

THE WORLD OF REAL-TIME GAMES IS A TOUGH FOR MOBS.★

三嶋与夢

イラスト/孟達

モブ  
敵  
世界  
です

乙女  
ゲー  
世界  
は



モブ  
です

01

# **THE WORLD OF OTOME GAMES IS TOUGH FOR MOBS**

**– Otome Game Sekai wa Mob ni Kibishii Sekai Desu –**

**- VOLUME 1 -**

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**[ 2Slow2Late Machine Translations ]**

## - STORY -

Leon, a former Japanese worker, was reincarnated into an “otome game” world, and despaired at how it was a world where females hold dominance over males.

It was as if men were just livestock that served as stepping stones for females in this world.

The only exceptions were the game’s capture targets, a group of ikemen led by the crown prince.

In these bizarre circumstances, Leon held one weapon.

He has knowledge from his previous world, where his brazen sister had forced him to complete this game.

Leon, who really just wants to live as a shut-in in the countryside, uses that knowledge to unexpectedly raise a ferocious revolt against the women and ikemen.

The curtains begin for an exhilarating fantasy about overtaking the fiendish heroine.

# 乙女ゲー世界はモブに★厳しい世界です 01

THE WORLD OF OTOME GAMES IS A TOUGH FOR MOBS.

GC NOVELS

三嶋与夢  
イラスト/孟達



「ほら、そっちの条件を  
早く出してくださいますよ。  
はやくはやく」

「え、あ……」

✿ アンジェリカ

✿ リオン

✿ オリヴィア

✿ ユリウス

「あ、あの……  
どうするつもりですか？」

（いったい誰なのよ、あのモブは！  
どうして私の完璧な計画を  
狂わせるのよ）

✿ マリエ

『アロガンツ、来ます』

大きな箱が空から落下し、そして地面に衝突する少し前にスピードを落としてゆっくりと着地する。

随分と大きな箱の前面部分が開くと、側面部分や天井部分も自動で開いて中に格納していた鎧が姿を現した。



# 登場人物紹介

## ルクシオン

宇宙戦艦の端末（子機）で、AIが搭載された球体ロボット。リオンの言動に対して冷たくツッコミを入れる。



## リオン・フオウ・バルトファルト

男爵家の三男坊。この世界をゲームとしてプレイしていた転生者だが、ひねくれ者の一般人。この女尊男卑な世界で、平穏な人生を送ろうと四苦八苦している。



## オリヴィア

貴族の学園に、特別に入学を認められた田舎の娘。素朴な魅力と芯を持った女性。ゲームの中では、主人公として攻略対象の中心にいたのだが、現在ほっち状態。



## アンジェリカ・ラファ・レッドグレイブ

王太子の婚約者で性格はきつい、曲がったことが大嫌いな真つすくな女性。実家は広大な領地を持つ公爵家で、王家に次ぐ権力を持っている。



マリエ・フオウ・ラーファン



本来ならオリヴィアがいるはずの、乙女ゲーヒロインボジションに居座る謎の子爵令嬢。見た目は幼い姿をしているが、王子以下五名の男性と同時に交際する悪女。

ユリウス・ラファ・ホルファート



ゲームでは攻略対象キャラだった王太子殿下。今の立場に嫌気がさしており、理解をしてくれなかったマリエに惚れている。

ジルク・フィア・マーモリア



宮廷貴族で王太子の乳兄弟。優しそうな雰囲気だが、気が利くので女子にも大人気なのが、王子のためには非道な手段に出ることも。

ブラッド・フオウ・フィールド



辺境伯の跡取り。頭は良いが気が弱くナルシストで、精神面も弱くわがまま。

グレッグ・フオウ・セバーク



伯爵家の跡取りだが、すでに冒険者として活動している実力派。実戦経験のない貴族を馬鹿にしており、クリスとはよく喧嘩している。

クリス・フィア・アークライト



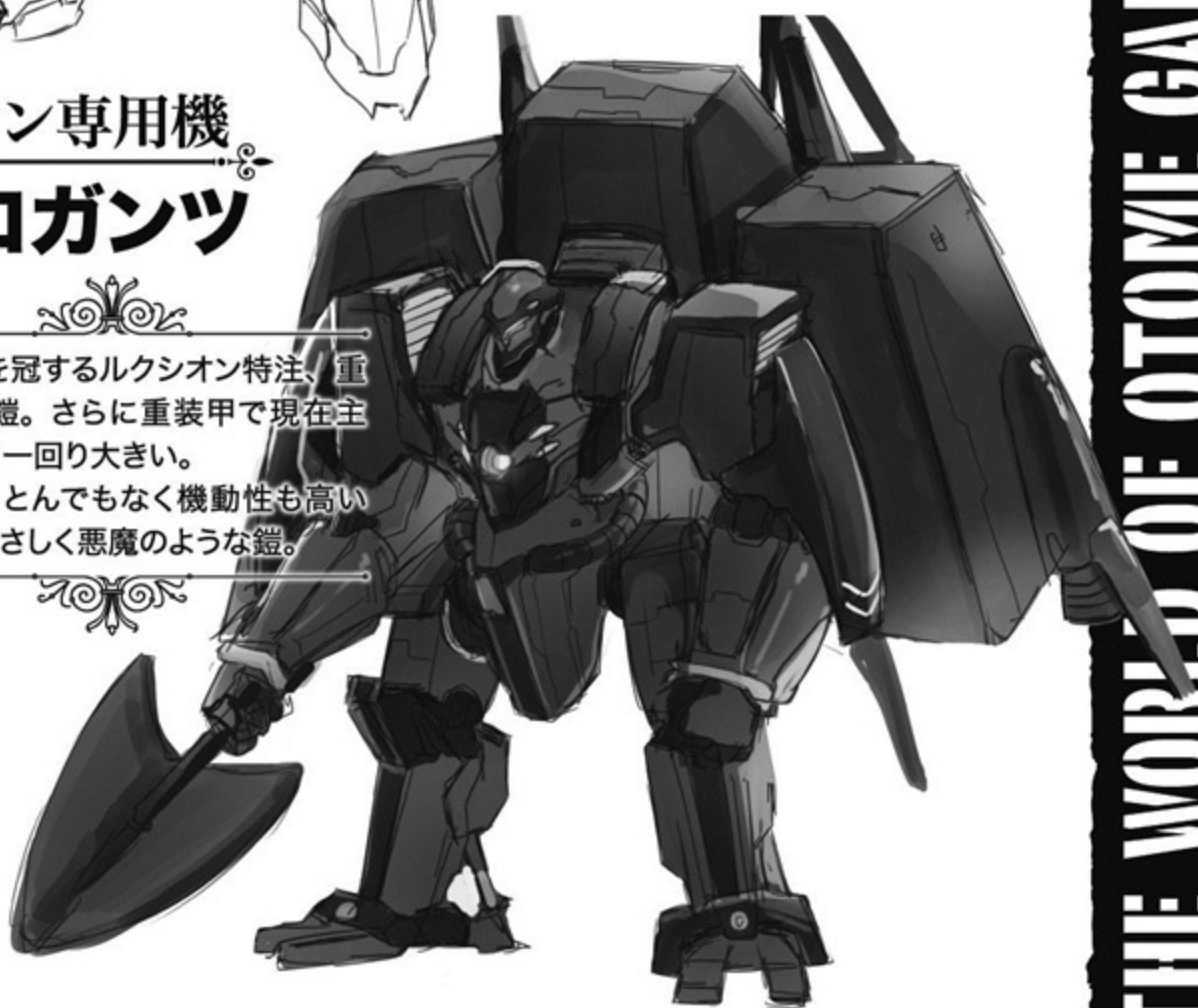
伯爵家の跡取りで父親は剣聖と呼ばれる偉人。自身も剣術を得意としており、その他の事にはあまり関わらうとしない。



空を飛んで戦うロボットのような兵器。  
現在はスリムな高機動型が主流。  
ユリウスたちは、それぞれのイメージ  
に合うカラーリングとカスタマイズをして  
いる。

## リオン専用機 アロガンツ

傲慢の名を冠するルクシオン特注、重  
装備型の鎧。さらに重装甲で現在主  
流の鎧より一回り大きい。  
そのくせ、とんでもなく機動性も高い  
という、まさしく悪魔のような鎧。





乙女ゲー世界は  
THE WORLD OF OTOME GAMES IS A TOUGH FOR MOBS.  
モブに  
★  
厳しい世界です  
01

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the World of  
Some games

# Prologue

## 1

Justice and evil can change depending on one's point of view.

I was so tired that philosophical lines, which I normally wouldn't think of, popped up into my head.

My willpower has been shaved down to the point that... I've been having a blank expression for a couple hours now.

I want to lie down on my bed and spend some leisure time on the manga and anime I love so much. Either that, or I'd like to play some games that have a male audience in mind.

With eyes like that of a dead fish, I, a functioning adult, am playing... an otome game. *(TLN: An otome game is basically a romance game directed towards a female audience. Most commonly, they're dating sims with a female protagonist.)*

It's one of those so-called love simulation games which play similarly to the gal games that are directed towards males, but are on the opposite end of the spectrum. *(TLN: Gal games are basically romance games directed towards a male audience, pretty much the opposite of an otome game.)*

The protagonist is a girl. It's an otome game, so the capture targets are males. On the other hand, if the protagonist is a boy and the capture targets are females, then it's a gal game.

That's right, during my time off, I'm not playing a game directed towards males.

It's not as if I like otome games, I prefer gal games.

"Why do I have use this morning to the win over some likeable guy?"

I'm not happy to see the male character on the other end of the screen blushing.

Basically, every captureable character that appears in the game is beautiful.

They're created by popular illustrators and voiced by famous voice actors. If this were a gal game... I'd be glad to hear the female characters, but the sweet voice of a guy doesn't make me happy!

With a blank expression, my focus was on a smartphone's screen.

Since I have no motivation, I have to rely entirely on walkthroughs to play.

Once selecting a choice on the flickering screen, you'll know if the love meter rises, accompanied a sound effect and a varying pose that the 3D character will make.

The male character had a pose where his hand was brushing through his hair, along with his cheeks slightly blushed.

'You're different from normal girls. Let me hear your name.'

This guy's the crown prince—an capture target character that appears in the game, and is established as a male character that's highly popular around the campus. This is a scene where the protagonist comes across him by chance, and not knowing that he's the crown prince, interacts with him normally.

I'm far past my second playthrough. I could only let out a complaint about these first-meeting scenes I've seen many times.

"You gotta be kidding. There's no way that one wouldn't know who the crown prince of their own country is. How sly. How sly of the protagonist."

It seems that the crown prince doesn't notice the sly behavior of the protagonist.

"...He's blushing while in delight. He's got no keen eye."

I'm spending my long-awaited weekend break playing an otome game.

Currently, it's noon on a Sunday. I've been playing this otome game non-stop since Saturday. I've been busy recently and didn't get a weekend break in a while.

At that moment, I heard an electronic sound from my smartphone.

Upon checking, it was a message with an image from my younger sister.

‘Enjoying it abroad with my friends~’

...Seeing my sister’s smile made my blood boil.

My sister was having fun at a beach and hotel with her friends.

I immediately replied.

‘Stop kidding me! Didn’t you push this game onto me because you said you were busy!’

Right now, I’m playing my sister’s otome game.

On Saturday morning, my sister, a college student living with her parents as opposed to me who lived alone, visited my apartment.

I thought of it as unusual before she forced a game onto me.

With a smile, she said “Since you have free time, complete this game for me, brother.”

And complete means to really complete it. After seeing an image, video, or scene in-game at least once, it can be replayed many times over. She told me to complete everything.

‘Stop screwing around, do it yourself!’ is what I also said.

—I got a reply from my sister.

‘Huh? Is it alright for you to say that? I won’t resolve the misunderstand with mom and the others that way. I’ll buy you a souvenir, so please complete it~. \*If you don’t complete when I get back, I’ll do more cruel things that will keep you stuck in that apartment. From, your cute sister.’

As I read the message, I yelled while fighting the urge to slam my phone onto the floor.

“Damn iiiit!!”

I wanted to refuse doing this.

However, my sister who lives at home—hid a large amount of her personal books in my room. They were books she liked and were for fujoshis. My mother happened to find them when she was cleaning, and now it's caused a misunderstanding about me supposedly having *that* kind of preference. (TLN: *Fujoshis are girls that have a very strong passion for yaoi/homosexual relationships between men in manga/anime/novels*)

I tried to resolve the misunderstanding, but the more I tried to explain—the more she thought I was trying to deceive her.

...It's a nightmare.

I've also learned that my sister is a fujoshi as a result of this misunderstanding.

And, perhaps you could say it's just bad luck, but... people trust my sister more than me. Even from the perspective of her brother, her looks are on a different class and her grades are also superior. I've also heard talks about how she has a gentle and friendly personality.

In truth, she's just skilled at feigning kindness, and she always gets me into trouble.

Judging from this otome game matter, I can also tell that she has the worst kind of personality.

She hides her hobbies, and no matter how much I try to explain to my parents, they place more faith in my sister's words.

When my worried mother gave me a phone call, I almost cried. That's also the moment where within my mind, I deeply engraved the desire to take revenge on my sister.

Holding back the urge to rage, I returned my line of sight to the screen.

Once picking up the controller again, I only thought about clearing the game so that this misunderstanding can be resolved. It's annoying, but my parents trust my sister.

My sister promised to clear up the misunderstanding if I complete the game.

...There's nothing left for me to do other than completing this otome game.

This is frustrating, but my sister excels at talking her way through a situation. On Saturday morning, she refuted my objections to her needing cash for her trip—and

demanded I give pocket money to her. It's quite pathetic that I was frightened into giving her cash.

However, I will definitely take revenge. I will continue my scheming as I fill up the love meter for this guy on the other end of this screen.

"You'll regret incurring my wrath."

Since a long time ago, sister has been clever with getting her way.

She knows that she's cute, she's the exact opposite of me. Her only weak point is probably how she hides her hobby from her surroundings.

I knit my eyebrows while continuing the game with feelings of frustration.

"...I can't get pushed around each time."

My sister forced an otome game onto me.

Aiming to be a large-scale otome game, it has quite a lot going for it. My younger sister is one of those that bought the limited edition immediately for the illustrations and voice actors.

However, the problem is that despite being an otome game, it has RPG elements and even strategy simulation elements in it.

As expected, this is a strange change of pace compared to the games made by companies with a male audience.

The game's setting is a fantasy world of swords and magic.

It's a setting where people live in a magical world that stands out from Earth.

I believe that it's a world with royalty and nobles, where the level of society isn't that high, but it's also a world where airships fly through the sky and knights can wage war while wearing armor that are like powered suits.

In this world, the protagonist goes to a nobles' academy.

the protagonist herself seems like a simple girl from the countryside. She's a student

that's not a noble, but a commoner, and yet, she's given special permission to enroll in the school.

Since her position is special, she gets picked on by the high-status noble girls. At that school, she comes across the prince and some noble sons, but at the same time, she gets involved in various matters and even a war.

Anyways, it's a game that tosses adventure and war into a school love game.

In addition, it's "a world very convenient for women."

In the beginning, my sister also tried clearing it herself, but in the end, it seems she wasn't well-versed in the factors of boys and gave up.

Thanks to that, I ended up getting stuck with a tedious job. She said "You just have to do this simple game. Easy, right?"

Well, I certainly like games, but even I think that this is difficult.

"Nobody would want these sections inside an otome game in the first place."

Though I complained, I stared at the screen while operating the controller.

On the screen, a unit of airships were lined up.

The design of the airship looked like a rugby ball. Various other airships were facing it.

There were hexagonal grid lines. It was turn-based combat where you move allied ships to have them attack using the cannons on their side, and knights wearing armor will swoop down on the enemy, but—.

"Damn it! What kind of enemy skill is being activated here! This is strangely hard. I'm trying to clear this more efficiently."

The enemy's skills and special techniques will activate, and the attacking allies received large damage.

Once the ally was attacked, they directly received the opponent's offense and sunk... although skill and ability can help with winning against the opponent, there's a

randomness factor that makes things very difficult.

My sister would give up here.

“Ah, crap.”

The airship that I couldn't let sink, the one carrying the prince, instantly sunk.

I saw the letters “Game Over” on my screen.

“It happened again! It's impossible to play while looking at the walkthrough!”

I oh so wanted to tell my sister to give it up. I want to say that I could just download a completed save file off the internet, but... this game has the feature of naming the protagonist. My sister put in her name.

She wants the famous voice actors to whisper her name, or something like that...

Due to that, I can't solve this by putting in a completed save file.

I have to clear it myself.

“I've already done this so many times! The prince sinks too much! Is it *that*? Does it want me to cave into microtransactions? Is this how it wants me to spend money on microtransactions?!”

Despite being an offline game, there's paid content for upgrading. Were they a response to players' cries of not being able to clear the game, or was this done as a calculation...? They give out numerous items that make the war part easy.

I don't want to cough out even more expenses for my sister, but what's causing my time to be taken away is certainly the battle and war parts.

Other than those, this is the same as a gal game. No issues arise unless you select the wrong choice. I paused the game to look for paid content.

A large number of items appeared on the screen.

Their prices around around one hundred yen, but things that are helpful for the battle part, like airships and armor, are strangely expensive.

Three hundred or five hundred yen. There's even paid content going for eight hundred yen.

"...It's setups like this that make its reputation worsen."

Initially, this anticipated super-large scale work was criticized on the internet for not being beatable without microtransactions.

Due to it having steep costs, the pricing was reworked and lowered within a month.

Yet even so, I still think it's expensive. With those thoughts in mind, I was taking a look at the men's swimsuits for sale.

"I'm not fond of men's swimsuits."

What's on sale is a special item that makes the male characters appear in swimsuits.

Seeing it made me disgusted.

Though, if this was a gal game and this item put the female characters in swimsuits, it would completely be the type of thing I'd purchase.

"It probably doesn't work for the women like it does for the men."

I gave off a feeble smile while emotionally exhausted.

I feel displeased imagining a female player getting off to these guys in swimsuits.

"I wonder if women feel the same way about harems? Well, whatever."

A man surrounded by women is a harem, a woman surrounded by men is a reverse harem. A man seeing a reverse harem will feel uneasy, and a woman seeing a harem would definitely feel unsure.

I'm getting tired about thinking of such things. Anyways, I'll just think solely about completing the game.

"Well then, what do I buy to quickly finish the game?"

Since they're paid content, they should be potent.

Special weapons for the male character, special equipment for the protagonist, and other such things were also up for sale.

I'd anything, I'd like to find something useful for the war part and buy it. Anything that can help with progressing through the game.

"...This one?"

What came into view was a battleship that was the most expensive paid item.

It ignores troublesome status effects and the need to resupply, it seems to be a strong airship in any case.

"Rather than an airship, this looks more like a spaceship."

Its appearance is metallic and it doesn't look like any of the other airships in the game. Its design would be one that people would think of as a space battleship.

For being one thousand yen, I had nothing to criticize in terms of its performance.

Checking its description, it's from ancient times or something... at any rate, it was written down as a terrifying spaceship.

"...It really is a spaceship! Or maybe, that's just a typo?"

Did they write it as a spaceship in the description by mistake? I was thinking about it, but I don't care as long as I can clear the game.

What's important is that this purchase could make the game easier.

Next is to check for armor.

Powered suits... they take the form of armor, but they don't give any sense of realism at all. Their appearances look like what's referred to as robots.

The guys who wear this armor while in the midst of war are... the knights.

From a woman's point of view, perhaps they find it cool to see a man that can fight for them?

Anyways, with a purchase this big, it seems like I can depend on it.

If this makes it easier to reach the capture, then I'll consider it a cheap expense.

The black armor makes it look a bit villainous, but that's no problem. Dark heroes are cool... Thinking about it, this was a pretty good design for something coming out of an otome game.

Blades are strong, but master swordsmen don't have a projectile weapon. Their weakness is their reliance on weapons, and if a guy has poor equipment... they're a feeble magically-illiterate fool that'll get struck.

Due to the unhelpful capture target characters, I've gotten a game over many times...

"I have to finish this... and at any rate, I want to complete it easily."

I'm going to lose my precious time off playing an otome game.

I don't have patience here, so by using the paid content that I purchase, I can continue progressing through this otome game.

As afternoon passed and it became evening, I managed to unlock over 90% of the events and CGs.

All that remains is the reverse harem ending.

The remaining ending is where all of the male characters get married to the protagonist.

This is what's called the true end of the game—the proper ending, but it doesn't matter to me whether it's true or not.

I'm not playing this for the thought of capturing them.

In the daily life part... I took the items received by the guys when their love meter reached a certain amount, and sold them off for money at a second-hand shop the next day.

Nevertheless, the protagonist is a companion of the people in question.

It would be fiendish to sell them off in front of their eyes, but it's a game so it doesn't

matter.

If this were a gal game, it would be impossible for me to take such an action. Even though it's a game, I can't be so fiendish.

Anyways, this my sister's otome game. Nothing matters as long as I can clear it.

I continued playing while thinking as such... and then I realized that it had turned to night.

Finally reaching the reverse harem end, the joy from the liberation was accompanied by a sense of emptiness.

"...It took a whole two days to conquer this."

When seeing the ending, feelings of rage, then sorrow, welled up.

Why did I have to do this?

I saved the data, and having kept my promise with my sister, I collapsed onto my bed.

Looking at my clock, it was a little early to sleep.

I don't feel like moving because of my exhaustion, but the outcome of being relieved that it's all over was an empty stomach.

Placing my hand on my stomach, I remembered that I ate little in the morning and nothing by the end.

"There was nothing in the refrigerator."

I was planning to do some shopping during my time off, but I prioritized clearing the game, so I did not go outside.

"Perhaps I'll go to a restaurant?"

When checking the time on my smartphone, I got a message from my sister.

'I'm worn out from all the fun~. I'm going to return in a few days, so you better clear it by that time. If you don't take this seriously, you'll forever remain a perverted, foolish

brother ?'

"This girl is the worst."

She's making demands to me as she enjoys herself and tells me to work seriously. Furthermore, she's extorting money out of me...

However, a small question arose.

"Has she been taking a part-time job or something? Where is her travel money coming from?"

The pocket money that I gave her wouldn't be enough to cover it.

Perhaps she's trying not to reveal it because of her imprudently high pride. If she works during closing time, she wouldn't have any leisure time until late at night.

In addition, she said that she won't do a part-time job because doesn't want to do labor.

Now that I think about it, I remember that my mother said something a little before that.

"She said that money was needed to get a license, or something like that."

It seemed my parents thought about getting a car license and were preparing money for it, but only part of it had to do with using it for travelling.

I took a snapshot to copy my sister's message.

I'll compile it with a PC so that I can send it to my mother.

Of course, what's accompanying it are images of her comments.

"...What an idiot. She's makes light of her brother, so I'll do this."

She threatened me and went on a trip.

If I show this to our parents, what would they think?

As to be expected, she won't be able to make an excuse in light of hard evidence. Then

finally, the mask hiding her true character will come off.

I noticed that I was grinning while thinking about it. Then I realized something.

“Huh? If I did this from the start, I wouldn’t have had to pointlessly clear this game... argh, it’s no use crying over spilled milk now.”

While realizing how stupid I was, I got up and took my wallet in my hand since I was hungry.

I’ll temporarily put the matter of my sister on hold and go eat.

I’m not going to rack my brain over this otome game anymore.

While thinking so, my steps got lighter.

It was a strangely fluffy feeling, kind of like the feeling of joy after being free from work.

“Now then, I’ll go on splurge today and even take something more pricey from the menu...”

I left my door while looking forward to my gorgeous dinner. I walked through an empty passage with flickering fluorescent lights, and then was attacked by a sudden dizziness as I approached the stairs.

## 2

“—Ah, this is pretty bad.”

My body lost its power like a puppet with its strings cut, and toppled down on the spot.

My body wasn’t doing what I wanted it to, and it was the worst of luck to have it right before I was about to descend from the stairs.

The scenery in my field of vision was quickly changing as my body approached the stairs.

I didn’t feel anything like pain in my body, but I recognized that my current state of

vigorously tumbling down was dangerous.

“I can’t... die... like this.”

My younger sister had crushed my long-awaited break, and just when I think I’m free, I’m going to get serious injuries now. Actually, it’s quite possible that my life may be at risk.

Thinking as such, I oddly—got enraged.

As the scenery around me dimmed and I gradually lost my senses, I had a thought during my final breaths—I had seen a scene that normally wouldn’t happen even if one was in their last moments.

There was land rising from the sea.

An airship was flying in the air.

As I reached out to the sun in the blue sky and white clouds, my consciousness faded away.



When I came to, I was on a slanted bank, with lushly grown grass.

There was the sound of grass scraping against one another, and the scent of plantation.

Lying down at such a place as my hand was reaching to the sun, I, “Leon Fou Baltfault”, was attacked by a violent throbbing.

I wasn’t sweating because of the sun’s warmth, it was a cold sweat that wouldn’t stop.

There was a pulsing pain in my core, and a unpleasant feeling as I sweated.

“W, what was that just now?”

Since I sat up in a panic, some of the grass that got caught on my clothes fell onto the ground. As the wind blew, the blades of grass drifted away.

As I thought of it as a strong wind, a giant airship passed through above me, blocking

the sun with its large shadow.

This airship, which was wooden like a box, is one that periodically arrives at this territory.

I usually look at it nonchalantly, but today, I couldn't hide my eyes wide open in astonishment.

It feels as if I'm seeing this for the first time.

Clutching my chest, my heart was still pounding fiercely. My breathing wouldn't calm down either.

As I stood up, I looked at the direction the airship was heading towards, and there was a sea spreading beyond.

I feel a sense of something out of place, the sea looks different.

“What is this? Why does—”

I slowly walked forward, and then fell over.

Looking at my body, my hands and feet were strangely small.

I'm sure that this is my own body, and yet I strangely feel like I'm small.

Rather than worrying about this, I need to check the situation first.

I got up and walked, then gradually shifted into a dash towards the sea.

I have this uneasy premonition.

I feel like it took quite a bit of time with these child-like legs, but I got to my destination.

The location, which had a fence to prevent people from falling down, looked like the usual scenery.

“Right. It's just like usual—a floating island.”

This was an island floating from the sea.

The island is still floating, but I don't know whether to be happy or sad about it. I had an image pop up about an island floating in seawater.

Though I shouldn't have needed to, I wanted to confirm it anyways.

Something's been strange for a while now.

When I reached my hand out towards the sun, an image popped up inside my head that seemed like someone else's life. It was the entire life of a man that didn't live here.

There was nothing prominent about it, but it still seemed enjoyable. It could be written off as a dream or illusion, but it felt vivid and strangely real.

Though I saw into that man's entire life, I don't remember his name.

I held my head against both of my hands.

It was such a vivid memory I saw and yet, why can't I recall his name?

I feel like I had instantly recalled the experiences of someone beyond my age of five.

I sat down, unable to understand what was going on. I feel like my current memories and those memories I recalled are blending together into a mix.

I looked up at the sky behind the fence.

"...What... what happened to me?"

Even I don't know who that question was directed towards.



Since the sun was setting, I returned home.

I was reluctant to return, and I remembered that I had come to this bank to run away, but I wanted to get back before it turned to night.

I braced myself as I returned home, and my father was waiting there.

He stood there in front of the entrance, waiting with a daunting pose.

“You stupid son!”

He hit me on the head with his large fist, and I opened the front door while holding back my tears.

Then there was my mother.

“You’ve finally returned. Why did you run away on the day the wife finally came?”

My father, “Barcus,” is a feudal lord—a baron.

Not long ago, an image about nobles had suddenly popped up, one where they wore neat clothes, and left more of a stingy impression. However, in that image, they were fat, whereas my father was a muscular giant that had grown out his facial hair. His attire was a shirt, tan pants, and boots, which didn’t quite look noble-like.

My mother was a mistress named “Luce”—a woman of a knight family that serves the Baltfault household.

She didn’t wear a dress, but clothes that would be worn by a town or village girl.

The “wife” that my mother was talking about was my father’s legal wife.

“I’m, I’m... sorry.”

Perhaps sensing that the aura around me was different from usual, my parents held complicated expressions as they led me to where I was staying—which was not a mansion, but a storehouse.

Thereupon, a woman wearing a dress was watching from the open front door.

There were cold gazes sent towards me, as I wasn’t supposed to leave the residence.

With figures in dresses embroidered with jewelry, the eldest son, “Lutart,” and the eldest daughter, “Merce,” were holding themselves back.

Only those two are the wife’s—the legal wife’s legitimate children.

Behind them stood tall and neat-looking men wearing suits. Having long ears, they were male elves that were sneering at us.

“Good grief, this uneducated child is no different from a beast.”

This woman, who was partially closing her eyes and had hair gathered together, gave off the exact image of a noble girl. My brother and sister were wearing valuable clothes, unlike me.

My mother apologizes, and my father takes me to the storehouse.

My father held a face of perseverance until we got to the storehouse.

“...Reflect on yourself in the storehouse. You’ll get to eat afterwards.”

When I nodded to what he said, there turned out to already be a guest in the storehouse.

The second son, “Nicks.”

He was my older brother who wore clothing like mine, and was reading a book under the light of a lantern. My father and I looked at him with surprise.

“You’re stupid as well. Just bear with it and those people will leave.”

When my father saw my brother turn his sight back to the book, he hit him on the head.

“Nicks, help Leon with studying.”

My brother made a face that seemed as if he was strongly opposed to that, but he made some room on the desk.

Once I sat down, he gave me a warning.

“If you fall asleep, I’ll hit you.”

Seeing that I nodded, my father left to return to the residence.

Now that it was just the two of us, my brother hands me a book to read.

I opened the book, which had been read so many times that it was getting tattered and had scribbles here or there.

I was inside the warehouse.

While warding away the bugs that were gathering around the light, I read.

I had this somewhat strange feeling.

My head was filled with this language that I didn't recognize. It's obvious that this language is different from what's written in this book I have. Actually, I feel like that language is easier.

As I was worried about such things, it seemed that my brother thought that I stumbled upon words that I had trouble reading.

"Think through it yourself for a bit. If you really don't know, then I tell you what it is."

Time quietly passed.

The persistent and annoying bugs were gathering around the light.

"—Hey, brother?"

My brother was slightly surprised that I had spoken.

"Brother? Didn't you call me bro in the morning?" *(TLN: MC was using Aniki, Nicks notes that MC was using Nii-san in the morning.)*

I tried to correct myself in a hurry, but my brother seemed to have seen through me.

"Are you at that period where you try to act older? Well, it doesn't particularly matter to me. Leaving that aside, is there anything you don't understand?"

I shook my head.

What I was more curious about was our treatment.

I wasn't bothered by it until now, but doubts were currently popping up one by one.

I get that the eldest son is treasured, but how come we're the only ones driven away to a storehouse? There are older and younger sisters besides us.

Yet, those sisters aren't in the storehouse, even though they're illegitimate children like us.

“Why are we the only ones in the storehouse?”

My brother muttered to himself, saying “They said to me that it was only going to be until yesterday...” then he set aside his book and stared up at the ceiling.

“It’s because the wife hates us.”

“It’s because we’re the children of our mother?”

My brother put his hands behind his head, and leaned his back against the chair.

“Do you think that there’s any other reason than that? Even though they’re daughters of a mistress, it seems she’s hesitant on sending the girls to the storehouse, but this is how us boys get treated.”

From there, my brother explained the situation of the household in an uninterested manner.

Rather than talking to me about it, it seemed more like he was complaining about it to me, the youngest brother of three.

It seems that my brother, who’s seven years old, had a lot to complain about.

The Baltfault family is a household that holds a floating island as its territory.

However, it was previously a knight household that had been classified as a semi-baron one. Not genuine nobles, but more or less in a feudal lord social standing.

It seemed that they were a family that lived relatively peacefully for a knight household.

As months and years passed by, they had realized that they turned out to become a household with warriors for subordinates. Knights showed up, wanting to serve them, causing the scale of their situation to get bigger.

As their territory progressed, the fields and need for work increased—and that meant the population they needed to support increased. The scope of their territory had caused them to barely reach the scope of a baron family.

...So that’s how things got to here.

Investigators from the “Holfault Kingdom” come to our territory.

It seems that this is something from the time of my grandfather, but it seems that investigators had come before to judge if the scope of our territory was worthy of being for a baron family. Then they proceeded to talk about the process for ascending in noble rank, but my grandfather brushed over it in a rush, it seems. Anyways, becoming barons wasn’t something intentional.

There, some knowledge from recalled memories rushed to my head.

Shouldn’t ascending in rank be something worth enjoying? Furthermore, is it really that simple to decide on it based on territory scale? For something like rising in status, isn’t it necessary for more achievements, like military feats or something, to be accomplished? Those were the questions I had.

“Is it bad to ascend in rank?”

It seems my brother doesn’t know this, but I could sense that father’s not happy from his expression.

“There were complaints about how troubled it would given its short notice, and how some wanted to be a baron household through contributions appropriate for them to become one. That’s the reason why we don’t have much money.”

The kingdom wants earnings that match our family status.

One piece from the recalled memories comes to mind.

A household that was barely at the scope of being a noble family, and a noble household with a lot of leeway.

The household with leeway has no issues, but the household that doesn’t has a hard time making contributions. So, despite our scope of territory being enough for a baron household, it seems we’re called a silent kinda-baron family.

Anyways, we became a baron household that are feudal lords of the countryside in an isolated island.

Wanting to behave in a way befitting of his family’s status, father married a woman with a high status.

However, the woman he calls his wife is normally not in this territory.

The eldest son and eldest daughter also only come here occasionally.

“...Fath—Dad and his wife are married, right? Why is she not usually here?”

“That’s normal for women in baron households and above. Pretty unlikable. If I get a wife, then I absolutely want one that’s a semi-baron or lower. Well, a high status woman would think nothing of us anyways.”

“That’s normal?”

“You too should start studying at once. If not, you won’t get married in the future, even when you’re twenty years old. If you can’t get married while in the academy, you’re likely going to be a leftover-husband of a woman past her prime. That’s not good, right?”

...I could not hide my surprise.

There are a lot of things I want to ask, like about the academy and such, but... above all I want to ask about that word, leftover-husband. Isn’t it usually women that have to get married by a set age?

“H, hey, bro?”

“It’s fine if you call me brother. Anyways, what is it?”

“...Men are usually the center of the household, right? Or rather, what do you mean by being forced to get with an older woman?”

My brother tilted his head.

“It’s just like I said. There are woman who aren’t married, had their man run away from them, or otherwise don’t have a husband. They get a lover in name only so that they don’t lose face. So, there are lots of old women and women past their prime that would take in youthful men as a leftover-husband.”

My brother answered my question in an awfully firm manner.

“It’s usually men that are in the upper position, right?”

From my recalled knowledge, I vaguely remember that men usually were the ones in charge for these kinds of situations. However, it seems that's not the case.

"If you look at dad, you'll know that the women are the ones in charge. You'll also know that he can't oppose that jer—his wife."

Seeing how he corrected himself by saying "wife" instead of "jerk", it seems that my brother thinks of her as unpleasant.

I had gone and heard something outrageous.

"Something's strange about you today."

I made a bitter smile towards my brother's suspicions while turning my line of sight back to the book, I was oddly sweating though.

How strange... this world is strange.

Due to this strange knowledge I got, I feel a sense of discomfort.

I read my book in silence for a while. Then I recall the words of my brother.

These recalled memories, wherever they came from, left a very strong impression.

"Academy... Holfault Kingdom? Then there's the wife's servants, which were elves? Huh? Could it be...?"

As I was muttering to myself, my brother made a complaint about the noise.

"What happened?"

"U, um, those suited guys. Those elves were lovers of the wife, right?"

My brother had a look of indifference, but was shocked.

"Don't ask something like that. Look, just study."

Those elves, which are part of a sub-race, are the wife's lovers, or more accurately, close servants that attend to her... I understand that. Or rather, I remember about this very clearly.

I slumped over on my desk.

“...This is the world of that otome game.”

The cloudy memories gradually became clearer.

As that happened, I had realized that this terribly frivolous setting was of that otome game.

My brother slapped me on the head.

“Don’t fall asleep! What’s seriously going on with you today? Did you hit your head?”

I lifted my head and looked at my brother.

I raised a stiff smile, causing my brother to back away a little in surprise.

“W, what is it?”

“...Brother, this world is outrageous, isn’t it?”

“...A, ah, it is.”

My brother, troubled in his answer, turned his sight back to his book, as if wanting to escape from me.

I never that I would experience being reincarnated into another world.

Furthermore, a world of swords and magic... but I didn’t hear about this otome game world being one where women are placed above men, or something like that.

I held my head against both of my hands.

“This is the woooooorst!”

My brother made a complaint to me, who had gone and shouted.

“What is with you! Someone shut this guy up!”

I, Leon Fou Baltfault, am a former Japanese man who reincarnated into the world of

an otome game.

...I wanted to reincarnate in a more normal world.

It would have been better than an otome game... give me a break.

# Chapter 1

## Reasons for Fighting

### 1

Ten years have already passed since I've recovered my memories.

When this otome game, which had a frivolous setting that was full of inconsistencies, became real, it made me boil in anger at this unsightly world as the days passed.

Well, I can't help but be angry.

Though this is another world, a game world, there's my livelihood that I have to deal with.

Though I'm a noble, I'm a noble that's poor and in the countryside. Since I generally do farm work at home, I can help around still.

I've forged my body through farm work, making my expression look more tough than how I was before in my previous world.

Black eyes, black irises, and fifteen years old.

My face isn't prominently beautiful, but I don't think it's something unsightly either.

However, this world is the unconventional world of an otome game.

Guys with good looks are commonplace all around.

I suppose that I'm one of the many others out there, the mobs.

My brother, who I believe I'm on good terms with, is in the mainland kingdom's academy within the continent, and is living in their dorms.

That cramped room that I was using with my brother before is now being occupied together with my younger brother that's six years younger than me—"Colin," the

fourth son.

I'm reading a letter sent by my brother.

He wrote "Finding a marriage partner is tough," in the letter.

In this otome game world... it's considered an issue if a man can't find a marriage partner by the time he leaves the academy, and men that can't find one by the time they're twenty are considered defective goods.

This is particularly harsh for noble boys. Commoners might be forgiven, but noble boys that can't find a partner by age twenty are given the cold shoulder.

This world is unthinkable tough for guys.

I can only pray that my brother finds a marriage partner soon as I read this letter in my cramped room.

To make matters worse, not being married will have an effect on finding a job or being successful in life.

Many of them will be forced to be expelled from their family in the future, even for second or third sons of nobles. When the eldest son can't succeed the lineage, there will be a replacement in his place, and the eldest son will no longer need to give birth to a child that will be the successor.

In that case, our occupations will already be predetermined.

Mainly soldiers or government officials. The more novel ones become doctors or something like that. At any rate, it's good to aim for an occupation that benefits the country and citizens. Anything other than that, and the cold shoulder will be given.

Then, the guys who can't marry are treated as servants for armies or government jobs. They can't hope for a successful career, nor will they be entrusted to any important tasks.

In any case, their social reputation will plummet.

This is a world where marriage is very important for men.

“At any rate, this is truly a tough world.”

Wars, skirmishes, sky pirates, monsters... there's lots of conflict in the world, making the death rate of knights and soldiers high. There are a lot of children in my family, but the reason for that is because many of them will die.

It's the job of the men to fight. To make matters worse, the central figure of the family is not going to change any time soon, so I have to work. Despite that, The females are the ones that hold authority...

The men fight with their lives on the line and easily die, yet our treatment is extremely poor.

“This world is too kind towards women.”

I'm sensing that this world is distorted because of the setting for this game.

This place is quite splendid for women. Even more so for nobles that are barons and above.

“Perhaps it's because the capture targets are all rich dudes from good families?”

I want to cry if women dominate over men because of a game-like reason.

Why did I reincarnate into this world? Not a day passes by without this thought in mind. No wait, there's some. There's quite a few. In the first place, since my life is busy each day, I often forget about this.

It's been ten years since I've gained my memories... I've gotten used to this.

Inside the room, Colin was lying down on the bed sleeping.

He had an innocent face.

People like us that aren't successor are just spares, to put it bluntly.

When entering a game-like academy, we'll only amount to mobs in the background.

We'll be like the many others that only serve a supporting role.

At best, we'd get to say a word or two during the game.

Mob A or B, that's our position.

I never even heard of the Baltfault baron family or anything like that within the game in the first place.

"A mob... that's what I seem to be."

I don't want to admit it, but I'm the kind of person that faces reality. To begin with, I'm not the type of person that's brimming with ambition to do something big and get ahead in life. If I'm a mob, then so be it.

Apart from that, I'm going to enter the academy starting next year.

One of the few advantages to this world is that nobles are able to enroll in an academy.

I feel a bit complicated when thinking about how this is the result of the game's setting becoming real, but I'm grateful that I can become a government official or military personnel.

This is a precious opportunity to get outside this territory.

Besides, I can look for a marriage partner while at an academy.

If I don't leave this territory, then what awaits me is a forced marriage after some marriage talks taking place.

It'd be a little better if I got someone in the same generation as me, or even someone twenty years old, but it's no joke if I'm the leftover-husband of a thirty or forty year old.

"When I think about it like that, I really am thankful for being able to enter an academy."

Looking at my little brother Colin peacefully sleeping, I breathed a sigh of relief.



“...M, marriage interview? What do you mean by that?”

It was after breakfast.

I lost my composure as I was called in father’s office—or rather, his workroom.

The reason is that the wife, “Zola Fia Baultfault,” was sitting down on the sofa and brought up the talk about a marriage interview.

My father, sitting on the chair he normally uses, was making an unpleasant face.

As I received personal background documents showing the photograph of a marriage interview partner and other various things, I had no choice but to be stunned.

Father was making a troubled face, but after looking at Zola’s face, he turned towards me.

“Zola brought up a marriage proposal. It seems that her acquaintance is looking for a leftover-husband.”

Zola complained as she drank an especially expensive tea in our house by saying “Cheap articles don’t suit my tongue.”

I raise my objections in disapproval.

“No, this isn’t right!”

The reason for my protest was because this is a cruel choice for a partner.

This partner seems to be a daughter of a baron household—but it’s written in these background documents that she’s over fifty years old, she’s gone through marriage seven times.

She has children too, but all of them are older than me.

Zola sets down her cup in a slightly violent manner, and then glares at me.

I could tell that she was irritated.

“This is something you would normally be indebted to me for. She’s a daughter of nobles from the royal court, and their family has a long history of serving the royal family. What are you dissatisfied about?”

What am I dissatisfied about? On the contrary, it’d be stupid to think that there’s anything I’m satisfied about. No wait, perhaps she may really be stupid. In the first place, what kind of daughter is fifty years old?!

“Why are you bringing up talks about marriage when I haven’t even entered an academy yet?”

It’s an unspoken rule that nobles basically marry after graduation. I suppose that’s due to the game’s setting, but at any rate, it’s a rule.

That’s probably because half of the nobles don’t graduate from an academy.

The exception to that is a marriage for political reasons. Or perhaps there’s some other reason out there for marrying early. Nevertheless, most are pretty much limited to just engagements.

Bringing up talks about marriage does not apply as an exception.

This partner is called a daughter of a baron household, but she doesn’t hold any of the heritage. More precisely, she’s a nephew of the main household, making her only a relative.

Furthermore, this marriage with me would be her eighth... it’s obvious that this marriage talk can only mean danger.

Zola got angry, and her tone of voice grew stronger.

“I can still allow the second son to enter an academy. However, there’s no meaning in sending the third son to one. Even if there were no entrance fees, there would still be other things that need money spent on them.”

I glare at Zola as father apologizes.

“I’m sorry that this is happening to you. However, the reality is that our household has little money. There are still ways of making money regardless of whether or not you’ve entered an academy.”

Father glanced at Zola from time to time. No matter what they say, I'm definitely not going to comply.

Zola reclined on the sofa.

"Even if you graduate from the academy, you won't find work. The right choice is to marry for the sake of the family. Be grateful that you can peacefully go through marriage. I also made preparations for you to work as a soldier. Do your best."

That's when I noticed it.

...This person is planning to have me die in a battle.

Nobles. This is the same for soldiers, but when they die in a fight for the sake of the country, their family will be paid compensation.

For soldiers, payments happen en masse, but the case is a little different for nobles.

They will be given an honor for fighting on behalf of the country, and to make matters worse, their compensation is given annually.

The only thing I can hear from Zola's marriage talk is the money she wants from my death and her subsequent honor from it. All the husbands of this partner so far have been written down on this background document as "honored by death in battle."

Far from trying to hide it, it's as if it was written down as a boast.

"No. I refuse."

Zola pounded on the table and stood up in response to my refusal.

"Silence! This is my view on lowly third sons like you! If you're a boy, then work for the family!"

This Zola woman... basically lives in the kingdom's capital, the "royal capital." Unlike feudal lord nobles, she comes from royal court nobles that receive work from the royal palace.

Since she doesn't want to leave the royal capital, father has to make arrangements for her residence and also send her money for living expenses.

We send money her way even though our income in the household is considerably tough, and yet this is the attitude she begets. However, father will gain a bad reputation if he cuts off ties with this woman.

If he casts Zola away at this point, her family won't play nicely—and our status will suffer damage.

He can't divorce her for that reason.

I rack my brain trying to figure out a way to break through this dilemma.

Then I remember.

I have the knowledge of this game—knowledge of this world.

I'm getting tired of this usual lifestyle at age fifteen, and I haven't tried anything out in particular, but... isn't now the time to use my knowledge of this game to the best of my ability?!

There's no future for me if I don't do my best!

"...So there's no problem if we have money?"

Zola laughed scornfully towards my words.

"Oh? That's quite the attitude for a good-for-nothing that can't earn money."

If you want find one of the few people to say that to, then take a look in the mirror.

I did not want to be called a good-for-nothing by Zola, a parasite on the Baltfault household that indulges herself in the royal capital.

"It's rude to refuse talks about formal matchmakings. Please stop this if you're thinking that earning enough to cover the entrance fees will work."

Not knowing what I was talking about, father made his complaint towards my words.

However, father doesn't go with a strong attitude.

“You’re still young, Leon. Doing something like that so hastily is—”

“Silence! Men over twenty won’t find a partner no matter what! You don’t thank me for finding you a partner so quickly, and now you’re being picky by making complaints... this is why I hate brats from the countryside.”

Quite absurd of you to blame everything on the countryside.

When I was about to raise a complaint, father intervened.

“Think about the feelings of this child. He can’t help but refuse when his marriage is with a woman that’s in her fifties. The age difference is almost forty years.”

I’d be the leftover-husband of a woman that has children older than me.

It’s natural that I would hate it. Even for a world where women dominate over men, this marriage talk, which she had decided as something unrefusable, is something that treads on peculiar territory.

A family where my wife is nearly forty years older than me and even her children are older than me... it gives me the chills just thinking about it.

My father breathed a sigh.

“...If he can prepare money, it’s fine to revoke these talks about marriage, right?”

Zola sat down in a violent manner and crossed her legs as she looked down at us.

“Oh? This is the first time I’ve heard about you having the resources to do so. I’d prefer you use it to increase the amount of money you send me.”

I’m not going to make false assumptions by saying that all women in this world are like this person. However, looking at this woman makes me feel disgust.

The image of women, particularly noble women, in this world is the worst.

Father held a hand to his head.

He then cast his eyes downward and spoke something as if he was squeezing it out of himself.

“Give me some time. I’ll find a way to arrange something.”

Seeing father looking discouraged while doing the unreasonable for my sake gave me a strong sense of guilt.

This really is a cruel world.

## 2

Once Zola left the room, only father and I were left.

“That woman had us prepare a ship just for this occasion. Then we also had to make arrangements for her stay, I feel reluctant in having to think about the costs. Father, why did you marry her?”

Since she normally lives in the royal capital, we have to make necessary preparations when she comes here.

There’s the costs of the airship service, but we also have to deal with the preparations for her lodging room and her meal arrangements. We also have to cover her traveling expenses.

My father is weak-kneed.

There are reasons for that being the case.

“Don’t be angry. This marriage was absolutely necessary. My marriage with Zola lets us be treated suitably as a baron household. There’s no choice in the matter.”

Father must be thinking that he should be thankful for his wife coming over to this isolated island from a remote region. It seems that daughters of nobles from afar like to find partners of cities that they yearn to live in.

There are some oddballs among them, but those kinds of women have to compete against each other.

I believe that father got married because of what it meant to be married to Zola.

That alone makes her an important marriage partner. If a baron household doesn’t

take an appropriate bride, then they're declaring that they're not a household of that rank. They'll be made light of by other nobles, and some will attack them—it would start a war on the household.

In any case, they'd be unable to get along with other households as well as not being treated as barons.

It's a case of ostracism.

"So, how are you going to prepare the money?"

I asked for confirmation, but I could already guess from father's bitter expression.

"To be honest, it will be tough. Our house is already in debt. Any further than this and we won't be able to recover. Even so, why did she bring up this talk all of the sudden?"

Father was also curious about it.

"...Why didn't she bring up a conversation about this with my older brother?"

Father tilted his head after hearing what I said.

"Even for Nicks, there would still be too big of an age gap, but... it's certainly strange. It seems that she doesn't want you to enter an academy."

I was holding a conversation here at home, but I was wondering if things were going alright on the other side.

However, the answer was beyond my imagination.



It was a week later—I was in the storehouse at home.

I was retrieving some weapons that were being stored.

Since the weapons are the property of the parents, my father gets angry if I use them without permission. However, nobody here is going to stop me right now.

There was an old-style rifle, the type that can only hold five magazines.

It was the most suitable object, so I took it to disassemble for maintenance.

I placed a decorated sword on the table and checked to see whether or not it was usable. I also gathered up other important tools.

My father looked at me doing this with unease.

“H, hey, what do you plan on doing?”

When I read a letter from my brother a while ago, I decided to resolve myself.

I’ve been thinking carefully about how to use my game knowledge to earn money, but now I’ve realized that it’s easier said than done.

“I need to make money at any cost before I get sold off to some perverted old woman! I don’t want that to happen, not at all!”

My mother was getting teary-eyed while behind my father.

It seems the house that I’m potentially being sold off to is one with a bad reputation.

There’s this forest of ladies, I believe? It’s gathering held with men that are slaves, making it fine to treat them in any way, according to what those old women said.

It seems that the treatment of the slaves is even worse than that of sub-race servants.

They’re a pack that enjoy using men and then crushing them.

They’re the worst.

Furthermore, there are rumors that old women of high noble status gather there, and even that men who aren’t of use are sent to the battlefield to die. They’re probably thinking that it’s better off to dispose of them through deaths in battle.

What’s cruel... is that Zola is one of the people involved in it.

Not one of the people that gather there, but one of the women that are thinking about making a profit by selling off us spares of the eldest son.

They’re a group that no decent person wants to get involved with, and even other

fellow females would back away from.

There's a reason why she didn't mention the elder brother in her talks and why she's been trying to prevent further talks about me going to the academy in the royal capital. They'll gather together young men like me that don't know anything, and have their way with them. That's how the forest of ladies works.

They'll mutually make schemes for those that aren't students at the academy, so at any rate, it seems that entry to an academy works against them. Due to that, Zola had been putting forth a marriage proposal before I could enter an academy.

"Why does a mob have to get involved with perverts like them! I'd rather have a more calm life without any mountains or valleys!"

My mother was worried about what I said.

"I don't understand what Leon is saying."

"I don't understand either. What is he planning on doing, taking out that weapon? Don't tell me that he's planning on marching into the royal capital? D, don't do that!"

Looking at me maintaining the weapon, father made a worried face.

I do want to march there and wreak havoc, but that's impossible for my current self.

Even if I march into there, I'm going to get apprehended since the demi-human servants near the noble women have been forged to become strong, so approaching them is not a simple matter.

"...Being an adventurer is the best option for getting money."

Both of my parents exchanged glances when hearing my words.

In this world, an adventurer is a recognized occupation. One could say that it's an occupation that has to be recognized.

At any rate, nobles can be traced back to being descendants of adventurers.

In this game's setting, nobles are people that obtained land by discovering it as adventurers. Adventurers that earned numerous fortunes from their adventures

became nobles.

So, that's the game-like excuse for why nobles need to be adventurers when they're at the academy.

This lets dungeons give the protagonist a way to raise love meters, but I can use them here to save my own hide.

My father shakes his head.

"Stop this. Going to a dungeon alone won't do anything, and it will take time before you can get money."

My mother was the same.

"T, that's right. Besides, it's hard to find a floating island now. You won't be able to earn money."

When floating islands where people can live or floating islands with resources are discovered, they become property of adventurers. If one feels inclined to, they can potentially own that territory independently, but... there's no suitable islands remaining around this continent.

There shouldn't be any left, but I know of one.

"Sorry, I've decided on it. I'm going."

If I was alone, then running away would be fine, but my younger brother Colin is still nine years old.

I don't want to see my younger brother being sold off to perverts.

Sympathizing with my resolve, my father opened his mouth.

"Is there anything you need?"

I didn't hesitate to tell my father what I needed to gather. It's a little unreasonable to force this on him, but this is a critical moment that determines either my life or my death.

If I don't do anything, I'll end up as a plaything for a perverted old woman. There's a possibility that I might die doing about I'm about to do, but I'm going to take my chances.

"Something like a ship would work. An airship. After that, I need some bullets. A specially-made kind."

My father tilted his head.

"What in the world are you planning to do? Are you challenging a dungeon somewhere? In that case, a passenger ship should be fine."

"It's somewhere where passenger ships don't go."

I assemble the rifle.

Rifles are a bit odd in a world of swords and magic, but this is a world where airships exchange gunfire using cannons. Rifles are a normal thing here.

When I pulled the trigger, the rifle operated, and a metallic click sounded.

I was able to keep living somehow after reincarnating into this world. Since I was satisfied with my life day after day, I didn't do anything special.

However, as expected, even mobs have to give something up.

I'm going to have to decline a life of being a plaything.

That's why I'm going to fight.

I'll show them all the willpower of a mob.

"I understand. I'll prepare them as soon as possible. However, you absolutely must come back. If you can't promise me that, then I won't do it."

I intend to return, but I know that things are going to progress into a life and death situation.

So, I told a lie.

“...I’ll definitely return.”

I want to protect my life, save my brother’s life, and while I’m at it, outwit Zola. One day, I’ll get revenge on that wench who tried to sell me.

While my heart harbored such a strong feeling, I resumed my departure preparations.



“This is the first time worked this seriously.”

Though this is an otome game world, it’s still a game world.

It’s not just once or twice that I thought about using knowledge of the game to be unparalleled.

However, my motivation for it disappears with the exhaustion of my every day life.

I eat a simple meal. My father trains me in the morning, and I do farmwork afterwards.

It becomes dark by the time it’s over, and studying awaits me once I get back home.

In this world, barons from a remote and isolated island are poor.

Basically, many are poor compared to others in the cities of the mainland, but become even poorer because of women like Zola.

Rank ascension—there are many fathers who complained about how they used to be wealthy as semi-barons before they got promoted.

Naturally, there are rich barons too, and also affluent baron households that have wealth at an absurd level compared their previous generation.

As far as our home is concerned, if we remained at the scope of semi-barons, then the contributions we need to give would be suitably low, and we wouldn’t have to deal with a high-class wife like Zola, so our spending would reduce.

...Things really were peaceful when we hadn’t ascended in rank.

Heading to the edge of the floating island, I readied the bolt action rifle and pointed

the trigger at a very odd flying-fish thing I found.

The existences called monsters are evil beings of the world within this frivolous setting. Since they're evil, I don't feel a sense of repulsion in killing them to the point that it actually feels refreshing.

I suppose the fact that they vanish when you kill them is one of the reasons for that.

It's better to kill these things since they'll rush to attack a human if they find one.

However, what's gained by killing them is not visible to the eye, "Experience Points."

"Damn it! It dodged."

I soon loaded the next bullet into the rifle, set it up, and took a careful aim.

My opponent noticed me and was coming this way.

It's about one meter in size.

Normally, having the target come closer is better for shooting, but if it dodges and it turns into a close quarter combat, I'll die in the worst case scenario. Monsters are too dangerous of an opponent when they're alive.

I can fight because of this rifle.

However, bullets aren't free.

It'll be expensive if I just blow shot after shot.

The approaching monster opened its large mouth and tried to bite at me. There were sharp teeth along its mouth, and it was frightening to look at.

"If I run away from just this much... then my life will be done for!"

Until now, I had been thinking about trying to earn experience someday. I would become an adventurer, discover an island, and explore it. I would earn money—Right, I would do it "someday."

I had been thinking about it, but never did it until now.

However, with this current situation where I'm already short on time and I can't run away either, I was finally being pressed to move forward.

When I pulled the trigger, the bullet entered the monster's mouth and pierced through its back.

Losing its vigor, it then finally dropped down before me.

Looking at its condition, it had been engulfed in a black smoke and vanished before its descent reached the seawater.

"...Did I get experience points from this?"

I took a look at my left hand, but I didn't feel any sensation of the sort. Perhaps the game and reality really are different?

However, not gaining experience points is not a reason to stop. I needed to sharpen my shooting skills anyways.

Leaving the rifle aside, I won't be able to reach my destination without getting a boat, the kind that flies in the air, and the knowledge of operating it.

What I had been thinking about doing it someday was retrieving a cheat-class item, as it would be called in game terms. Among the paid content, if I acquire this thing, then negotiations would go by quickly.

I had also been pondering about the possibility that it isn't there.

Originally, it's an item, a treasure that the protagonist is supposed to obtain, among other such things, but my life is at stake here. This is a disservice to the protagonist, but I need to get that thing above all else.

I hold the rifle in both of my hands.

"I'll have to sacrifice the protagonist for the sake of my happiness. It'll be fine. According to my calculations, I'll be in the same grade as the protagonist. I'll return the favor someday to make up for it."

I had feelings of guilt, but an even stronger desire to not get sold off to a perverted old woman.

This is a crisis of my chastity.

“Is this how a woman being sent off to a perverted middle-aged man feels? Damn it! What’s with this world?”

I have little time available.

“It should have went for it sooner.”

I looked for monsters in the surroundings while in regret.

### 3

It was a month later.

This one small boat is surprisingly well built.

There’s a propeller attached to the engine, and it’s easy to operate.

I was on top of the boat.

I wore a robe that hid my body well from the sun, and put on the hood. Water, food, and some weapons to use were loaded aboard.

This amount is enough for a single person to do fine.

“It seems I asked for the unreasonable from my father as well.”

He didn’t just prepare a ship for me, but a sword and rifle. There a lot of other things too.

It wouldn’t be enough to only thank my parents.

I probably forced something very unreasonable by having them gather this much stuff.

The boat itself is basically like a small propeller engine attached to the stuff I’m carrying. Even so, preparing just this much is a hefty expense for poor nobles.

“All things considered, I wonder what kind of fantasy world has gas and electricity?”

Sitting while grasping the rifle close, I hold binoculars in my hand while looking at the surroundings.

I brought out a map and fetched a compass.

“I suppose it’s things like this that make it a fantasy.”

The compass shows the direction and which way to go. Along with a needle that points towards one’s direction, there’s also a needle that knows where the destination is.

Compasses with two needles are a thing here.

By setting up the location with a dial, it’s a handy tool that points towards the destination.

Since it was ten years ago, my memories of the game and such are fading, but right after recovering those memories I had written down coordinates. Well done, past me!

When I regained my memories, I had only delusions of running around as a cheat at the time, but I wasn’t able to start on anything because of the business of my daily life.

“I would have been better if I had started working hard long ago.”

It’s only human to have such thoughts like that yet not move. One could say that’s the type of person I am. Many times I’ve grumbled about things like this, regretting how I didn’t take action.

I had continued idling around day after day until I was pressed for time.

In the first place, my life here is tougher than my previous one.

I get up early in the morning, study during the night... farmwork is really severe. It’s normal for me to get to bed right after it’s all over and sleep just like that.

I was exhausted every day. I didn’t have the spare energy to do self-training, and I also didn’t have any special knowledge or skills. Being a cheat with reincarnation perks? If I had such things, then I won’t be going through hardships.

Being a cheat through knowledge from home? I don’t have such knowledge, and I wouldn’t know how to apply it to this world.

There was a scenery with occasional floating rocks.

“There’s the blue sea and sky... and also the white clouds, but I’m getting tired of just that.”

I grasp the rifle tightly while controlling myself from going insane.

I, who had been in my previous world, was thinking that perhaps if I commit suicide with this rifle, a better life would await me next—but I vigorously shook my head sideways.

“Even if I die alone, it wouldn’t resolve anything. Instead of me, it would be Colin that becomes victim to the perverts.”

I give up on that thought and raise my head.

The sun was radiant.

I had been thinking many times that perhaps I could try abandoning everything and running away.

However, this world is more dangerous than Japan from my previous life.

With monsters and thieves, one’s life is always at risk.

In my current situation, I’m flying out alone without even a means of economic security. I miss Japan from my previous world.

I’m getting fed up with this situation where I can’t find refuge.

“This world is harsh for mobs.”

I’ve been speaking to myself a lot, but I don’t care.

I’m done for if I come across sky pirates at a time like this.

With such a thought, I once again become cautious of my surroundings, and then a sudden wind blew strongly. The map made a a flapping sound.

The compass had been placed on top of the map to prevent a blowing wind from

sweeping it, but the needle pointing to the destination spun around.

“What?”

As I got up, the wind blew even stronger, and I had to resist it or else my body would topple over. I clutched a nearby handrail and scanned my surroundings, but the sea was calm.

The movement of the clouds was also normal.

It doesn't look like a storm or anything is happening.

As the boat proceeded, the sun was blocked by a shadow.

“—Something above?”

I glanced up, and there was a white cloud.

A large cloud.

I looked at it and clenched my left fist tightly.

There was something under the boat.

Looking at the sea, a part of it was shining green.

I slumped over, and hit myself on the forehead while bearing a smile.

“That's right, it's this thing—I've come across *that*! Perhaps it's because of the micro-transactions? Or perhaps it was here from the beginning? Well, it doesn't matter either way... I've hit it. I've struck the jackpot!”

I got up, spread both of my hands out wide, and looked up to the sky while raising a cry.

I really am thankful that this thing exists.

I had been thinking that it would be nice if it existed. I came here without too high expectations to confirm it, but—I hit the jackpot.

“Whoops, I still haven’t gotten my hands on it yet.”

Pulling myself together, I moved to the rear of the boat and operated the propeller mechanism.

I moved the boat close to the sea. Heading to the place that was casting light, the boat began to creak as it shook.

I lowered my body and clung on to the boat.

“Please work.”

Though I wasn’t operating the boat, it began vigorously rising. The force was too much for me to get up. I could only bear with it while I was on my knees.

The soaring boat was thrown entirely into a cloud, and my surroundings were pure white.

My body’s cold.

My clothes are wet.

I protected my rifle by tucking it under my robe, and I moved the boat while not being able to see anything in the cloud.

There was something sweeping from outside the cloud, and I moved the boat in the direction against it.

I moved to oppose the sweeping while not seeing anything, but it felt as if I was moving along the raging stream. Well, I’ve never experienced a raging stream, but anyways, a violent wind was blowing within the cloud.

The engine made a loud sound as it was being pushed to its limits. However, even that sound was being drowned out in the roar of the wind despite that I’m right next to it.

The two needles on the compass were spinning round and round, not serving to be of any use, and I was in state where I didn’t even know where I was.

Yet, I had no choice but to continue moving against the flow, and when I realized it, my body was drenched in water. It was cold to say the least.

My clothes, soaked with water, felt heavy.

The boat was somehow operating against the stream, but I was uneasy about if this would work. I was challenging a storm by myself, alone.

“I beg of you! I’ll ask again and again for my chances—!”

It’s been several tens of minutes, or perhaps several hours?

With my sense of time also being unclear, the overworked engine began to spout a fire.

“Wait! Wait a minute! If I get thrown out like this, it’ll be a disaster for—”

Instantly, the worst case scenario popped up into my head. In the next moment, the engine exploded and the propeller spun away while on fire.

The fire spread onto the wooden boat, and it suddenly began to shake while I was thinking that I needed to extinguish the flames.

The boat violently shook, pierced through the cloud, and was thrown out—then right there, a floating island covered by the cloud appeared.

Being ejected from the cloud, I resigned myself to my fate, but my eyes opened wide upon seeing the floating island. It’s something I’ve viewed many times in the game, but when seeing it in reality, it was grand.

The island was entangled with the roots of large trees, and was green from being wrapped up in nature.

Looking at the surface of the dirt, roots were also sticking out from it, and there was vegetation growing there.

“—How amazing.”

I gradually approached the island. Actually, I suppose it was my boat that was heading towards it.

I tried moving it in a panic, but since the engine was blown away, I couldn’t operate it. While I’m on the topic of the engine, it was also on fire and very dangerous.

“Are you serious!”

While approaching the surface of the floating island, I held onto my luggage and calculated the timing so that I could jump off the boat and escape.

Letting go of the luggage I was holding, I rolled over onto the surface and stopped when my back hit a large tree root.

The boat smashed into pieces when it hit crashed into the surface, and my luggage fell apart as it scattered around.

I got up in pain as I wiped my cold sweat.

“Ah, that was dangerous. It was risky to come here on boat.”

Things would have been easier had it been a larger airship, but we didn't enough money to buy one. While I'm talking about this, we've also run out of money from our loans.

“But, I managed to somehow arrive.”

My vision was still flickering. I hurried to gather my important luggage while holding my aching head.

Some of the luggage had been burned, but I'll be able to manage somehow with what's remaining.

I gathered the luggage in one place and collected wood from the burnt boat.

I arrived at my destination, but I lost my boat.

With this, I really can't escape.

There won't be a problem if I can retrieve “that” which is laying dormant in the island, but I won't be able to leave if “that” isn't there.

Sitting down to take a break, it seemed that quite a bit of time had passed.

The surroundings have begun to darken.

I took out food and water from my luggage to eat.

I ate some cracker-like food and washed it down with water into my stomach.

It was food that only served to fill the stomach rather than satisfy taste.

“If nothing’s here after I’ve come this far, then I can only laugh.”

Things will be busy starting tomorrow.

I start a bonfire using the broken pieces of wood from the boat and warm my cold body.

I checked the condition of my rifle and also looked for any abnormalities in my other equipment.

“It seems fine. All thing considered, it’s quite the relief that this thing is okay.”

Within the light of the bonfire, I count my bullets and load them into magazines.

The bullets I have are specially-prepared ones. A mark of a thunderbolt is inscribed on the surface, indicating that they’re different from normal bullets.

In terms of Japanese yen, a typical bullet goes for around 3,000 to 5,000 yen.

This is a special bullet—a magic bullet that can give rise to magic effects. These are fantasy bullets that can burst open a fire upon a direct hit, have a freezing effect, or other such things.

Due to that, the price for one shot effortlessly exceeds past 10,000 yen.

I have only feelings of gratitude to my parents who were able to gather these bullets in great numbers.

“If I make it back alive, then it seems I’m going to have to pay tribute to my parents... Come to think of it, I didn’t pay tribute to my parents back in my previous world.”

When I think about how I died before my parents did in my previous world, it would definitely make me seem like someone who didn’t respect their parents.

“I wonder what happened to my sister? I’d even be glad if she were here to give me just one insult.”

I still remember the day I woke up in this world, or rather, the day when I regained my memories. I miss having to do an otome game for my sister.

Thanks to that, I’ve been able to make use of the knowledge from this game, so I suppose it’d be better if I show gratitude towards her, maybe?

Then again, if she didn’t force this otome game onto me, I’m pretty sure I wouldn’t have died.

Is there anything missing?

Once I finished checking the rifle and bullets, I placed them beside me as I rested my back against the large tree root.

Since I’ve been living on a boat for quite some time, this was the first time I’ve laid down on the ground for a long while.

“...Why did I reincarnate into an otome game world? Normally, I would have reincarnated into the typical fantasy world of swords and magic. No wait, I’d prefer if it were my previous world. Right, it would have been better to reincarnate in Japan if possible.”

Thinking about it, it was quite lucky of me to have been in Japan, where monsters didn’t exist and sky pirates weren’t a thing.

While thinking as such, I closed my eyes.

“...I’ll have to... work hard tomorrow...”

The largest gamble in my life awaits me.

# Chapter 2

## Lost Item

### 1

An otome game world with a gentle setting.

Anyways, when a terrific item makes an appearance, they are called “lost items” in present time, and are impossible tools from ancient times being rediscovered.

Many of them are made with a lost technology and can't be newly made, so their rarity is high.

Among these lost items, there's even a item that only the protagonist can equip. It's a setting made for the protagonist to give off a special feeling.

This floating island I arrived at is the one where that very item is sitting at.

Advancing through the forest which didn't have any path maintenance, I wiped my sweat, unsheathed and readied my sword, then proceeded while cutting away at the grass and branches.

Just moving forward alone is a pain.

The ground's all mushy, and I've fallen over many times.

“It would have been better if I had my hatchet.”

Advancing through the forest, I progressed by cutting away grass and branches while thinking about how much easier it would have been to have a hatchet. I brought one along, but when I got thrown out, the handle broke and it was no longer useful.

“I wasn't supposed to use this sword for anything other than training.”

This is more or less the mindset of nobles.

I'd wake up early in the morning and train the basics under my father's guidance. Noble houses would employ a mentor or a tutor, but poor nobles don't really have the leeway to hire someone.

I look at my surroundings.

I'm aiming for the center of the island, but it's taking a long time to get there, unlike how it was in the game. As expected, it seems that the game and reality are different.

To start with, traveling along a path that hasn't been maintained is hard.

I can't be careless about the snakes, insects, and other living creatures, but above all, the most dangerous thing is—

“It's here again.”

I complained in a low voice while hiding.

I crouch down onto the ground and conceal myself as the enemy passes by.

This enemy isn't a monster.

It's a round robot with full body armor that travels by floating along. It doesn't have any feet, and it moves by floating in the air with a bit of a tottering manner.

It's a machine that's characterized by its long arms and pointed hat on its head, and is a robot that's tasked with defending its base—the island.

It seems that it periodically makes rounds within the forest.

While staying still and holding my breath, I pray that I don't get discovered.

Confirming that the machine had passed by me, I get up and quickly leave the scene.

“I was spared from being torn apart.”

Since this operating machine is protecting a base that is already devoid of people, it holds a strangely lonely setting, but getting caught will be a disaster.

The robot has continued to run since ancient times to protect the island, and has

broken or rusted parts here and there. Since it hasn't been able to find me, I suppose it's half-broken.

"I want to hurry and get to that base."

There's a base within the floating island.

It's the base where the lost item is residing, but robots are guarding it.

The setting didn't explain this in detail.

Within the game, it was a place to gather useful late-game items. In short, it was the point where you could get the microtransaction items.

Though there was a chance for the protagonist and co. to get kicked out, it was the moment where one could get those items.

I proceeded through the forest while cautious, and came across a building after walking for several kilometers.

The building was entangled with ivy, and grown trees were sprouting through the roof, making it look worn out.

It was probably left untouched for a very long time.

It's a bizarre scene that resembled what I saw in the game, but it feels fresh when seeing it in real life.

"...Now this is proof that I've reincarnated here."

I had been thinking that perhaps these recalled memories were actually just delusions... that I was only under the impression that I reincarnated. I've thought about it many times. It was also possible that I was only seeing this world as the world of that game.

While in relief that I haven't gone mad, I entered the building with caution.

The defensive equipment in the building is broken, and most objects were immobile due to tree roots and ivy.

It was a building made of concrete.

There was electrical equipment implanted into the walls.

It all resembled objects from the world I know about, and I can feel a sense of familiarity too.

“Old buildings like this are sometimes treated as dungeons, weren’t they?”

There are old buildings like this on floating islands, where adventurers would gain treasure there and accumulate a fortune.

Nobles would find new islands like this and then would be praised if they conquer a dungeon. They take pride in being the descendants of great adventurers.

“It could also be said that they’re breaking into historical sites, though.”

Adventurers plunder treasures from precious historical sites. Sometimes they’ll nonchalantly destroy historically valuable things for the sake of fortune.

Looking at it another way, they’re destroyers and looters.

“Well, I would do the same for the sake of not getting sold off to perverted old women. I wouldn’t say that in front of people, though.”

Continuing along the pathway, I discovered an open door.

However, there was a swaying, floating machine in the passage—a robot tasked with defending had turned my way and noticed me.

It’s a miracle that these nearly-broken robots can move, and I shed a tear thinking about how they’ve been guarding a base that nobody will return to.

However, I have a rifle.

“Sorry about this.”

Having made an apology to the machine that’s been protecting the institution up until now, I pulled the trigger.

The bullet hit the robot, and it electrically discharged at the point of impact.

A sprout of light instantly burst out, and the robot fell onto the floor. The flickering light in its eyes then vanished.

I stay on alert while holding the rifle, but it doesn't appear to be coming back. There aren't any other enemies coming to the scene either.

Confirming the effect of the bullets, I was relieved that the facility and robots were partly broken.

"It's just like the game. It's good that I remembered their weak points. Now then, I wonder if it's this way—"

The special lightning effect on these magic bullets does a number on the robots. Since they're tasked with defense, they should at least have had lightning resistance installed, but that's fantasy for you... along with the world of an otome game. There's no use talking about minor details.

I move forward, relying on my memories, towards the open door.

It was half-open from the tree roots and ivy.

"Was it like this in my memories? Well, it's going according to the game."

When entering the room, the skeleton of a corpse tumbled over.

It wore tattered fabrics of what used to be clothing, and put its hands together in a prayer pose.

I took out a flat card from its pocket-like thing.

What I took out was the card key. I wonder if this was also an ID, as someone's name was written here with the alphabet. The photo has vanished from the deterioration, and only a portion of the letters are left, so I don't know this person's full name.

"This is the alphabet, right? I'm sensing something strange."

I did not expect to see the alphabet in another world.

I put the card key into my pocket and resume moving.

There's a place within the game where a microtransaction item resides. I've stopped by this island many times to get this item for the purpose of completing the game.

However, my memories from ten years ago could be unreliable. I would have forgotten the coordinates for this floating island if I hadn't written them down right after I regained my memories.

It's frightening thinking about how I would have had to rely on my fuzzy memory if I didn't write anything down.

The anxiety and fear from setting out into the sky alone... is something I don't want to experience twice.

When I searched for a room that could be opened with a card key and showed it to a device that then opened a door, there was a place that seemed like a break room.

Rusted and worn-down vending machines stood out.

One of them had collapsed, and the goods inside had spilled out.

When picking them up by hand, they crumbled away like sand.

There were two skeletons corpses sitting on a sofa.

"...I didn't care about it when this was a game, but what in the world happened here?"

A part of the ruined base was still operating. Thinking about how a civilization with such technological strength had perished... makes me feel a bit uneasy.

"Well, my top priority is getting what I need."

Of the two skeleton corpses, one had the key I needed for moving ahead.

I left the room after getting the key, and headed towards my destination. What lies in store after this are defense robots of a different type.

"Come to think of it, this fellow was here too."

It was a multi-legged robot that was missing a few legs, making it immobile. However, it was in the way, blocking the passage, and the also had weapons to protect what's ahead from intruders.

While hiding in the corner, I shoot the rifle, and the impact of the bullet turned into a flash of light, but—the defense robot came alive and began counterattacking with a Gatling gun held in its hands.

It was only the Gatling gun that was moving. However, that alone is enough of a threat. Whether broken or not, it's a relief that its aim isn't locked onto me.

“Woah there!”

As I hid in the corner, I load the next bullet with the bolt action mechanism, and attack with the rifle while still hiding.

So as to not present myself, I use a mirror to look at the situation while attacking in concealment. It may be cowardly, but tackling this in the first place is like poking a wasp nest.

Due to the opponent being broken, it isn't fighting back since it can't move and fix its sight on me. If this thing was maintained and replenished, then I'd immediately be in the heat of the wasp nest.

What I was thinking as I released shot after shot was—

“Shoot! It's too sturdy. To make matters worse—damn it! I was off again!”

Calculating the consumption of bullets in my head, this is taking up an outrageous amount of money.

Since I'm shooting it with a bad posture, the shots aren't hitting, and to add insult to injury, when they do hit, the thing is still operating. After numerous shots, the thing finally stopped functioning, and once I checked, it turned out that I used up nearly thirty bullets.

Thinking about how it was in the game, it should have only taken around ten shots...

“Perhaps things really have changed now that this is real?”

I refocused my mind and afterwards, I headed to my destination while keeping a lookout and keeping company with defense robots. I kept moving forward, aiming for the core of the base.

When I realized it, only a few of the bullets I brought were left.

I proceeded through the dim passage, with only a fragment of light remaining, and then I finally arrived at the location of my objective.

I use the key to open a door.

I continued on through a staircase leading to the basement.

I couldn't see anything in the darkness, so I fetched out a lantern and turned on the light.

“If electricity exists, I'd at least like there to be flashlights.”

This is a world where light bulbs exist, but no flashlights. Due to that, they still use lanterns. I descended the stairs while raising a complaint.

Within the dark passage, there were occasionally fallen human bones that provoked a sense of fear.

I don't know what went on in this place, but if possible, I'd like quickly get I came for and go home.

“Even so... this is going completely according to my memories.”

It's the place where the microtransaction item I bought resides—reaching into my memory, what's ahead is a large room intertwined with tree roots and ivy.

That large room is the dock of an airship.

Grasping the rifle tightly with both of my hands, I walked while being cautious. Many of the places to accommodate airship docks are empty while ivy and tree roots stick out and dangle.

Even for the airships that are here, they're entangled with a lot of ivy and tree roots. What's more, moss is sticking onto the surfaces.

Also, all of the airships are broken.

Among them, a noticeably large space had been prepared for the thing I'm here for. It's on a whole other level in size compared to the other airships.

“—There's no mistake that it's this one.”

It was the only airship that maintained its original form, and was green from the ivy and branches entangling it, along with the moss sprouting. However, not everything was covered, and the gray armor was visible in one spot.

I shuddered.

“It's really here! It really is!”

## 2

I slowly put my feet on the ramp and made sure that it wouldn't break as I approached the airship.

The entrance isn't showing signs of opening with ivy being tangled with it, so I took out my sword and severed them. Then, once I opened the entrance with the card key, I entered the ship's—no, the warship's interior.

Unlike the outside, it was still beautiful and lacked ivy or moss.

It's classified as an airship that can become a flying battleship. No wait, it's a spaceship, so I suppose it's a cosmic battleship? At any rate, the design of the warship's interior was very futuristic. It seems to have come from a whole different universe... especially compared to the game it appears in.

“The interior isn't visible in the game, so this is the first time I'm seeing it. I wonder if it was like this there?”

I'm estimating the size to be around seven hundred meters, making it an enormous cosmic battleship. It's questionable whether something this large can fly, but this is a world where islands and continents can float.

Among them, some of the smaller islands have even been remodeled to become

airships. I've heard that their size easily surpasses one thousand meters, and they're like a mobile fortress.

I can't really make a comparison here since I haven't actually seen them, but this is a world where it's not strange for something of this size to fly.

It seems that in this world, something of this magnitude is indeed large, but not rare.

On the outside, it basically has an engine that's like a square box on both sides of the machine's rear. Its aerodynamic body means that its head is pointed forward, so when looking at it from up top in the game—its graphic looks like an isosceles triangle with squares attached to both sides.

The shape itself is simple, with no propellers on the deck, sail, or anything of that sort.

The shapes of airships in this world vary.

A common airship is shaped like a rugby ball. Honestly, it seems that there isn't really a fixation towards the shape, probably since the level of difficulty in making an airship is low.

It's easy to make it float in the first place. Hence, people tend to develop airships and then adventure around or do something else.

...As I move through the warship's interior, the lights automatically turned on, so I shut off my lantern.

After coming this far, there's only one obstacle remaining.

I intend to make it to the spaceship's center and get it to move.

As I moved along this incredibly lengthy passage, I could only hear the sound of my own footsteps. Then, a door to my goal appeared, and I came to a halt while wiping my sweat.

While tense, I checked the status of my rifle and confirmed whether there were bullets loaded into the magazines.

I adjusted my breathing.

“...Time to move.”

I brace myself, open the door, and head inside.

It was the central facility of the spaceship—the place where everything is controlled, the core. A very spacious area had been arranged here.

In the middle of the room, a humanoid robot, whose upper-half rose from the floor, was waiting.

It had a large body.

Its head had a simple shape, and within its visor were camera-eyes that glowed red.

A startup sound resounded within the room.

I readied my rifle.

[...Intruder detected. Exterminate... exterminate...]

The robot slowly came alive, and its size was about six meters. Its large hands moved to try and catch me, so I pulled the trigger on my rifle.

However, the impact only let out a small explosion on the surface of its armor, and emitted a flash—that was it.

“So it really is going to be hard.”

When I loaded the next bullet, the ejected cartridge made a metallic clank as it hit the floor.

“Will you not permit me if I show it a key card?”

As I held the faint hope that it wouldn't stop me if I had one of the base members' key card, the robot in front of me replied in a calm tone.

[The card key you own is from a base staff member. Your body features do not match the member, nor any of the other staff members. Additionally, it has been judged that the survival of the owner, and the people of this base, is hopeless. Therefore, you are an intruder—exterminate.]

“Thanks for the honest reply, at least!”

I had heard a synthesized electronic voice. I did not expect it to be able to hold a conversation. I think it’s a bit surprising how direct its answer was, but I don’t have the leisure to care about that right now.

The next shot was on the mark, but it likewise didn’t deal that much damage.

I ran to escape its arms that extended out.

When I took a cylindrical object attached to my belt, pulled out its pin, and threw it, the opponent tried to ward it off with one hand.

However, when trying to do so, it exploded on impact.

It brought forth an electrical shock stronger than what the bullets could do, and the robot opponent temporarily halted. Fumes were coming from its joints.

“Alright!”

While I was being glad that I hadn’t missed, the visor on the robot’s head shined.

[Attacks from “magic” have reached critical levels. Now activating magic barrier.]

A faint light sprung out from its body to wrap it, as if protecting it entirely.

Even when I fired shot after shot, it completely repelled the magic electrical attacks. Electricity doesn’t even come out on impact, and there’s no damage.

“How cowardly!”

The robot replied in response to my cry.

[Thank you.]

Though I was surprised that it thanked me, I switched magazines and readied my rifle.

“Are you broken? You kinda just thanked me.”

While I was shooting bullet after bullet with the rifle, it seemed that the movements

of the opponent dulled a bit.

[Fighting cowardly is a compliment. That's what I've been taught, is that wrong?]

"It's wrong! Why are do you have countermeasures against magic!"

This thing didn't have magic barriers in the game. I've been cheated here.

[Simple answer. I cannot say that I understand magic, but analyzing and preparing countermeasures is natural, no?]

"You sure are bright! Chatty too!"

While running around in the room, I continue pulling the trigger to attack consecutively. I've been searching for a weak point, but I can't see one.

If I ask, will it tell me?

[It's been a very long time since I've spoken like this, I may be in a state of excitement.]

I'm wondering what this machine is talking about, but this cheat-level spaceship is a lost item.

The culmination of ancient technology, a microtransaction item I bought for one thousand yen... it's a bit odd that this was one thousand yen, but anyways, there's no doubt that it's a potent weapon.

It wouldn't be strange for there to be an AI, but I didn't think it could converse. Perhaps it's because the setting for this wasn't established in the game.

I take another cylinder from my waist—a hand grenade.

[Is that possibly a hand grenade with magic effects? There will be no effect on my current—]

"Idiot!"

I throw it, take a distance, and stoop down.

The enemy didn't try to defend against it.

However, when the grenade hit the robot opponent, it made a large explosion that was unlike the previous one. I tumbled over to the corner of the room from the blast, but I soon got up.

Black smoke sprung out into the room, and visibility soon worsened.

“That’s just an ordinary bomb. Tremendous power, right? I was hesitant on using it because it could have destroyed the ship.”

I’m going to use this spaceship later. It would have been better for there to be as few scratches as possible, so I didn’t want to use it.

Within the smoke-filled room, I lowered my rifle.

“This is only a fragment of the trump cards I have. Even in the game, my power was quite——”

While thinking that this was it was over, a large hand then reached out from the black smoke and easily caught me.

The impact made me drop my rifle, so I took out my sword and thrust it at the robot’s fingers. However, the blade only chipped and it didn’t cause any damage.

Being grabbed this forcefully was very painful.

“L, let go——”

[——I was surprised. That was just a powerful grenade? Since you all are so obsessed with magic, I didn’t think that you would use weapons like this. What an interesting battle.]

A portion of the robot opponent’s armor was torn off, exposing what’s inside. The infrastructure, motor, and other such parts were visible.

As it grasped me, it brought its face closer while looking at me.

[Your way of fighting is quite different from those in the past. That rifle is surprising, but I have an interest in those bullets. Incorporating magic into them is a fascinating concept.]

Using its camera lenses within its visor, it kept magnifying and retracting while looking at my face, moving frequently.

I couldn't escape, and the strength of its hand used to seize me was gradually getting stronger.

It threw a question at me as I was struggling.

[Question. What year is it in terms of the solar calendar?]

"Agh! Solar calendar? As if I know! In terms of the Holfault Kingdom calendar... Gaaaah!!"

Electricity sprouted from the robot opponent's hand, and my body turned numb from the agony as I yelled in pain.

Losing control, I acted violently to try and get away, but it wasn't likely that I would escape anyhow.

[That answer is plenty. We had asked the same question many times... but we were defeated all the same.]

I was exhausted once the electric current ended, and the robot's motion ceased. I was trembling and I couldn't close my mouth, so I wiped my drool with the hand I was using to hold my sword.

"D, defeated? We? What are you talking—"

Were there even opponents that could make a cheat-level battleship lose?

[...This is about the new human race. The former civilization had been destroyed in the past before the advent of the new human race with overwhelming magic power.]

New human race?

Is this part of the game-like setting? Did the otome game include such a setting? I'm a little concerned. I wanted to deal with this simply, I wanted to be spared of any new facts when coming here.

Well, such a thing has nothing to do with me. I need to get out of here somehow.

[And you are a descendant of the new human race. You are the enemy for me.]

I suddenly heard a low voice akin to an electronic-sound. It was as if the voice was trying to label me as an enemy and eliminate me.

“T, that had a lot of emotion. Let’s talk about this for a second—hey, w, wait! Augh!”

I heard a sound that I should not have heard coming from my body as the large hand continued constricting me. The sound of it gradually grew stronger.

[Exterminate the enemy... exterminate...]

Things were no longer in a state where we could talk.

It seemed that the robot was trying to crush me at once after having taken a large amount of damage. However, on the contrary, it only resulted in my prolonged suffering.

I don’t know if that’s good luck or bad luck, but I’ve decided on what I have to do.

“Y, you... you’re just dragging out an old feud.”

[Our mission is not over. It is our maximum priority to exterminate the new human race. The orders were to be on standby at this base, but to exterminate if new human race beings come. At this point, many of the new human race had come to this base. And looking at you now, it’s obvious that they are weakening... I will now launch an attack to destroy the new descendants of the new human race—]

There have been adventurer’s that have come to this island before?

Leaving that aside, if this thing gets out there and goes on a rampage, my family is going to be erased.

Doesn’t this make me the one who woke this dormant thing up?

It’s fine if that Zola is gone, but it’s definitely repulsive if my parents, my older brother, and my younger brother disappear.

I bit on a pin within the hilt of the sword on my right hand, pulled it out, and pointed the blade at the robot.

Then—

“Go to hell... piece of junk.”

Once I activated the mechanism, the blade flew, stuck itself into the visor of the robot, and then burst into a flash of lightning. Since the electricity flowed into its internals, the damage was likely huge.

The head of the robot blew away with a small explosion, and the visor broke apart as it flew off. I don't mind that a piece scraped past my cheek, causing blood to come out.

The hand lost its power, releasing me as I dropped onto the floor. Hitting the floor is painful, but being released made it easier to breathe and I'm relieved that I was able to escape from harm. I don't know what's what anymore.

While coughing violently, I moved on my hands and knees to retrieve my rifle.

The robot had dull movements, and its behavior turned strange.

Pushing myself up with the rifle, I then thrust the muzzle towards the visor.

“I don't need to have sympathy for you. I have my own circumstances. Be silent, lay down, and accept what's coming to you.”

I pull the trigger. Then I loaded a bullet again and pull the trigger once more. Each time I repeated, the robot tried to reach out and grab me with its hand, but—

“—It's over.”

I repeated this many times until my magazine became empty and the robot stopped moving.

### 3

There's an electrical discharge from all sorts of parts, revealing that it was in a pretty bad condition. Black fumes rose from the gaps in the armor.

However, I could hear an electronic sound—a robotic voice.

[...Are you trying to use me? That's impossible.]

The robot isn't moving, it was the the control panel within the room that booted up. In the game, it was possible to register yourself as the master for this thing.

"How annoying. I only came here to get a microtransaction item. Just be silent and abide."

I don't know if the microtransaction item I bought is here or not. However, there's no future for me or this world if I don't obtain it.

[I will choose to self-destruct rather than have the new human race snatch things away.]

"If you're going to self-destruct, then I'll take you under my control. An explosion would also be annoying. I'm not here to die."

While performing my operations, I change the alphabet letters on the screen to Japanese.

*"What a nice convenience! This will make things easier to operate."*

I spoke in Japanese, the language that I had long missed.

The goal is right in front of me... the thing I'm here to accomplish is just a little bit ahead, making my tension rise.

I carried out my actions, then what opened on part of the control panel was the register for the spaceship's owner, the master.

Guidelines that indicated where to put my hands lit up.

[Japanese...? You can read it? You people shouldn't be able to use Japanese.]

Listening carefully, the sound was coming from the speaker in the room. It seems it wasn't coming from the robot.

It appeared that the robot had an interest in me.

I cracked a joke while placing my hands on the control panel.

*“My soul is of a genuine Japanese person. Justice for me is rice and miso soup every morning. Well, I’ve never eaten those here, though.”*—Perhaps you didn’t know what I just said, actually.”

This thing probably won’t understand even if I introduce myself as a reincarnated person. I think that if I say such a thing to other people, they’ll make a bitter smile while taking a distance from me.

[Soul? Is this the concept of transmigration?]

*“So you do understand what I’m saying? Right, that’s what it is. Probably.”*

I feel a bit glad having a conversation in Japanese after such a long time.

The control panel checked my genetic information from my palms, the registration for the master finished, and then began scanning as my whole body was wrapped in a red light.

As soon as the scan finished, the robot asked me another question.

[It’s confirmed from your genetic information that there are indeed traces of a Japanese individual. However, you are of the new humans. At the same time, you have inherited the genes of the the former humans. How perplexing. It is not feasible.]

*“Is that so? Though, with this, the ship is mine now, right?”*

[Indeed. From today, this spaceship is your property. Do you want to name it?]

I think for a bit.

Naming it wasn’t something I could do in the game.

“I can’t think of a good name. In the game, it was ‘Luxon’ though.”

[Luxon... it has been documented.]

*“So you’re not going to self-destruct. That’s a relief.”*

Being extremely exhausted, I sat down on the spot after everything was over. I was able to hazily see the room through the smoke that came from the battle.

I held the rifle in my hands, along with its wooden stock—the gun’s stock had detached.

When it’s like this, I can’t use it without repairing it.

*“The present from my parents is battered.”*

I sighed while staring up at the ceiling.

[If you have the soul of a Japanese person, does that mean you have memories of the war?]

*“The war? I don’t have any. In the first place, I was born during a period of peace, and I was an office worker there. I don’t have any experiences of war... Now that I think about it, my previous life was quite the blessing.”*

Even now I miss my previous world... I want to go back to it if I can.

The smoke gradually cleared up, likely due to the ventilation in the room.

It seems that what I wanted was someone to talk about my story to. I told the details of my reincarnation to my AI partner.

*“So do you get it? This insane world is the world of an otome game.”*

[Otome game?]

*“It’s something like a love simulation game.”*

I talked about how it started—the time period it was, and how I came to reincarnate. Then, I talked about how this world is that otome game world.

*“Surprised?”*

[I am impressed by your delusions. However, you speaking Japanese is not something that can come from a delusion. If I were to describe my thoughts in one word, that word would be... interesting.]

*“I’m surprised as well. Besides, I think that your existence itself is proof too. The fact that I know about you and that I was able to find you here is proof that this world is of a game, right?”*

[I'm hearing absurd things from you. To begin with, shouldn't there be others that would recognize this world as a game?]

*"Just leave the minor details alone. I don't like dealing with bothersome things. Anyhow, I can't really think of an answer to that, so this is just becoming a waste of time."*

As I continued to talk while exhausted, I started coughing.

When I covered my mouth, I noticed blood coming onto my glove.

*"...Am I injured somewhere? Not good. I have to return."*

As my body slowly collapsed, I heard a voice.

[Leon Fou Balfault—Confirmed that the master's life is in critical condition. Transfer to medical office will—]



It's been three months since Leon's departure.

Zola had arrived at the Balfault household and spoke about unpleasant things.

She entered Barcus' workroom, and from the morning, had him and even Luce sit down while she criticized them.

*"This marriage proposal I took great pains to arrange is ruined, that child really is an idiot. He flew out alone and selfishly got himself killed."*

She clutched Barcus' hand in annoyance.

When Luce had been told that her son may have died, her mood clearly darkened. For that very reason, Zola didn't stop her tormenting.

She knew what it was doing to her and continued to do it.

*"At this rate, we'll have to settle for the next son. Well, even at an age like that, he should still be able to do housework."*

Barcus interrupted.

“Colin? That child isn’t even ten years old. Besides, it’s possible that Leon may come back.”

Zola laughed scornfully.

“Are you seriously saying that? It’s been three months since he left, three months. It would be strange if he were still alive. Oh, right. It’s possible that he may have run away by himself. Good grief, this is why rural noble children are nuisances. Does he not know about my chivalry?”

The Holfault’s chivalries swear loyalty to a figurehead or a leader.

For knights, it would be the ruler of the country.

For retainer knights, they pledge allegiance to a feudal lord or the head of their household, and are taught to live nobly and righteously.

Daily training and living modestly and frugally are regarded as virtues.

They are knights of honor that would certainly put their lives at risk for the sake of their loyalty.

Fighting for the sake of the country is an honor... for the ideal knight.

To put it simply, chivalries are groups of convenient subordinates for leaders.

In recent years, there have also been chivalries with knights that protect women and put their lives on the line for them. Originally, the swords and shields to protect the powerless citizens were the chivalries, but the situation changed as time progressed.

Seeing Luce’s crying face, Barcus went to her side and placed a hand on her shoulder. The two looked like a married couple.

That irritated Zola.

(How insolent. I was the one who married this rural feudal lord! I cannot allow such a sight of intimacy before my eyes.)

The presence of Luce, the mistress, annoyed her.

Due to that, she had been struck with the idea of selling Luce's sons and daughters to people in the royal capital that didn't have a partner.

(In the first place, the one that will succeed this baron household is my son, Lutart. The other children are unnecessary. Everyone else can be sold off to make way for Lutart and Merce.)

Upon which, a frantic voice was heard in the room.

The still-immature Colin opened the door using all of his strength, and tried to say something while out of breath.

"Colin, you should remain in your room. You didn't even knock at the—"

While Barcus was giving him a warning, Colin kept opening and closing his mouth while pointing at the window.

Everyone looked outside the window to see a shadow that was able to block the sun.

When Barcus opened the window to look outside in unease—

"What kind of ship is that?"

There was a giant airship that had halted above the residence.

Zola drew back.

"W, where? What ship?!"

There was a panic as to whether it was a sky pirate, a fief, or an airship from another kingdom coming to attack. However, if that was the case, then there was something weird about the situation.

From a large airship, a smaller one, about twenty meters, descended.

Leon's figure was visible in it.

The airship carried a mountain of gold and silver treasures, an amount that was incredible even when looking at a distance.

Leon got down onto the garden of the residence, and waved his hand.



“Father! I came back as promised. Take a look at this treasure!”

Leon burst into laughter in front of the mountain containing gold, silver, and jewels. The exact value of it couldn't be calculated, but if they were the real deal, then it would definitely be an unthinkable amount of money.

Luce broke down crying on the spot.

“My child, suddenly returning after no contact with him... what a relief.”

She smiled while either happy or sad.

Barcus hurriedly rushed out of the room in confusion and headed towards Leon.

Zola kept her eye on the treasure Leon had from the window.

Upon which, Leon held a triumphant smile. He faced towards Zola and mouthed the words “I win.”

Zola made an unpleasant expression while clutching strongly at the windowsill.

“T, that stupid brat...”

Once Barcus reached Leon, he embraced him while crying. He cried in joy while calling him an idiot.

Zola became irritated and exited the room.

(Well, that's fine. It's not bad if I think about that treasure becoming mine. I'll just have him work for me from now on. I'll take all of your earnings. It'll be me who gets the last laugh.)

Once Zola left the corridor, she met with an elf servant who was waiting for her, and headed out.



I raised a smile in front of Zola while she made a bitter face.

Not only did I bring treasure, but a spaceship—err, airship. When she realized that

this was mine, she soon came over to try and make me hand it over, but before that, I gave a sound argument to silence her.

“The contract between you and my father has no relation to me. Since I’m fifteen years old, and thus an adult, I completed my registration as an adventurer. You catch my drift? The treasure I find is my property, and not my father’s.”

My father was about to say something, but my mother stopped him.

Zola nevertheless talked back.

“That’s treasure you gained with your parents’ money! What are you doing showing it off as if it’s yours?!”

I reply in a calm manner.

Knowing her, I had a hunch that she would say something like this.

In the Holfault Kingdom, there’s a tightly protected law about the ownership of treasure obtained by adventurers.

That’s due to this country being founded by adventurers.

“I’m fine with being insulted by my parents, but not by you. Oh, you can have this.”

I hand her a suitcase of gold bars while grinning.

I’ve got a tremendous amount of treasure behind me, but what I gave to Zola is really just a tiny fraction of it. By all rights, coming across bars of gold is a lot of money by itself, but she was not grateful about it at all.

Knowing that, I consciously had put the treasures in the back.

Zola did not give up.

“H, how is such shoddy logic like that going to suffice?! This treasure is going to be under the control of Barcus anyways, right? In that case, that’s property of the Baltfault household. I have the right to own it!”

I shrugged my shoulders.

Then I talked about something I had consulted about with Luxon before.

“You’re talking about it becoming the property of this household, right? Since I’m already an adult, I am an independent adventurer. Perhaps you don’t know that I can manage my own property now? Though, I do need to contribute to my household, right? So, I’ve been thinking about investing these assets towards the territory. Don’t you think it would be a good cause towards harbor maintenance or something akin to that?”

It felt nice seeing Zola furrow her eyebrows and scowl at me.

If I just transfer the money or fortune to my household, it would definitely be in Zola’s rights to take it. However, if I’m the one in control of the money and I invest it—an investment towards the development of the territory isn’t something she can take.

She can’t tear off a portion of a built road or harbor and take it with her.

Perhaps understanding that she was at the disadvantage, Zola withdrew.

She took her elf lover and returned to her room in the mansion.

I roared with laughter once looking at her back.

My father hit me on the back.

“Idiot. You went too far. What are you trying to do by provoking her?”

“That woman was trying to sell me off to a perverted old lady. I think I should be excused for just this much. Anyways, what do you think about this mountain of treasure. Amazing, right?”

My parents were certainly astonished looking at all the treasure I accumulated.

“Well, it’s honestly amazing. However, did you report this to the guild?”

I nodded and explained.

The Adventurer’s Guild is an official establishment from the country, so though they’re called a guild, they’re not really an independent organization.

It seems that they decided to call it a guild in the past. This lackluster setting is troubling.

“Of course. Thanks to that though, the country took away a portion of it.”

From twenty percent of the fortune I presented to them, the country took thirty percent of that.

However, the remaining treasure is all mine.

“I’ll buy you back a new boat in place of the one I broke. Perhaps I could send an airship to you as a present.”

My mother was a bit amazed in front of my lavish self.

“You, you aren’t thinking about saving some for the future? With this much, you can be independent.”

After having said that to me, I straightened up and looked at the two.

“There’s actually something about that I have to talk about.”

I talked with my parents about what will happen hereafter.

# Chapter 3

## Enrollment

### 1

I came across a floating island.

There was nothing particularly prominent on this small island.

At a small mountain there was a forest and a river on the level ground section which was spacious.

When I found it, it was an overly featureless floating island, but this is where I decided to hold my independent territory.

One of the reasons for picking this is that no matter how much it develops, it'll only be at the scale of a semi-baron, but more importantly, this is an unpopulated island where nobody lived, so I made it mine.

Wouldn't that be the best for the future, or rather, the rest of my life?

I'll graduate from the academy, become a feudal lord, and then be a shut-in under the pretext of developing the land.

I can let the servants look after my family while I leisure around here.

On the lower part of the island is a dock where I can hide my airship.

It's where I store Luxon.

Paper mache was heavily plastered onto Luxon, which would be used to start the modelling for the construction of a new airship.

The ones making it are robots built for manufacturing.

A red one-eyed orb with a metallic body was floating near me.

It was about the size of a softball.

“Is it really necessary to make a mock one?”

[All of this preparation is necessary. Besides, I cannot deny the possibility that the woman named Zola might do something.]

Luxon said it was going to self-destruct before, but when it realized that I could speak Japanese, it started following me under its interest.

Quite the simple fellow.

“Apart from that, what’s the situation of the island?”

[There is a mineral filled with heat in this floating island. It’s possible to make a hot spring by pumping water through it. It seems income can be earned by making it a tourist attraction in the future.]

“I’m not interested in tourist attractions, but a hot spring is good.”

My parents seemed surprised when I said that I would be living independently on an empty island. Land development is a plain, but difficult job.

They asked many times if I knew what I was doing, but I didn’t give up on becoming independent. In the end, they backed down said for me to tell them if anything troubling happened, but... in the first place, with Luxon here, development is not a problem.

This thing is definitely a versatile and capable fellow.

What’s amazing is that since in the game’s frivolous setting, it was an item for “making resupplying unnecessary,” Luxon can prepare any resources now that it’s become real.

It can’t create something out of thin air, but it seems that this thing can even turn the surrounding rocks into gold.

With such a cheat ability, I can’t fathom how they lost to the new humans.

However, after listening to its story, it seems that Luxon booted up when the functions of the base were almost nearly gone. It was waiting and on standby for orders, but it

seemed it would try and gather information when the descendants of new humans, the adventurers, occasionally arrived.

That's the reason why it understood our language.

That doesn't matter now, though.

With how capable Luxon is, I'm heading smoothly towards independence without being sold off to perverted old women. It's all about the results.

[We have begun construction of the estate, and have moved forward on the development of a harbor. The surface is also expected to be comfortable in a year or so.]

It would be terrible to leave this territory unmaintained. The ground is uneven, it's overgrown with vegetation, and it's not something I'd call comfortable.

Being able to make it habitable in a year is one of Luxon's many abilities.

Its performance is something I can't imagine was just one thousand yen in my previous life.

I regret not having spent more on the game, but having just Luxon itself is still most satisfactory.

"I have a request. I still have a bad experience with adventuring. I had to save my own hide many times just looking for you as a mob. I just want to live a peaceful life without its ups and downs now."

[I will respect my master who has obtained my ability and wholeheartedly decides to be a shut-in. No ambitions, and selfish. An admirable human.]

"Was that sarcasm?"

[Cynicism.]

I flicked Luxon.

It seems that its hard exterior is covered by a relatively soft material, as it didn't hurt that much. It floated back to its original position.

[Aside from that, were you able to prepare for your entry to the academy?]

I shrugged my shoulders while replying to Luxon's question.

"It's done. I got a lot from the merchants congratulating me for my entry, so I didn't need to prepare anything. My father was quite surprised at how friendly they became."

[It's because the economic activity of the territory has risen. Perhaps new humans are the same in that merchants are honest with money...]

I spread the funds from the treasure I got towards developing a harbor and developing the territory of the household.

I started with repaying the debt of the household, and the island became more lively once I invested into the stagnating territory. The economic activity was going well, so the merchants gathered and handed presents to my household.

The territory became quite prosperous in a few months.

"All things considered, is there a meaning to going to an academy?"

[Outward appearance, the implication is that the qualities of young nobles will increase when going through education. There are many young nobles all over the place who can't be a shut-in at their territory like you, master. Therefore, there are a lot of nobles in both the world and the aristocratic community that generally lack common sense. They want to gather them all in one place and educate them. Also, prideful nobles want to make a display of the kingdom's grandeur and reduce rebellious spirit. This also puts countryside nobles at a disadvantage, but if they send out children towards the royal capital, it will propagate their pride, make them strive to pursue knowledge, and welcome new acquaintances too. Both have their merits and demerits, but I believe there's quite the large significance in its existence.]

"...That was quite lengthy."

[I believe the main reason for the existence of the academy is to create a sense of belonging to the same country. A strong unification in case of an emergency. It seems there are other continent nations that exist based on what you've told me, master.]

If that's what its selecting as the meaning for an academy, does that mean that's all to it?

I can only reason that an academy exists because it did in the otome game. What Luxon said might be right somehow.

[I've also heard that people search for marriage partners at an academy. It's a place of socializing for youthful nobles. Please be careful, master. If you're reckless, you'll be exposed to shame.]

What does this thing think of me?

"As if mobs can stand out that much. They're treated as part of the background. Anyways, my life isn't going to change for the better at the academy."

[Mobs, you say? I understand what you want to say, but that judgement is—]

I interrupt Luxon.

"Well, I'll find a suitable partner. Rather than going for the unattainable goal of a noble's daughter, I'll find a daughter of a knight household who will be independent in the future. That would be nice."

Just a smoothly sailing life.

I'm not going to stupidly go for a high-status woman, just looking at Zola makes me feel repulsive about it.

My life likely won't change for the better from here on... but even so, I think that a happy life awaits me.



"...Huh?"

I was called to my father's workroom, but what was waiting for me was an incident beyond my imagination.

"Well, why are you surprised? You discovered and conquered an unexplored dungeon. In addition to discovering a lost item, you found a new floating island."

There was a letter addressed to me from the royal palace.

It was written that my achievements so far as an adventurer have provisionally granted me baron status.

Rather than being independent as just a knight in the future, I've been given the status of a baron.

"W, why!"

"This is just a guess, but you're going to be the head of a baron household after you graduate so that you're not under guardianship."

My household is of a baron. Baron households can become guardians of only knight houses or semi-baron houses, so Holfault Kingdom's rules say that I, who's now arranged to be of an equal rank, cannot be under guardianship.

"My territory is not at the scale of a baron!"

"You think I don't know?!"

It seems my father was also astonished.

At best, I thought that my independence would be recognized and that I would be at the knight rank, or a semi-baron if I'm lucky.

"Perhaps it's the academy..."

"Maybe it's so that you enter the class for the heirs of baron households and above."

A majority of the nobles who go to the academy are youths from knight houses. The knight rank and semi-baron rank are considered knight houses, and those considered nobles are from baron houses and above.

At the academy, there are two types of classes prepared, a class for the future successors of nobles, and a class for the many others.

Knight houses attend the regular class and the nobles attend the advanced class.

My older brother is in the regular class.

Normally, since the second and third son aren't going to succeed the house in the

future, they would take the regular class. Houses of high rank or income would have their second and third sons go to the advanced class, but nobles from the countryside don't have the leeway, so they normally go to the regular classes.

However, there's an exception for girls. If they're from a baron household or higher, they can enter the advanced class regardless of whether their house is affluent or humble.

...Since I had planned on being independent, I thought that I was going to enter the regular class at the academy.

However, now that it's been decided that I'll be a baron... I'm going to be placed into the advanced class.

"I was fine with the regular class."

"Impossible. You're going to be the head of a household. A suitable education is necessary, so even if you don't like it, you're taking the advanced class."

"And what about my bride?!"

"...Of course, it will necessary for you to be with a young lady of respectable origins."

I crumbled down onto my knees from the despair.

"I don't want thiiiiis!"

"Idiot, stop crying! There are few women that are like Zola. Besides, there will be a woman who thinks well of you at the academy... probably."

My father said the word "probably." It seems he himself doesn't have faith in it, now does he?

"Isn't a girl from a baron up to an earl household the biggest trap? I don't want it. I absolutely don't want it!"

My father panicked.

"You, stop calling daughters of nobles as traps! If someone hears you, it'll turn into a major incident. I mean, your older and younger sisters are also daughters of a noble

household. Do you see them as people that cruel?”

“That’s what I’ve been saying, though! They’re seriously the worst! If you look at them and think that they’re good women, then take a visit to the hospital!”

“You, saying that towards your sisters...”

If possible, I’d rather go for the daughter of a knight household.

“I’m not doing it! I prefer a gentle, kind woman. A daughter from a baron house and above is impossible!”

My father covered his face with both of his hands. I suppose there was a part about it that he agreed with.

Actually, though they’re nobles from the countryside, even when I look at my older and younger sisters, I get the feeling that makes me go “Eh?!”.

I drew away from them after they held a calm expression while saying “Men are resourceful, aren’t they? I’ll look for another man with a good face. Or perhaps a slave! Hey, Papa~, I want an elf lover too—no wait, an exclusive servant. I want a slave.”

It seems that using my money, the second daughter purchased a slave, boasted about it, and became the target of envy.

My mother panicked after seeing her daughters like that, and my father, my older brother who just returned, and I calmly looked at that spectacle.

Whether it be an older or younger sister, they can do nothing but harm.

“Anyways, the class you’re going to is the advanced class.”

I felt as if my plans for happiness had been snatched away, and I sat down there while holding my knees in place.

My father looked at me with a shocked face, and it seemed that he was then trying to cheer me up.

“I, it won’t be all that bad. When you enter the academy, you’ll be with the heirs of prestigious nobles, including his Highness the crown prince. If you can build

connections, your future will be peaceful.”

“No, they’re not going to take any notice of people like us.”

The prince in the otome game liked plain looking people, and probably disliked the nobles gathering around him. I’m seeing the prince and the other capture targets with a narrow view of that sort.

“...I understand, but it seems I didn’t speak clearly. Thanks to you, the territory has gotten a little better. Just two more months and we’ll be more wealthy.”

As my father apologized while in low spirits, I felt down about having to think of what will happen in the future.

## 2

Holfault Kingdom’s royal capital was placed at the center of the continent.

That location held a dungeon since the olden days, causing monsters to gush forth. Yet at the same time, that dungeon was a goldmine of resources for its output of demon stones.

It’s become a source of income and materials for the kingdom, and is the primary factor for why it rose up into a powerful nation.

The continent is very large, and doesn’t have just one or two sites for pumping water from the sea. There are numerous spots where water is being drawn, and the soil is rich.

The floating island draws up seawater and spreads it throughout the land. I’m not sure how they filter the salt water, but since it’s just part of the lackluster setting, there’s no point in paying attention to it.

It’s known as a beautiful continent that harmonizes with nature.

The scale of the royal capital is very large.

I believe that the population of the urban district alone reaches a million people.

It's a modern town with things like a sewer system and electricity.

Such a place is where nobles attend the academy.

A small floating island located slightly away from the urban district became a harbor for airships, and is where incoming airships anchor.

I was on an airship that my household purchased, the type that was fifty meters large.

The latest models of airships have a deck laid out at the top, but the rest is covered in armor. Its form resembled a submarine.

My older brother was yawning while carrying his travel bags.

"It's nice to come here directly from our house. We don't have to transfer flights like on regular air services."

Before this, he had to transfer flights between home and the academy.

My older brother, and the second son, is a third year student at the academy. My older sister and the second daughter, "Jenna," is a second year student. A city slicker sister that follows fashion, dyed her hair brown, and bought a slave after realizing that the household had money.

He was a skinny, yet muscular beastman demi-human with cat ears, and he wore a suit more elegant than what I had.

"I would have preferred a more extravagant airship. I hate how my friends have a luxury liner, and yet I only have this cheap-feeling thing."

I wanted to say that this wasn't her airship, and that if she didn't like it, then she didn't need to ride on it.

My older brother averted his eyes, seeming to have the same thoughts.

"Even though our mother is upright, when it comes to these girls, it's a different story."

My older brother and I carried our traveling bags and headed towards the boarding terminal for an airship of the regular air service, and then my older sister followed afterwards with her slave carrying her luggage.

“One moment, did you guys hear what I said? Leon, if you still have money, then give me some. Your older sister’s entertainment expenses are not something to laugh at.”

Ignoring the noisy animal that was my sister, I talked to my older brother.

“Brother, are you dissatisfied with me being the only one going to the advanced class? If you want, how about I say that my achievements were actually your doing?”

“I wouldn’t stoop so low as to take the credit for your achievements, brother. I don’t want to go to the advanced class anyways. As you know, only *those* kinds of women are there.”

Both of us looked behind to see our sister still mumbling complaints.

“...She had the nerve to buy an expensive slave using my own money. How scum-like.”

When I murmured that in annoyance, my sister’s slave glared at me.

It seemed his cat ears twitched and had heard what I said.

My brother placed his hand on my shoulder.

“You’ve been burdened with going to the advanced class. You have my sympathies.”

Going to the advanced class means being of the status where one receives a fitting education or has slaves. Therefore, rich households make a display of themselves by having fancy slaves accompany their daughters.

On the other hand, if a boy pointlessly tries to walk with a fancy woman slave accompanying him, he’ll receive cold looks.

...What a cruel world this is.

My brother gave his words of gratitude while a little embarrassed.

“Well, thanks to you, I can study without taking a part-time job. Now if I could only find a partner, then I’d be very grateful.”

“Then, I think I can help with—”

“I won’t ask for anything unreasonable. Whoops, it’s easy to get lost at the terminal, so there’s a need to memorize it.”

Guided by my brother, I moved to the terminal of the regular air service, and confirmed that there were many other students heading to the academy.

Most of the people that use the airship harbor are from the knight up to the viscount households. It seems that earl households and above have exclusive harbors prepared for them by the city, and that’s where they get on and off of.

In terms of my previous world, it would be closer to call it a bus terminal or a railway station rather than an airship harbor. It has a closer impression to that than of a harbor.

One has to wait until the regular air service arrives.

When our sulky sister behind us was in a panic for some odd reason.

My brother put his hand over his forehead.

“What’s wrong?”

My brother pointed to a crowd of people.

“They’re followers of duke households.”

Upon looking, a grand group of people cutting in line caught my attention. There was group of females followed by beautiful slaves behind them. Then there were boys after them.

My sister made an unpleasant expression.

“It seems a great number of prestigious nobles are going to enroll, and their followers also make up a large group.”

The heir and daughters of the duke households called out to their followers who were people under their household’s guardianship or classmates involved that were waiting for them. They’re there to protect the heirs and help them out.

In the future, those followers will be people that support high-ranking nobles. Though

it's assumed that the academy treats students equally... the reality is that nothing but influence matters.

"I see... so they're henchmen that get cocky because there's a boss in town?"

My brother and sister panicked after I said that.

"Y, you idiot!"

"Are you an idiot?! Hey, are you actually an idiot?!"

The two were worried about whether the followers heard what I said. Then, they were relieved after the followers didn't turn their attention towards us.

"Those demi-humans with good ears may have heard it, though. You should be more alert. Things would've gotten serious if they had heard you."

I apologized in light of my brother's warning.

"I'll be careful in the future."

My sister was getting irritated.

"You really need to be careful. I won't forgive you if you cause trouble for me."

...Can this animal only think for itself?

Then, an airship that was like a small bus had arrived, and stopped by our harbor.



The academy was in the royal capital.

It was able to reserve a large plot of land in a place with a large population density, making the school buildings large and the scale of the student dormitories vast as well.

My brother headed towards the dorms for the regular class, but I headed towards the dorms used for the advanced class.

...I'm feeling down.

The student dorms were unthinkably extravagant, the entrance was pretty much like a hotel lobby.

There's even someone at a reception desk, and the people working here are pretty much like hotel employees. They wore uniforms, were thoroughly trained, and were operating briskly.

"Wow, it seems just like it did in the game"

It's a gorgeous student dormitory. That's the impression that came out of me. Though some would say that this is their long-awaited academy, it doesn't change that this is prison for me.

In the game, the dormitory interior appeared as a background.

I'm not really that excited.

I went to the reception desk to know what room I would be using.

"It seems you are Leon Fou Baltfault. Your room will be over here."

The staff member explained with a map of the dorms and handed me a key.

"Be sure to look over the rules inside of your dorm. Afterwards, if you have any questions, then voice out to one of the people in charge."

The way it was explained in an uninterested manner oozed with the sense of this being just a job to the person.

Upon which, I was pushed aside by a student who came in from behind and wanted to talk to the reception desk.

"Hey, guide me to my room."

Surrounding the student with the very big attitude were boys who seemed to be followers. It seemed that the person is from a rich viscount family.

The staff member, hearing the person's name, silently nodded.

"Welcome! I will show you the way at once. Now then, I can carry your baggage."

It was clearly different from how I was treated.

What an academy this is. Perhaps it's because of this being the world of an otome game, or perhaps it's because of this being a society of nobles... but there's some genuine preferential treatment going on here. It's also affected by one's popularity in the class, but the scale of their household and their influence have a big impact on the matter. Despite the academy singing praises about equality, there's clearly a difference in how people are treated.

"I want to go home already."

I headed towards the corridor of my dorm while raising a complaint, and arrived at the dorm I was going to use for three years.

I unlocked the door and entered the single room, but it wasn't that wide.

The room had been cleaned, and my luggage had been sent and placed here already.

When I opened a box and set it down in the room, I noticed that there were things like notebooks and textbooks for the academy, so I placed them on my desk.

"So this is where I'm residing for three years..."

I flipped through a textbook. Textbooks concerning magic are difficult, so I can't understand what's being written in here right now.

This is the world of a game, and yet I'm fed up with things like this. I wanted a gentler world.

[Since you've arrived, I'd like it if you released me quickly.]

A voice called out from inside the bag I brought. When opening the bag and taking out what's inside, Luxon appeared and surveyed the room.

"Ah~, my bad. I forgot."

[...As expected of my master. Your ability to remember is something praiseworthy.]

I continued to tidy things up while listening to this thing's sarcasm.

“So, how was your cruise?”

[All surfaces of my main unit are in excellent condition. I have no impression of the cruise. Though my only surprise is the magic technology, it's still at a level reproducible by science... I will continue investigating magic technology in the future.]

In other words, there was something noteworthy about it.

“So you're an AI that can't be honest. Are you a tsundere?”

[Oh? Are you trying to seek a womanly part within me? Unfortunately, the concept of gender does not apply to me, so I cannot respond to your feelings, master.]

I mustn't get angry at this thing.

I was ready to punch it, but I took a distance and returned to tidying up everything.

Upon which, I heard a knocking sound.

### 3

After leaving the student dormitory—or rather, after having been taken outside by upperclassmen that were gathering the first year students, there was a stylish bar outside of the academy.

“Eh, I'm quite glad that I can meet first year students of the same position this year.”

The one making the greeting was someone from a baron household who would be its successor.

Not so wealthy upperclassmen from the countryside had invited underclassmen of similar circumstances like me to a welcome party they opened.

I talked to a nearby first year student, Daniel Fou Darland.

Daniel is a healthy boy with tanned skin. He looks like a pleasant young man with short hair, a tall height, and some muscles.

“W, why are you guys doing a welcome party like this?”

“You don’t know? People in the same group gather together to talk about their troubles and to exchange information. Things like marriages or other important matters, you see.”

It’s certainly sounds nice being with a group of similar people, but I’m thinking that it’s going to turn into a free-for-all when a favorable woman shows up.

Tilting his head, a boy wearing glasses sitting across from me, “Raymond Fou Arkin,” pushed up his glasses while explaining.

Unlike Daniel, he seemed to have a bit of a rebellious personality with his intellectual glasses.

“Even if it turns into a scramble for a woman, we’d get along as a group of similar people, so we wouldn’t do anything absurd. If there’s a dispute, we’ll negotiate it amongst our group. Well, moments where we would compete against each other will probably be rare though.”

After coming to that understanding, the greetings from the upperclassmen finished, starting the party.

It seems this welcome party was a treat by our upperclassmen.

Then next year, it seems that it’s our turn to do it.

One of the upperclassmen came over to me.

“Well, since we’ve got a massively successful adventurer here this year, I’m looking forward to it. Oh right, I’m ‘Rukul.’ Nice to meet you, promising first year student.”

Rukul seems to be a third year student.

He’s already found a marriage partner, and I can see that he’s quite content, since all that’s left is for him to return home.

“Promising first year student?”

When I tilted my head, Raymond clicked his tongue.

“I prefer if you didn’t play dumb. You’re the third son of a baron household and was

quite successful as an adventurer prior to entering school, right? Talks about it have reached not just the royal capital, but even over at my home.”

Daniel was surprised.

“The one in that rumor was you?!”

I cast down my face.

“I had no choice. If I didn’t get money, then I would be on a course towards a marriage interview with a perverted old woman.”

Perhaps sympathizing with what I had said, everyone didn’t pursue the matter anymore. It seems it really is easy to talk with them since we have similar troubles.

Rukul talked about the academy while smiling. He also listened to Daniel’s and Raymond’s worries, but they were really just zealous questions about marriage rather than about studies.

If us boys aren’t married by the age of twenty, we’re treated like a disgrace, so we have to frantically get married somehow while attending school.

I also asked some things I was worried about.

“Come to think of it, my eldest brother is the one that’s going to succeed my household, but perhaps he was in your group? Ah, his name is Lutart.”

Rukul and my second oldest brother are both third year students.

I was thinking that perhaps he knows about him, but—

“The upperclassman Lutart that graduated last year? He wasn’t in our group. He said that he didn’t want be grouped with the lowest level.”

Lutart... you’re also part of that lowest level.

Rukul talked about what happened back at that time.

“He mixed in with a rich group of people from viscount households and above. Though it seemed that he forced himself onto the group, it couldn’t be helped because that’s

what he wanted. Were you close with him?"

When I shook my head, Rukul said "I thought so," and lifted a stein to his mouth.

Rukul then talked to us.

"Since we have a few days until the entrance ceremony, I'll show you around the royal capital in the meantime. So don't mess around too much to the point that it would put your body into disorder."

The three of us nodded our heads, and the smiling Rukul then made a somewhat serious expression.

"Also, it seems that there's an honor student enrolling in your year. I heard that they were letting someone enter, even though they're not a noble, for the sake of picking up this talented person."

Raymond had a bit of an unpleasant expression when he heard that.

Daniel didn't seem to be interested.

I suppose this reaction is normal for young nobles.

"An honor student? For the regular class, right?"

Rukul shook his head in response to Raymond's question.

"The advanced class. Quite troubling, especially when His Highness the crown prince is entering too, isn't it? I also heard that this girl is a commoner with no connections whatsoever, but... I don't know if that's actually the case. If you guys know anything, would you mind telling us?"

...That commoner girl is going to be the center of the academy in the future, the protagonist.

I wasn't surprised, considering that I already know the honor student is a commoner, but the other two were astounded. They're shocked at how she has no connections.

I suppose they thought that she would be the daughter of a merchant or some other kind of girl with a similar background.

I pretended to be surprised as well.

Did she become a saint in the future? Anyways, I should probably keep silent about how she'll establish a very grand bloodline and how the nobles will eventually change their attitude about her.

Even if I did say it, nobody would believe me, and I don't intend to get anyone involved in the first place.

I'll just let her enjoy her fun youth with the crown prince and the others.

That's also for my sake too, after all.



It was the day of the entrance ceremony.

This is quite the grand auditorium, isn't it?

At any rate, the entrance ceremony began in a place that was like a large theater.

There were a surprising number of noble students present, some of whom were yawning.

The combination of the scents from women's perfumes created an overbearing smell.

I suppose there's no hope unless one gets used to this smell.

Amongst the crowd, the crown prince "Julian Rafua Holfault," with short navy blue hair, spoke greetings on behalf of the first year students.

The crown prince is first in line to the succession of the throne, but in the game, he's the only prince that appeared, so he's pretty much *the* prince that will rule.

He had a beautiful appearance. He was tall, lean, and had a nice body balance.

His navy blue eyes within his fair skin looked like they were sparkling.

The surrounding schoolgirls understandably sighed in affection.

—It was a different story for the others, though.

Daniel and Raymond were sitting next to me, but as expected, it didn't seem like they were going to voice out their complaints. I silently listening in on their conversation.

Upon which, from behind—

“I finally arrived. I've already been waiting for the prince these ten years.”

I turned my head around towards a voice I had heard, but I couldn't find out who had said that. There were several girls around that were murmuring about the crown prince's beauty, so I couldn't pick out the one that did it.

It wasn't a particularly loud voice, but it strangely got through to my ear... then my wandering gaze stopped when reaching at a certain girl.

Blond hair and blue eyes.

She had gentle, long hair, and was a short girl that was looking at the prince with a sparkled gaze.

She looked more like a cute girl rather than a beautiful woman. However, it was her gaze that I was uneasy about. Within the surrounding gazes of yearning or of favor, it was obvious that the little girl's eyes looked like an animal aiming after its prey.

Her delicate body felt childish in some aspects. She looked younger than others of the same age, but the glint in her eyes was the only thing that was sharp... my impression was that she was very unbalanced.

Daniel looked over at me.

“What the, did you already find your partner? Oh, she seems cute. Do you like that girl?”

I calmly shook my head towards Daniel, who was teasing me.

“No, if I had to say, then... I dislike her.”

I set my sight back to the crown prince and readjusted my posture, but this strange feeling wouldn't settle down.

“I, Is that so. I think she’s cute though.”

What I felt when I first saw the girl was anger. I don’t know what I was angry about, but she was irritating for me.

It’s not hatred. It’s something more complex... and at any rate, I don’t think she’s someone I would view as a partner of the opposite sex.

# Chapter 4

## The Protagonist and the Villainess

### 1

Well, several weeks have passed since the entrance ceremony.

There weren't any noteworthy events or anything of that sort for a mob like me, and I was finally getting used to this unfamiliar life at the academy.

In terms of the game, this is around the time where the protagonist would finish meeting with the male capture targets. Now that she's finished raising the flags in rapid succession, I suppose this is the period where she gets familiar with the capture targets.

Perhaps since the real protagonist is sly, this is the time where she's thinking about narrowing down who to go after?

Then, I suppose this is around the time where the villainess would show up and say "Know your position." I can't recall the details too well since I played the game many times over and ended up using the skip function to skim through the text.

Well, I'll leave the story of the protagonist and co. alone without getting involved.

Now that I've begun to get used to life at the student dorms, I'm in the process of deciding which friends to associate with.

I'm talking about Daniel and Raymond.

It's also due to the two being placed close to me, but the environment in which we were raised was practically the same. Due to that, conversations between us go well.

We were at a bench in the academy's courtyard.

The three of us guys were sitting down while talking about the plans for a tea

ceremony in the beginning of May.

“So, what to do for a tea ceremony? We should probably choose who to invite, right?”

During the break in May, the girls have time off, but it’s different for the boys. It’s when they can invite girls to tea ceremonies to shorten the distance between them.

It’s not an event where anybody can send an invitation to anyone like a playboy would. One has to choose a suitable partner from a household of the same rank to invite.

Then, they have to properly open a tea ceremony and not be rude to their partner.

The tea ceremonies have become an unofficial event in the academy... Well, they prepare lessons for boys on how to welcome women as a gentleman, and that’s so that they can show it off during the break in May.

Raymond cast his eyes downwards towards Daniel’s worry.

“We do have our allowances from home, but we can’t make a luxurious tea ceremony. Any girl would be fine as long as they participate in my tea ceremony.”

The academy costs money, even though we aren’t charged for living expenses like tuition fees or meals. Boys in particular are charged quite an amount of money, and is something they can’t work around.

Even though I have some money in reserve, that’s not a reason to burn through it, and I don’t want to use it.

Why is it that we have to use up a large amount of money to humor a girl?

The thing about this tea ceremony... is that if one avoids doing it or just doesn’t set one up, then the girls will start spreading rumors about them through their network. They’ll spread talks about how that person didn’t open a tea ceremony, and it would put them at a disadvantage when it come to marriage.

Even if they’re not interested in a partner, they still need to make a solid tea ceremony.

Like how us boys share our information around, the girls share their information around as well. Becoming an enemy of the girls means having them spread bad rumors, making things tedious.

This is yet another aspect where boys are at a disadvantage. In the first place, since girls hold the strong position in marriages, the boys are ultimately left with a weak one.

Then, there's one problem.

My merits have allowed me to exert independence after graduation, and I'm seen as a rich person by my surroundings. They're aware that I've gotten my hands on treasures of gold and silver.

"Does this mean I have to do a formal tea ceremony? It seems I do. Honestly, that bums me out."

While the three of us were feeling down before the May tea ceremony, we saw Julian, who could be described as a winner, walking with followers and women accompanying him.

Near him was one of his close friends and bodyguard who was the heir to a viscount household—foster brother "Jilk Fier Memoria."

He had deep green, long hair that made one question if that was really his natural hair. He had green, droopy eyes that contrasted with the prince's sharp glare.

Though he's from a viscount household of the royal court, he's also a close friend of the prince to the point of being a foster brother. It's obvious that he will be given an important position in the future.

The girls that talk to him have hearts in their eyes, and there are boys of high-ranking earl households near and far that pridefully follow and serve him.

"Are you going to open a tea ceremony in May, your Highness?"

"I want to participate too."

"M, me too!"

Looking at the girls who wanted to be invited to the prince's tea ceremony like dogs wagging their tails, we had to come to terms with reality.

Raymond covered his face with both hands.

“...Since his Highness and other noble families are here, it’s going to be a big hurdle.”

Daniel dropped his shoulders.

“Quite the comparison to make between him and us. Pardon my frankness.”

Looking at the envious scene of the prince and the others, one girl then came along. She had followers surrounding her. It soon became apparent that she was of a high social status...

This person was a daughter of a duke household—“Anjelica Rafua Redgrave.” She was a girl with blonde hair that seemed to sparkle and had an upswept hairstyle.

Her white skin was lovely and her red eyes were fierce.

Her eyes gave off a strong impression and would make someone soon realize that there was something different about her from the others.

It seemed that she and the prince were both people that naturally had something about them.

I believe that on the inside, the protagonist definitely has something grand about her as well. Undoubtedly, there was something about her that made one recognize at a glance that she had a different feel than normal people.

Otherwise, I’m pretty sure that the crown prince and the other capture targets wouldn’t have swayed towards her.

Although she may appear normal, she, the protagonist, definitely has a unique aura surrounding her.

“Is that his Highness the crown prince’s fiancée??”

The girls surrounding both the prince and Jilk took a distance faster than I could say it. It seemed that they weren’t fools who would try to get invited right in front of the prince’s fiancée.

None of them wanted to even say a word.

Anjelica’s eyes got a bit sharp.

“Crown prince your Highness, I have something to talk about regarding the May tea ceremony. Is it alright that we attend together?”

Within the academy, it's said that one should not to abuse the authority of their position nor their parents' power, but such a thing is not possible to stop in the real world.

Julian breathed a small sigh.

“Anjelica, you're coercing the surrounding people. This is the academy.”

“Right, I know. However... the people around you are quite noisy, crown prince your Highness.”

There was no fool in the academy that would go against the daughter of a duke household.

The girls awkwardly averted their gaze from Anjelica.

“I suppose this is the protagonist's rival. I get this strong feeling that she's a formidable enemy.”

As I was mumbling to myself, there was one girl remaining in the place where the crowd had dispersed.

I squinted upon seeing her.

If Anjelica was said to be a beautiful woman, then this girl felt like a small and cute person.

She was a girl with blonde hair, blue eyes, and was the daughter of a viscount family.

Her name was “Marie Fou Lafuan.”

She's someone that I haven't come to like in any way.

I get irritated looking at her. Yet, it was not a feeling of hatred, but something complex... I can't put it into words.

Jilk noticed that she was looking over their direction with her blue eyes and notified

the prince.

“Your highness.”

“Hmm? Aah, it’s Marie. Perfect, I was looking for you. Can you come over here?”

The prince smiled while looking at Marie.

Anjelica’s eyebrows moved with a twitch.

When one of her followers whispered about Marie into her ear, she knit her eyebrows grandly.

Marie went over to him since her called for her, and a feeling of tension rose in the location.

It seemed that Daniel, with his hands over his stomach, wanted to run away on the spot.

“Can I not go home?”

A quarrel was awakening near the bench, but we would stand out if we got up and escaped. Raymond shook his head.

“No. It’s better not to move until it’s over. All things considered, perhaps she’s the rumored girl.”

Rumored?

“Do you know who she is, Raymond?”

Uneasy about Marie, I asked about her, and it turned out that she was relatively famous.

“You don’t know, Leon? There’s been talks about her. She, Marie, had slapped his Highness Julian.”

Daniel was surprised upon hearing him say that.

“...That’s gotta be a lie, right? I heard that when she dined together with a prestigious noble, she ordered a steak and ate it vigorously. That’s the rumor I know about.”

This time, it was Raymond that was surprised.

“Huh? Is that so? I didn’t hear about a rumor like that. But, it seemed that Julian actually forgave her for the slap while smiling.”

It turned into a conversation about Julian’s leniency, but does this Marie girl not know her surroundings? Then there’s her eating a steak like a guy would... hmm?

“Slap... steak?”

There’s something about this in my memories, but I can’t recall it.

Thereupon, Marie called out to Julian with a lovely voice.

“Could you invite me, your Highness?”

“Actually, the boys have plans to arrange tea ceremonies in May. Since I don’t really want to hold a flashy one, I planned on only inviting acquaintances. So, I wanted to invite you too.”

Hearing that, Anjelica objected.

“Crown prince your Highness, there are rules to the tea ceremonies as well. I won’t say that it needs to be flashy, but a suitable scale——”

However, Julian didn’t cease.

Then I remembered this scene.

—Wasn’t this the game’s coercion event?

However, it doesn’t seem like the protagonist is here. When I stirred around trying to find her face while uneasy, Raymond seemed to have taken notice.

“What are you doing?”

“Well, there’s someone I’m looking for... is the honor student here?”

Raymond similarly looked at the surroundings, but shook his head.

“She’s not here. To begin with, the honor student wouldn’t mix in here. Look, just stay quiet. Bear with whatever you’re feeling until this storm passes.”

We can’t escape.

There were occasionally some students that would try to enter the courtyard, but run away after noticing the strange mood. I’m envious of those that were able to escape.

The prince seemed a bit annoyed while arguing with Anjelica.

“That’s enough, Anjelica. This is the academy. I’m just a student here. You’re my fiancée, but that’s no reason for you to interfere this much.”

Anjelica backed down after hearing that.

“...Excuse my discourtesy.”

Saying that and stepping away, Anjelica glared at Marie in the end before leaving.

Her surrounding followers also turned towards Marie with a harsh look.

“My apologies, Marie. I made you feel bad.”

“N, no, I’m fine. However, is it really okay for me to participate?”

Jilk shrugged his shoulders while smiling.

“His Highness is not fond of formalities. He hopes for a tea ceremony with a light mood. By all means, he wants you to participate, Marie. Besides, his Highness has never been so eager to invite a woman until now.”

Jilk chuckled while the prince looked away in embarrassment.

“A, anyways, I want you to participate. Look, let’s go, Jilk.”

When the prince and Jilk started moving, their followers left as well. However, they too looked at Marie with a complicated gaze.

Daniel and Raymond were relieved after having finally been freed, but I looked at Marie’s countenance.

Perhaps not thinking that anyone was watching, Marie negligently let something slip for just a moment. It was really just a moment—but she let out a slight grin.

Turning away from Marie like that, I joined the two in leaving the location.



There's a class about manners for a tea ceremony.

The teacher of the class was a gentleman with a neatly-ordered mustache who felt like a male instructor. He was an instructor that wore a suit over his slim body and straightened his back.

Right now there's a table placed in the classroom, with sweets and tea laid out.

It seems he's teaching us how to use utensils.

"Ready? When you invite a woman to a tea ceremony, you need to think about how you appear. From your behavior and up to what kind of education you received, your partner will see through into what kind of person you are. If you properly welcome a woman, she will think of you in high favor."

The boys sat silently in the classroom while studying the mannerisms.

My father said that he also studied tea ceremony manners under that mustached man, but forgot about them when he graduated. Indeed, it's possible that one's behavior in their usual life may be looked into, but would one's partner look that far?

In any case, women partners are people that walk along with their sub-race slaves, their lovers, as if to flaunt them. I'd like to tell them that they should be the ones paying more attention to their regular behavior.

"Hey, Mister Leon! Please take these lessons with more tenacity!"

"R, right!"

As I responded to his warning, I heard the laughter and chuckles of my surroundings. The ones laughing are the heirs from rich noble houses or from the royal court.

"He's a country bumpkin, after all."

"He gets all prideful just because he accomplished a small achievement."

"A savage like him may be cut out for being an adventurer, but not for this place."

The instructor straightened his back and continued the lesson.

“The first thing that matters in the tea ceremony is the entire atmosphere. First of all, I’ve gathered utensils. It is out of the question to hold up a vacant room! Be very particular about each and every utensil, and then invite the girl into your specialized room. However, remember that the spot where you’re preparing your tea ceremony is not below third-rate.”

Is there even a meaning to trivial lessons like this one? While thinking that there wouldn’t be a use for them after graduation, the instructor seemed to have seen through me.

“Mister Leon... it seems you don’t understand. Well then, let’s put it into practice.”

Being called up, it seemed as if I was a guest to be entertained.

It’s not a big deal anyways.

I, who doesn’t have an interest in tea or things of that sort, was wondering what significance there was in things like expensive tea leaves. I think that even the cheap ones are fine.

I did my best to make a reply that seemed as if I was impressed on the outside, while mocking on the inside.

“Wow~, how enjoyable.”

Perhaps getting motivated, the instructor adjusted his collar.

“Well, do enjoy yourself.”

The instructor made a smile.

He did best to boast about pricey tea leaves and sweets. I laughed on the inside while being impressed on the outside.

At least I thought as such—



—After the lessons were over.

When he left the classroom, I hurried after the instructor while calling out.

“Teacher! I’m deeply moved!”

Holding his head high, the instructor stroked his mustache in pride while looking back.

What a spectacle.

A gentleman even when looking backwards.

“Mister Leon, it seems you understand.”

I’m ashamed of my past self.

“Right! I had made light of tea. No, I was looking down on it. I am dreadfully embarrassed of that. I have deeply reflected on it now. I want to hold a perfect tea ceremony like you, teacher!”

The instructor nodded with a smile.

“Very good. However, you’re mistaken.”

“Huh?”

The instructor turned around to face me, then placed his right hand on his chest.

Each and every one of his movements seemed so tantalizingly gentlemanly.

“The important thing is to welcome them. Furthermore, I’m only halfway there. Even to this day, I cannot provide a fully satisfying hospitality yet.”

“I, I see. Even you’re not perfect, teacher?”

The instructor nodded.

“Yes, that is so. I too am aiming for that time, that moment where I reach the best

hospitality, but I still haven't arrived at that state. However, I can teach the basics. Mister Leon, how about we traverse the path of tea together?"

"Of course! Teacher—no, Mentor!"

As the instructor—no wait, my mentor and I were talking with a smile, I heard the voices of Daniel and Raymond from behind.

"...Did Leon hit his head?"

"Who knows? Well, it's fine as long as he isn't hopeless, right?"



It was the May tea ceremony.

I got an answer from the person I sent an invitation to, so I borrowed a room to prepare in response.

There are several rooms dedicated to private tea ceremony use within the academy, and it's normal for students to borrow them and provide hospitality there.

I originally wanted to borrow a full-scale room, but they were all full at this point in time, so I didn't get to rent one.

I had a set of utensils, tea, and sweets.

I gathered these in accordance to what I consulted about with my mentor, I carefully made preparations from cleaning the room to changing the layout, and now all that's left is for the girl I invited to come.

Luxon floated in the center of the room, checking the interior design.

[Remarkably elaborate. I would not think that this would come from my master that had tried rushing a merchant to finish business a couple weeks ago.]

"How annoying. If there's something you notice too, then do say it."

After having done one final look around, I took out my pocket watch and checked the time.

The girl I invited should come in just ten more minutes.

The one I invited was the second daughter of a baron household.

[I cannot understand this world. Is it not optimal to choose a partner based on the most suitable genetic information?]

“That’s impossible since there’s nobody that can check someone’s genes.”

[Then I have nothing to say.]

Right as Luxon finished talking, the girl had arrived.

“Hello~”

“Thank you for com... ing?”

The girl took a very light attitude. That’s not something to particularly be surprised about, but behind her were two carelessly laughing girls whom I hadn’t invited.

“Ah, friends. Let’s kill some time while we’re here. I was invited to a large tea ceremony by an earl from afar, but it isn’t time to depart there yet.”

A tea ceremony hosted by a prestigious noble heir would already be at the scale of a party. It seems they wanted to kill time while their carriage to the venue was being prepared.

“I, is that so? Well then, when are you departing?”

“In about thirty minutes. We talked about how we had a little spare time left, then I remembered that I had replied to a tea ceremony invitation and said I would go.”

The other two sat as they pleased on the seats I had prepared.

They began eating the sweets I had brought.

“Oh, I’ve also prepared some tea.”

The three surrounded the table, leaving no place for me to sit. They then got excited talking about the tea ceremony they’re heading towards, and ordered me to make

more tea or supply more sweets like I was a servant.

When the time came, the three left the room leaving the food scattered around without even a word of thanks.

“Well, I’m tired~. The sweets were good, but girls won’t be pleased if you don’t buy more expensive ones. Pay attention next time.”

Perhaps thinking that she actually gave me advice, the girl left acting as if she had said something good in the end. The three were in high spirits while heading to the tea ceremony they were actually looking forward to.

I dropped my shoulders.

“Those sweets that I bought were made just today at the store. They had a hefty cost, and yet she said to get more expensive ones...”

When seeing the table being dirtied from the food scattered around, I stared up into the ceiling.

“...Mentor, the way of tea is still a very steep road.”

While putting everything away with feelings of frustration as if I was about to cry, I heard a voice outside. It was a quarrel amongst several schoolgirls.

“...You don’t belong here!”

“B, but, my invitation——”

“That’s where you’re supposed make the smart move, commoner!”

I heard the sound of footsteps.

Several schoolgirls said things like “Let’s hurry and go, the carriage is about to leave,” and left. I peeked from the room under the guess that the so-called commoner from just a bit ago was the protagonist.

I was expecting the person there to be someone with an aura that could definitely compete with that of her rival Anjelica—but the girl sitting down in the hallway betrayed my expectations.

There was the figure of an ordinary girl with light brown, medium hair that had a bob cut, and she held no spirit or aura.

She had greenish-blue eyes and had a gentle look, making her a complete opposite of Anjelica. She was a modest girl.



She was a beauty, but... an ordinary child.

“Is she the type that shines when she gets polished? Even so, she’s more modest than I thought.”

In the hallway was an abandoned, ripped apart invitation.

Luxon, who had been forced to act like an ornament for a while now, placed itself onto my shoulder and looked at the situation.

[...Is this what bullying is? It’s due to her being an honor student, but not a noble, isn’t it. Many students at this academy cannot accept that an ordinary person had been admitted.]

“Well, it’s pretty much like that. However, something about her seems... too ordinary.”

Looking at her being gloomy while gathering the torn pieces of the invitation, I turned my gaze towards the room.

“Perhaps I can still invite one more person in here?”

I voiced out loud about how the remaining sweets and tea leaves could support one more person. I couldn’t leave that lonely figure behind me alone.

“Hey, you over there! Have some tea!”

I tried calling out to her in a light mood, almost like that of a playboy.

The girl, who was the protagonist, raised her head and made a bit of a surprised face when seeing me.

### 3

Unlike last time, the atmosphere felt like an actual tea ceremony.

“Hmm, so you received an invitation by the heir of an earl household from a remote region.”

“Right. He said it wouldn’t be bad for him to talk with an honor student and then

invited me. However, everyone said that wasn't acceptable and they refused me..."

I enjoyed the fragrance of the tea while popping a sweet into my mouth.

When I offered the protagonist some, she held back at first, but then nervously took them.

A smile returned to her sad face when eating the sweets.

Unlike the girls from before, she ate them in delight. I'm glad that I had prepared tea and sweets now.

The protagonist was then a bit perplexed when looking at the tea.

"T, this is expensive tea, isn't it? Is it okay for me to drink this?"

She's quite the shy and modest girl... who was the idiot that called her a sly protagonist again? Isn't she a pretty good person?

"This a lot for just one person, so it helps that you're drinking some of it. All things considered, it seems things have been tough for you."

I don't intend to get deeply involved, but I wanted to know who she's been associating with. It wouldn't be bad to know what kind of actions the protagonist will take hereafter.

...In addition, there are also some things I'm uneasy about.

"...I was pleased at being invited, and I was looking forward to it, but it seems there really is no hope for me."

She made a sorrowful laugh.

That earl from abroad—the one hosting that tea ceremony is probably "Brad Fou Field."

A rich narcissist with long purple hair, and owns a vast amount of land, even for a feudal lord noble. His household is of a large scale, and he's one of those prestigious nobles.

He's not someone who will get along with households like mine.

Brad is the type of person that strategizes before moving ahead. He could be called an advisor, the kind of person that would command an army because of his intellect.

I thought of him as a narcissistic guy whose forte is magic.

Though he has a specialty in magic, he's useless in martial arts, and I believe he has a complex over that.

Feudal lord nobles have a strong tendency to boast about their martial arts abilities, more so than about magic—like how knights boast about being able to manage well with however amount of armor they wear.

Brad pays attention to this as a descendant of feudal lord nobles, so he has a complex about his martial arts and physicality, causing a provocation to anger him.

To put it briefly, this guy is bothersome.

No wait, thinking about it carefully, all the capture target boys are bothersome guys.

The gloomy protagonist, "Olivia," cast her eyes downwards.

"It's really would've been better if I didn't come here, right? I'm trying my hardest to persevere, but I can barely make my way through what's around me... I don't know why I was enrolled here."

Come to think of it, in the beginning, her status was low and the academy part was difficult.

Julian and the other guys are then supposed to follow her, but the Olivia right now was alone.

...It seems a little odd for her to be alone at this point in time. Even if people are ignoring her, she's supposed to get involved with Julian and not be by herself.

Could it be that reality really is different from the game?

I didn't know about how uninvolved she was until now since my choices for classes were different from hers. I thought that she was doing well.

Even if it wasn't Julius, there would no problem if she had gotten close with one of the others.

Judging from what she's said, it seems she's been alone for nearly a month.

That's a more miserable situation than mine.

An academy life without a marriage partner, let alone a friend, is far too lonely.

Well, from the standpoint of the boys from the advanced class, she's not an eligible marriage partner. Her social status is too low. Us boys, who are frantically searching for a marriage partner, wouldn't have the spare time to associate with her.

The capture target characters, who already have fiances, can get involved with the protagonist since they do have the free time.

I'm envious.

In addition, from the standpoint of the girls, they wouldn't understand why someone like her is going to the same academy as them. She's someone they can't allow... so they think about forcing her between a rock and a hard place.

However, something's a bit off.

It's already May, so she's supposed to have encountered the capture target characters. There was also a coercion event as well. That's when I remembered it, I remembered Marie.

The ominous smiling countenance of Marie.

"U, umm"

Perhaps uneasy after seeing me pondering in silence, Olivia became flustered. Maybe she's blaming herself for something she thinks she did wrong.

I wish that those other selfish girls would take notes from this goddess here.

Who was the jerk that said this protagonist was sly? I'll knock them off their feet.

"I was just thinking for a bit. Well, since this is the first time we've had an honor

student at this academy, it'll get a bit rough sometimes, so don't be too hard on yourself."

Olivia nodded while going "I see, you're right," as she agreed to my advice. Anyways, there's no way that my few brief words will leave a deep impression on her.

I don't have much life experience, and though I was an adult in my previous life, I didn't have to respond to such prideful people back then.

"...Is it okay for me to stay here?"

I immediately replied to her question.

"Hmm? It's fine."

You're this world's protagonist, after all.

Who you decide to capture has little relation to my life, but... you don't have anyone. None at all. Well, I had wanted you to talk about who you had gotten involved with.

"W, why? I mean, I'm not worthy of being here."

Though it's a matter of course for me, perhaps it's strange for Olivia. So I gave an explanation using a suitable excuse.

"Well, you see... oh right! Your admission is a decision by the academy and the royal palace! You shouldn't complain about the position you're in, and the other students don't have the right to judge whether or not you're suitable here."

Olivia blinked repeatedly.

"B, but, the people around—"

"Even if you can't endure it, you shouldn't just drop out. In regards to the people telling you to go away, doing that is impossible since your stay was decided by the higher-ups. So why don't you tell them that if they have a complaint, they can take it up to those higher-ups? I think few people would talk back to that."

At any rate, the protagonist will surely be protected by the capture target boys.

So it'll be fine.

Definitely... probably.

However, I'm uneasy about the flow of this conversation so far. Is it really okay that she hasn't encountered a single person, or rather, that she hasn't raised any flags yet?

Olivia slowly opened her mouth to speak.

"I... want to study more about magic. However, I'm unfamiliar with stuff like the regulations of an academy or unspoken rules... recently it's been difficult with people causing mischief on things like my textbooks and many other items of mine."

There are lot of unspoken rules amongst the boys, but it's the same for the girls as well. No wait, the girls would probably have even harsher unspoken rules that are unclear.

Not knowing them would be a big disadvantage in the academy. Come to think of it, in the game, I feel like there was a scene where the protagonist was criticized about such things by the villainess.

At that time, the capture target boys helped her out, but... the Olivia right now has no boys that will assist her.

I couldn't leave her alone in that bitter state, so I thought about what course of action would be good.

"I don't know the unspoken rules amongst girls either... ah, come to think of it, one person that does comes to mind. That might work somehow."

"Really?!"

The smile on Olivia's delighted face dazzled.

For the sake of Olivia, I decided to call my sister, the second daughter.

I was worried that she wasn't going to prove to be useful. With how much money I've lent to her... I'll have her pay back a bit of the loan she owes me.

She's a woman who moves upon a glimmer of gold.

I'll have her talk, even if she doesn't want to.



I boiled some tea for my sister.

I seriously wanted to do it sloppily or stuff something nasty into it, but I stopped myself when my mentor's face came to mind. It would hurt my heart doing such things in a tea ceremony.

She's an annoying sister.

Behind her stood a tall slave with cat ears folding his arms.

"It's quite remarkable that you've called for me, stupid brother."

I laughed scornfully.

"And I admire the reason for why you responded to my call. Alright, quickly teach her the rules amongst the girls."

I took a seat while telling a worried Olivia not worry.

My sister held her hand over her forehead.

"...I'm fine with teaching that, but what do you have to gain by supporting the honor student?"

I don't have anything to directly gain from it, but Olivia's happiness will help with the future of this country.

There's no harm having her be indebted to me, and above all, this is the least I can do for her since Luxon may have originally been intended to go to her.

"This is why I don't like people who think only in terms of gains and losses. How about having a kinder heart?"

My sister clicked her tongue toward my agitation.

She has that handsome slave, a lover that she was able to purchase, behind her

because of me. Seeming to know that as well, she looked at Olivia.

“Within the girls in the class... did you greet the most distinguished girl among them?”

Olivia shook her head.

“I don’t get close to her.”

“Send a proper letter to her. It’s part of the rules to greet her with a present. If there’s a large group, ask someone to be the middleman. The ones following her have a fairly important position. Send a letter to those people, and some presents too while you’re at it. Aah, make sure to investigate what kind of presents they like.”

I listened to what my sister was saying and had a thought.

“Isn’t that just a bribe?!”

“You’re being noisy. There’s no problem as long as it does the trick. Anyways, don’t go with plain money or something unrefined. That will make them angry. Tea or sweets from a popular store is a safe bet. This is where mistaking their tastes will cause a hassle.”

Olivia’s hand, which was jotting down notes, stopped.

“T, that much money isn’t something I—”

My sister looked over at my face.

“It’s fine to have this stupid brother buy them. He’s the one that called me over here, so he can do it.”

I panicked when that subject was suddenly brought up.

I felt like it was troubling when the girls had ignored me, but then I was hit with a surprise attack.

“W, what...”

My sister ignored my reaction and continued speaking.

“If they send a reply back saying that they want to meet you in-person or that they want to return the favor for the present, then you’re done. All that’s left is to not rub them the wrong way and then you can peacefully graduate.”

Olivia looked at me with eyes that seemed as if she was about to cry.

“It’s fine... I’ll handle the bills.”

“Thank you. I’ll definitely return the favor!”

Seeing Olivia giving a word of thanks made me think about how the other girls around should be as kind as this child here.

Seeing my sister leaning back while eating the sweets made me shake my head. As I let out feelings of irritation, I noticed something from my sister’s slave.

That cat-eared bastard was reaching towards me, so I soon fled from that spot.

I’m not going to do something troublesome like a contest of strength with a beastman.



A few days later, Anjelica called out to Olivia.

Olivia watched in nervousness as Anjelica drank an elegant black tea. Both the cup and its contents were of a higher grade than what Leon had prepared.

Treating it as if it were just a common-class item, Anjelica placed her cup down while looking at Olivia with a sharp glare.

“I don’t know who gave you the suggestion for it, but I’ll praise your greeting. It’s the behavior to take when meeting a superior. This isn’t a place for people like you. However, bear in mind that I will tolerate you if you stay quiet in the corner.”

Their location was isolated from the outside of the academy, making it slightly mysterious.

There are also peculiar rules about not keeping in close touch with the outside.

A similar kind to the one about making a “greeting,” like what Olivia had done to Anjelica.

It's not particularly necessary, but it is important for making one's academy life smooth.

Olivia has no power nor supporters.

She was in a really weak position within the school.

"U, um, then you'll allow me to stay in the academy?"

In response to Olivia's worries, Anjelica made a bit of a face like she had remembered something.

There were several girls following Anjelica, but they left and now only the two remained.

Upon which, she started speaking in a somewhat gentler tone of voice than just before.

"...You can just nod along, drink your tea, and then return back to your dorm. Just that much and we'll be done. I suppose that this conversation turned more complex after you started asking all these questions."

"—Huh?"

Anjelica sighed.

She made a slightly tired expression for some reason.

"Did you think I was going to try and drive you out? Honestly speaking, I'm not interested in the matters of an honor student. I don't have the leisure to get involved with you either."

Anjelica mumbled a few words towards the worried Olivia.

"You're better than that girl getting close with his Highness the crown prince."

"U, um, come again?"

"No, it's nothing."

Anjelica made a slight smile towards Olivia.

It was a sight that made her seem appropriate for her age.

Olivia had an image of Anjelica that held more spirit and was easily agitated. Indeed, Anjelica had broken into a yell a couple of times in the academy.

“Honor student, who was the one that taught you about these greetings? Aah, don’t misunderstand, it’s not that I harbor ill feelings towards them. I’m just wondering who had supported the honor student that people distance themselves away from. A personal interest.”

The boys are focused on searching for marriage partners and don’t have free time while the girls dislike the honor student. She expressed her interest in knowing who would assist her.

Olivia was a bit worried, but voiced out Leon’s name.

She talked about how Leon brought in his older sister.

“The third Baltfault son, is it? He’s quite the oddball. Well, he has a good will.”

“You know about him?”

Anjelica made a small smile.

“You don’t know? He’s a knight from our generation with high hopes placed on him for the future. Actually, I was surprised when I heard that he had earned a baron rank by himself. There’s no doubt that he’s reached the ideal success as an adventurer. A fascinating person. All things considered, his nature isn’t bad. It wouldn’t be harmful either to have his Highness the crown prince speak with him.”

Olivia felt a slightly mysterious feeling as she looked at Anjelica saying that while smiling.

# Chapter 5

## Noble Manners

### 1

Holfault Kingdom's nobles can be traced back to adventurers.

For that reason, adventurers hold respectable professions as they work for a guild managed by the country... and many nobles temporarily become adventurers to follow their ancestors.

Regardless of whether they take the regular or advanced class, everyone goes to the Adventurer's Guild to register as an adventurer, and they take lessons that have them acknowledge and be grateful for the hardship of their ancestors.

There's no difference between men and women, all adventurers register equally—and then tackle a dungeon as is custom.

Well, whatever the reason is, it's a way for broke noble youths to earn extra money as an adventurer in the family. It's a popular occupation, even in the academy, and there are many schoolboys who earn money as an adventurer during holidays or vacations.

It seems that my father and older brother also earned a considerable amount as adventurers.

It makes me shed a sorrowful tear thinking about how that money would vanish towards paying entertainment expenses, like tea ceremonies, for girls.

I'm not troubled about money, but I'm still thrilled to hear about dungeons.

There's not much to enjoy in this otome game, but this dungeon falls under the adventure part of it.

It would be fun—well, it was supposed to.

It was the middle of May.

It was the day where first year students become adventurers and try to tackle a dungeon within the royal capital. I took a look at my surroundings and worried about sticking out like a sore thumb.

“I was concerned about my friends, Daniel and Raymond, and yet they ran away. Well, if I were in the same situation, I’d run away too. Even so!”

Standing next to me, as I wore standard adventurer equipment, was Olivia, who was still trying to get accustomed to her own equipment.

I basically wore leather armor on top of thick clothing. Iron armor covered portions like the arms, chest, and lower legs. It’s equipment that would make one wonder what exactly is fantasy-like, or rather, stylish about it. Equipment and the like all focus on appearances in this otome game. Much of the equipment tosses practical use out the window, and many of the students are using such equipment that makes me worry about whether its safe to wear.

As for me? I took an emphasis on faultless safety. Something far from being stylish.

Olivia looked apologetic towards me.

“I, I’m sorry. Anjelica said she wanted you to participate no matter what.”

I know that even if I make a complaint towards the worried Olivia, nothing can be done.

However, today’s the day to challenge the dungeon.

An unexpectedly high-class group surrounded me.

A smart, tall, serious boy with blue hair and eyes wore equipment geared towards fashion, which made me wonder how that thing was supposed to defend him. He was a four-eyes—err, cool character that wore glasses.

Only a long sword hung from his waist.

He was a capture target and a serious vanguard swordsman—well, he’s supposed to be an expert swordsman according to the game. He’s “Chris Fier Arkwright,” the son

of a master swordsman.

He's from a well-established family of the royal court. The heir of an earl household that rose to power through the sword.

There was also a muscular delinquent-like guy, with ruffled red hair and rolled-up sleeves, who shouldered a spear.

This rough man, who declared that his doctrine is to get real experience with swordsmanship rather than study it, has been challenging dungeons before his enrollment, and defeated many monsters.

He's a capture target character. A hearty vanguard from a feudal lord household of earl nobles.

He looks like a delinquent, but is a rich young man.

His red hair and light brown tanned skin makes him look completely unlike a rich young man.

His name is "Greg Fou Seberg."

He doesn't get along well with Chris according to the game's setting, but I believe there was a friendship event along the way. It's not a necessary event to clear the game, but since the friendship event made it easier to capture him, I went through this event, which made girls fantasize about unspeakable things going on amongst these two, many times.

The crown prince "Julian Rafua Holfault."

The prince's foster brother and heir of a viscount household, "Jilk Fier Memoria."

The heir of an earl house from afar and the narcissist whose pride was in magic, "Brad Fou Field."

The son of a master swordsman who will succeed an earl household as an expert swordsman, "Chris Fier Arkwright."

The frank heir of an earl household whose doctrine is to learn through experience, "Greg Fou Seberg."

These five are the capture target characters—the five who might become the lovers of the protagonist.

In the game, I memorized them in the order of black, green, purple, blue, and red.

Originally, there was also a handsome boy named “Kyle” that would join. He could be purchased by the protagonist as a slave—an exclusive servant.

He was normally a convenient character that would take personal care of you and would tell you the status of the love meter. In battles, he could use magic act as a support, but he’s not here.

It seems he held a position that was like a cute little brother, but to me it felt like he was just the protagonist’s maid.

I should mention that in Holfault, the middle name “Rafua” is for royalty, “Fier” is for royal court nobility, and “Fou” is for people the come from feudal lord nobles.

The five people made a complete set, and amongst their followers, the ones whose skills stood out fortified their surroundings.

Within that group, Olivia and I were mixed in.

So why am I here?

The reason for that is for the sake of one of the five.

Olivia was an honor student, and I was an adventurer who made an achievement... I suppose that the academy wanted me to escort Julian while guarding him in the dungeon.

Using knights and soldiers from home is considered inelegant, along with using the power of one’s home or its surroundings. However, if there’s someone like me who’s of the same generation and has made achievements, it seems that’s reason enough for us to move together.

I’m not too well-versed on this, but I suppose that since bringing along soldiers or knights without permission is troublesome, they decided to settle on using fellow students to solve this problem.

Even in the academy, it would still be troubling if Julian got injured.

Various things piled up, like the academy's intentions and Anjelica's own recommendation, causing this kind of result to happen.

You know... we're entering a dungeon now, but what we're challenging is the beginner level of beginner levels.

It's excessive to have people working like guards here.

Perhaps having the same thought, Julian had a displeased face. That reminded me, I believe that he talks with the protagonist about how he hates things like this happening to him.

The prince's fiancée, Anjelica, was also in the group while searching our surroundings.

Basically, it was decided that gender had no bearing on entering a dungeon.

This is one of the few cases where the academy treated men and women equally.

The group had about thirty people.

That feels like a lot, but our entry to the dungeon this time is more like sightseeing. There's likely no problem with this number of people.

"At any rate, there's not much I can say when I get called out to do this."

While I looked at my surroundings, Olivia seemed uneasy.

"Maybe we should voice out our opinion?"

"I wonder. It might be better to just follow their directions, since it would otherwise be considered as being intrusive."

If I'm speaking about my real intentions here, then I'm wondering about who the protagonist is going to go for, but I don't want to get too involved, so I needed to keep a distance.

Won't someone here get close with Olivia and set up a good mood...? I was thinking of such things, but I felt an oddly unpleasant feeling.

Why do I have to watch one of these other jerks get close with a good child like Olivia?

...Should I just bear with it for the sake of the future?

I'd like the story to progress by having one of the five guys make Olivia happy. Otherwise, things will turn serious.

The teacher ahead started explaining to everyone.

"Now then, please form groups. If you reach the third floor of the dungeon, come back. Don't progress any further than that."

It was decided that we would make five groups of six people. Even so, the thirty people here agreed on moving while close to each other.

Julian, the one that shan't be hurt, and his clique were in the center while I ended up being in the front. Well, that's fine.

However, splitting into groups was the problem.

"Like I said, know your place!"

Anjelica's anger-filled voice echoed in the dungeon.

Everyone turned their head, and saw that she was standing in front of Marie.

The teacher got into a panic in front of the youthful daughter of a duke.

Looking at how the situation was developing, it seems that there was a dispute over a group's composition.

Marie was hiding behind the prince.

...What a sly one she is.

"Anjelica, leave it be."

Anjelica talked back to Julian, who was sticking up for Marie.

"Your Highness, are you going to allow this person's selfishness?"

Marie cast her eyes downward from behind the prince. She held onto the prince's sleeve with her fingers, seeing her do those cute gestures, as if it was her intent, made me oddly irritated.

"Your Highness, I... just thought that it would be nice to be with you. I don't mind you refusing me if I'm a bother."

Anjelica snapped and let out an angry voice towards Marie.

"Don't get carried away! His Highness' social status is different from yours. I've been tolerating you up until now, but if you're taking that kind of behavior, then—"

Anjelica gave off a very furious image.

It's the same in both reality and the game. She's a character who's teased as being like an instant water-boiler. Well, she's the villainess and the protagonist's rival.

I suppose she's made an image of herself as an agonizing woman who has a short temper, good looks, and brandishes her household's power.

However, in this scene... it's supposed to be Olivia, the one standing next to me, who's to be protected. Meanwhile, Olivia's just being flustered while saying things like "W, what's going to happen?!"

...She looks strangely cute. It's different from Marie.

I was pondering about why it turned out like this, but I can only think of one cause.

"Have you noticed anything weird about that Marie girl?"

Olivia thought a bit in response to my words.

"C, come to think of it, recently she's been bullied harsher than me. The people around her gossip about things like how she's the daughter of a poor viscount household."

A viscount household is one rank above a baron.

However, that doesn't mean they're rich. There are many cases where despite a household's ranking being high, the scale of that household doesn't match up to it. In the past, viscount households had appropriate territory and income, but at present,

there are many that had their territory taken away, or just don't have a balance between court rank and household scale.

While the two argued, the people around agreed with Anjelica.

"It's unthinkable to get so close to him right in front of his fiancee."

"That girl has gotten closer with other boys too, right?"

"Unbelievable."

Judging from the reactions of the surrounding people, it seems that this girl named Marie has snatched away the position of the protagonist. As I was listening to Olivia—

"That's enough!"

Julian raised a loud voice, shutting up the mouths of the surrounding students.

Anjelica made a surprised expression.

"Y, your Highness?"

Jilk, with his usual gracefulness, appeared in front the prince as if he was going to protect him. He stood before Anjelica, held his right hand out sideways, and took a posture as if he was going to then protect both the prince and Marie.

"Anjelica, I prefer if you don't bother his Highness too much."

"Bother? I'm a bother? I judged that this was for the sake of his—"

The one who flared up towards those words was Greg, who seemed invested.

He carried his spear over his shoulder, squinted, and looked irritated.

"He's saying that kind of attitude is annoying. In the academy, we don't consider outside connections. Seeing this is making me lose my patience."

Nobody in the surroundings could talk back to the words from a heir of an influential noble. The prince then addressed the teacher.

“My apologies. We’ll be teaming up with Marie. Now we just need to figure out a suitable formation.”

The teacher panicked and nodded many times.

“R, right!”

Anjelica was dumbfounded, but I didn’t fail to notice the smiling grin Marie made while nobody was looking.

## 2

The dungeon in the royal capital, how do I say it... really feels like an abandoned mine.

Wooden pillars and beams were placed at equal distances apart within the wide passage.

Occasionally, there were ores that seemed to protrude from the walls, but those were the dungeon’s treasures. There also seemed to be a treasure chest left somewhere unnoticed, but its source hasn’t been investigated.

It’s futile to ponder seriously about this game-like reasoning.

There’s no point in thinking hard about it.

Olivia was taking the ores that were buried in the wall.

She’s come across iron ores or something like that. To begin with, it’s odd that the iron coming out already seems refined.

“Eheheh, I found one.”

Olivia looked delighted, but was so absorbed in it that when she wiped her sweat with her hand, the tip of her nose would get dirt on it.

“Congrats. That one’s definitely one hundred dia.”

I took the heavy lump of metal and tossed it into my luggage.

The monetary currency here consists of “dia” and “dil”.

One dia is... well, in terms of my previous world, I suppose it's worth about one hundred yen?

Gold and silver pieces also exist as money, but they're aren't seen very much due to there being bills and coins.

Olivia looked at her surroundings.

"What's wrong?"

"Well, you see... I'm wondering why a phenomenon like this is happening in the dungeon. I've even heard about there being a treasure chest, and it's a little strange. It's almost like someone arranged this."

There's no purpose in having feelings of unease about that.

After all, the dungeon is the kingdom's treasury of materials and funds that help support it.

In the first place, there's no point in asking for an explanation since this is the result of the game's setting, a lackluster setting at that.

"How strange. Alright, let's keep going."

"W, wait a moment! Leon, are you not concerned about it?"

I sighed.

"Not particularly."

Olivia's spirits waned.

"You're cold, Leon."

She's opened up quite a bit, but... unfortunately, this girl descends from commoners. Eventually, she'll be recognized as a saint and become an untouchable presence.

I shouldn't get married to such a partner, so I'm going to limit it at just being friends.

It's really regrettable.

If Olivia were a noble, people would get a little pushy in trying to confess to her. The reason being that she's a person with a kind heart among other things, but most importantly, she's practically the ideal partner.

She's from the countryside of an isolated island. She seems to be thinking about returning to her home in the future, though I wouldn't mind if she stayed over at my house.

...Really regrettable. If she wasn't both the protagonist and a commoner, I would've given her a marriage proposal.

"I shouldn't get depressed so quickly—whoops, perhaps it's better to end things here."

She's an honor student who will rise to power.

We didn't get along well with the other group members, so us two had gone on ahead.

I moved behind Olivia and drew out my sword from my waist. Perhaps it'd be more accurate to call it a broad katana.

Luxon talked about how a katana would be better for someone with a Japanese soul. It seems that Luxon is the kind that wants to try something out if it can.

...I'm neither a descendant of a samurai, nor do I practice kendo, but I took it with pleasure.

However, the Japanese sword it created was a fantasy sword.

It's something that resembles it.

Olivia trembled from behind.

"That's a... monster."

A giant ant had appeared. It was a giant insect that spanned about seventy to eighty centimeters in length.

However, things will turn grave if one gets bitten by its large jaws.

Once it came out, several more appeared within the dungeon.

They could be called the cleaners of the dungeon since there are rumors that they carry away dead adventurers and whatnot.

“I can’t use the rifle in a passage like this, so this is going to be troublesome.”

Even though I was raised in the country, my father trained me.

I remember my father saying that I would probably have to earn money through dungeons in the future, so he would train me in fighting.

It seems my father also went through hardships in the dungeon.

The giant ants noticed us and headed in our direction, one after the other.

There were five of them.

I slashed the neck of the first enemy right in front of me.

I moved around, swung my sword down, and had aimed at its relatively thin neck.

Once its neck separated, black smoke appeared from the giant ant as it vanished, but I didn’t pay attention to that and started my attack on the next one.

Giant ants are nuisances, but the joints connecting their head and torso is pretty fragile.

Their chin and head are more or less sturdy, they’ll withstand an unskillful slash of a sword.

For that reason, I made sure to slash at its weak point.

“Alright, that’s two! Now for the third!”

The katana I held tore through and killed one after another.

Being careful about their strong jaws, I took a roundabout path while continuing to swing down my blade, and then the battle finished once I sliced the neck of the last giant ant.

In the game, the turn-based combat meant that one would have to receive the enemy's attacks, but in reality, one can avoid them if they made good use of their positioning.

However, it goes to say that the opponent can do the same.

It's really hard to deal with them when one is surrounded. Death is likely.

I placed the katana over my shoulder as Olivia approached. Seeing the monsters, which had now let out black smoke and vanished, scared her a bit.

"You're strong, Leon. One by one, you were able to defeat those frightening monsters."

Indeed, a girl would hate the appearance of a giant ant.

Anyone can shoot a gun. The important part was hitting the right spot.

If you know the right way to kill them, they're easier to deal with.

"That's because I know their weak points. Once you get experience, you'll be able to defeat them with ease as well."

While looking Olivia, who made a troubled expression, I sheathed my katana and suggested that we move forward.

"Leon, you're reliable."

"It's just that this place is easy enough. There's only small fries that appear. Ah, gotta watch out for traps. Al~right, let's hurry and go!"

I was concerned about the mixed feelings Olivia was showing.

"If you don't feel like it, then there's—"

I then quickly draw out my katana, pushed down Olivia from behind, and held out my left arm. There was plating on the back of my hand to protect it, and a monkey-like monster that had jumped at us then bit at it.

"Shoot! I got careless."

I stabbed the monkey with the katana, but it kept strongly biting at my arm until it

disappeared. It turned into black smoke and vanished, but when I looked at my arm, its teeth had broken through the plating and reached my flesh, causing blood to appear.

Olivia, who was sitting on the ground, sprung up and got into a panic when seeing my arm.

“I, I’m sorry. It’s because you were protecting me—”

Seeing Olivia getting teary-eyed and worried about me made me think about how a guy would probably protect this child when seeing her like this.

In the game, I thought that the protagonist had deceived those five guys and made them meat shields who would sacrifice themselves, but... I don’t feel anything ill now.

“I got negligent as well, so it’s fine. An injury of just this much is fine, so—”

“N, no! We need to treat it right away!”

Olivia took off the plating covering the back of my hand, rolled up my sleeve, and held her hand over the location of injury.

A faint, white light came from her palm, and it felt very warm.

“...Healing magic?”

There’s lots of people who can use magic, but only a few can use healing magic.

I recall the protagonist being one of the special ones who can do it.

Olivia smiled while looking at my arm.

“That’s a relief. The wound closed.”

“Th, th, thanks.”

This is a fantasy world with magic, but the rarely seen healing magic gave me a bit of a surprise. Olivia’s smile then turned towards me.

“This has been my strong point for a long time. After a traveling scholar taught me a

lot as a teacher, I've been doing self-study."

"...How amazing."

Was there such a setting? I can only remember the part about healing magic being the protagonist's pride.

"I'm glad that I was useful for you, Leon"

I had a single thought when seeing Olivia delighted like that.

There really is something special about this child.

### 3

The group led by Julian was essentially one that was in the middle while following behind the one in front.

There was also a group behind him, so Julian and his teammates were protected both from the front and back.

However, monsters still jumped out within this dungeon and its complicated branched paths.

There were also dangerous moments when traps appeared.

They advanced through the floors in the dungeon.

Though it was the first and second floors, they could die if they let their mind wander.

Julian broke into a cold sweat from his first dungeon and combat experience.

Next to him stood Jilk, who looked strained while protecting Julian.

The normally rude and chatty Brad had clammed up, and even Chris didn't let go of his sword's hilt due to the tension.

Greg was the only one accustomed to a dungeon, but perhaps thinking that there was no meaning to the academy preparing a venture of this level, seemed to be leisurely.

Julian paid attention to the woman behind him—Marie.

“No problems with the pace we’re walking at?”

Marie smiled towards his slightly clumsy speech.

“It’s fine, your Highness.”

For Julian, Marie was a girl who gave a fresh impression, the type that nobody in the royal palace had.

Listening to the stories of her hardships stirred up his desire to protect her.

The biggest reason for that was their encounter, though.

Marie appeared when Julian was alone, since sometimes his relation with Anjelica got troubling and bothersome, and then took an impolite attitude as she got angry.

He never experienced a girl of the same age getting angry at him, and was surprised when Marie got a little rough, slapped him, and scolded him like she was his mother.

That left Julian with both an impression of surprise and freshness, and he couldn’t help but pay attention to Marie afterwards.

“If there’s anything you’d like me to know, then feel free to speak out.”

“Alright.”

Marie’s smile relieved Julian, but Greg clicked his tongue when seeing the two like that.

“I’m more worried about his Highness the crown prince than about Marie. Those raised in the royal palace are weak against feudal lord nobles, like Marie, who are more strong-willed than they seem.”

Chris tightened his gaze in response to those words.

“...You have some nerve for a wild bumpkin. However, I cannot overlook you being impolite towards his Highness.”

Jilk soon intervened.

“You’re too serious as well, Chris. We’re students of the academy right now, so pulling attention to such things is unnecessary.”

Greg made a roaring laugh.

“Apologies. However, if you think hard enough, you’ll remember that feudal lords tend to get very arrogant. My bad.”

The person he was referring to soon realized what he was saying.

A vein appeared on Brad’s forehead.

“A meathead thinks about everything in terms of brute strength. Marie, you’ll face trouble if you marry a man like that.”

Greg talked back while Marie made a bitter smile.

“Hey, stop lying! Marie, a woman who comes over to my place won’t face any trouble. If you become that heinous Brad’s wife, you’ll get tired of his meticulous personality. If you come to my place, I’ll let you live as you please. Aren’t you getting sick of the formal life of nobles as well?”

It seemed he was panicking while trying to clear up a misunderstanding with Marie.

The team of guards felt awkward listening to this conversation amongst Julian and the others.

There were groups that were defending Julian, and amongst them stood Anjelica.

They were a noisy group.

However, the mood changed completely once Greg immediately readied the spear in his hands.

“...Hey, everyone be alert. We’ve got giant ants.”

All members held up their weapons in a panic.

They were in a dungeon. It would especially be frightening to use guns in this passage since it could lead to friendly fire.

For that reason, one was not supposed to rely on guns.

Jilk and the girls had a handgun for self-defense, but the boys were not allowed to carry firearms.

Greg got slightly impatient.

“There’s... six of them. They’re going to come out from that side road.”

A slightly irritated Brad criticized the other groups.

“You group in the front, what are you doing?!”

Chris drew his sword in silence.

Then, he took an elegant posture.

“If they’re coming from the side road, they’re not going to cross paths with the group in the front. At any rate, six of them is a lot. Your Highness, please step back.”

However, Julian took a momentary glance at Marie, stepped forward, and took out his sword.

(As if I’ll let her see such a shameful display of myself here.)

Greg whistled.

“How nice, your Highness. You’re part of the royalty, for sure.”

While being surprised by Julian taking a fighting stance, Jilk took out his handgun. Jilk was exceptional at handling small arms, so despite him being a boy, he was allowed to possess one.

Anjelica was in the back.

“What are you doing! Defend his Highness!”

There were two pairs of six people that were protecting Julian and the others. They were supposed to be the opponents of the monsters.

However, Greg shouted.

“Move back!”

Wielding his spear that had an ornament attached which was the same color of red as his hair and eyes, Greg leaped forward, pushed aside the guarding students, and swung his weapon down to strike a target.

While a squashed giant ant was wrapped in black smoke, two more approached and tried to sandwich Greg.

When he raised his spear, one of them had already been bisected by a slash, while the other was roasted in flames.

When he looked, it turned out that Chris, wielding his sword, had entered the scene.

“Your movements are unwieldy.”

Behind him was Brad holding a staff. Brad was the one who released magic.

“You really are a meathead. I could defeat three of them at the same time if you weren’t in the way.”

Immediately after were the sound of two gunshots.

Two giant ants got their heads shot through, were engulfed in a black smoke, and vanished.

White fumes came out from the muzzle of Jilk’s revolver.

“You’re losing focus. —Your Highness.”

The last one that remained headed towards Julian.

Anjelica shouted.

“What are you doing! Hurry and protect his Highness!”

Jilk spoke to reprimand the shouting Anjelica.

“Just watch for a bit. Anjelica, his Highness is not weak.”

Unlike Anjelica, who was in a panic, Jilk was calm.

Julian started running, and raised his broad, double-edged Western sword.

“Ha!”

With one downward swing, the giant ant’s head and torso had cut open, black smoke appeared from it, and it disappeared.

When Julian wiped the sweat on his cheeks, he noticed that he was trembling. Then, he struck his sword onto the ground, causing a stone to bounce upon contact.

He didn’t wear gloves, so the back of his hand was cut just a little bit.

Upon which, Marie ran up from behind and clutched Julian’s hand.

“Your Highness, are you alright?”

Julian felt reassured by the warmth of her delicate hand that was holding onto him.

(What a relief. Is this affection? No, is this love? —Hmm?)

Julian noticed Marie’s hand lightly shining. Then, when Marie took her hands off, he saw that the wound had disappeared.

“Marie, you—”

Marie then said “Shh~” while holding her finger to her lips. Noticing that she wanted him to remain silent about it, Julian closed his mouth.

“It’s good that his Highness is safe. Of course, it’s a relief that all of you are safe as well.”

For Julian, Marie, who had worried about him even after the fight ended, seemed more pleasant than Anjelica, who tried to stop him when he was about to enter battle.

Anjelica then approached. At that moment, she pushed Marie aside to drive her off.

“Your Highness, I have a towel.”

However, Julian found Anjelica annoying.

“...I don’t need it. Anyways, let’s move on ahead.”

Saying that, he took Marie’s hand and moved forward.



We entered the third floor.

Olivia and I had arrived at the destination for today’s lessons.

A teacher was waiting there to make sure that no student would get carried away and keep going, so when we arrived, we ended up having to wait for the others to come.

Looking at the contents inside the luggage I was carrying put a smile on my face

“As expected of the royal capital’s dungeon. When we had gone on ahead of them, those rich nobles thought we were going to get ourselves killed, but now we’ve managed to get a hold of so much metal.”

As expected of a fantasy world, the metal that popped out of the dirt had taken on the hues of iron, copper, and other various colors, as if they had already been refined. I shed tears in my gratitude.

There were also pretty crystals that were called demon stones.

Olivia took a crystal into her hand and looked at it.

“It looks like a jewel. What in the world are these things used for?”

While calculating how much this stack of treasure would sell for, I explained the matter of demon stones.

“Let’s see~, this and that would be worth two hundred dia, so—oh, you asked about demon stones? They’re energy resources. It seems that when you’re forging metal, you can toss them into the kettle and expect good results. I don’t know the details, but they’re pretty amazing stones. That doesn’t matter though, since we’ll be able to sell them for a high price.”

Once we sell the stuff we obtained, we'll get about five hundred dia.

It's good that we were able to get this much after going on ahead. This amount of treasure isn't much for the rich guys at any rate.

"Even after dividing this much amongst two people, it's still... not even enough to cover a tea ceremony. Darn, I need to earn more."

I still have the tea utensils I bought from last time, but once I start purchasing the tea leaves and sweets, the expenses will soon rise from one hundred dia to two hundred dia, and so on.

While I was feeling down, Olivia then spoke to me.

"Why did demon stones appear? I'd understand if it were metal, but there's no such thing as a mine where demon stones pop out. I've heard that they appear only in dungeons, so it's been on my mind."

Since it seemed that she was going to be so keen from now on, I didn't take her reaction seriously.

While pondering as such, I ended up speaking out loud.

"Oh~, it's *that*. *That*. When monsters are killed, their magic power is released and accumulates into the ground. That accumulation takes the form of a demon stone."

"Is that so? This is the first time I've heard something like that, though. Err, it was written in the textbooks that there still isn't an explanation found for it yet."

"Trust me. I'm sure that I'm not mistaken since I remember reading about it somewhere. Huh? If that's the case, then perhaps the treasure chest was also formed from the accumulation of magic power as well? Magic, or rather, magic power sure is convenient."

For the next tea ceremony, perhaps I should get items that are more tailored to the other party?

In that case, I'd have to repurchase a tea set, but wouldn't that result in an embarrassing situation where it seems that I only made the utensils elegant in an act of foolishness?

Damn it, why does tea have to be this profound?

Or perhaps it's just me wanting to have a famous tea set.

I sort of understand the feelings of a Sengoku era Japanese military commander stocking up on tea utensils now.

It seems that the tea ceremonies in this world also follow the Way of Tea. (*TLN: The Way of Tea refers to Japanese conduct in the preparation/presentation of tea gatherings.*)

While I was thinking deeply about it, Olivia looked into my face.

"...What?"

"Leon, you're pretty knowledgeable. That surprised me."

Knowledge. That's not it.

Basically, even though this is my second life, on the entrance examination of the academy, I was ranked as being in the upper-average score of seventy points.

If it's about excelling students, then find one of the others scattered around.

However, I'm pleased that she praised me while being glad.

I'm just an insignificant human. However, I don't hate how I am.

"R, really? If there's something you don't understand, how about I help teach it to you?"

A full smile appeared on Olivia's face when I said that.

"Yes, please!"

Well, there shouldn't be a problem in taking care of studies during the break periods of searching for a marriage partner.

# Chapter 6

## The True Protagonist

### 1

—I feel like hitting my recent-past self.

I showed off by telling Olivia that I could help teach her things, but I didn't actually check her level of comprehension.

I mean, she didn't say that she had trouble keeping up with the material around her!

And yet—

“I don't understand it past this point. It has to do with magic, so apart from ordinary spells, magic utilizing art rites could also be applied, and—”

It was just us two holding a study group in the library.

In the beginning, I thought that it was going to be a study session with a girl in the midst of a bittersweet youth, but now I was breaking into a cold sweat while surprised at the extent of Olivia's knowledge.

In other words, Olivia's intelligent.

“Y, yeah, wouldn't it be like that?”

I've somehow managed to make it through using both knowledge I've studied up until now and from the game.

However, the intelligent Olivia nodded along to my vague words while seeming impressed.

“Right! The textbook isn't right, there really is a mistake, isn't there? I thought it was strange for some reason. I felt something off about the explanation on how using magic is supposed to feel. I'm glad I asked you, Leon.”

What to do... this child began pointing out mistakes in the textbook.

“N, not everything has an error. I think the textbook is important still.”

“I agree. About twenty percent of it feels off, but on the other hand, I agree with eighty percent of it.”

When I looked at Olivia’s textbook, it had signs of extensive use. Could it be that this girl has already finished reading through it? An amount worth one school term? It’s still June!

Yet she managed to do it even though some of the nobles have given up on the textbook after having a hard time on it?!

I’ve been studying in accordance to what we’ll be tested on, but I can hardly say I understood its contents. In the first place, the score I got on magic was seventy points.

While praying that the time would go by soon, the two of us continued our study group.

Then, our arranged time had passed.

“I, it’s already time to wrap things up?”

“Seems so. It all went by in the blink of an eye, didn’t it?”

Olivia looked delighted.

For me, time seemed to go by at an immensely slow rate.

“Um, can I ask for your help during the next time off?”

Seeing her upturned eyes while making the request, I wanted to reply with “Yes!” as someone of the male sex. However, I don’t really want to do it that much.



Searching for some excuse to bail out, I remembered an important matter in the academy. Right, marriage! I came to this academy for marriage...! I can't really say that I came here to study, given the strangeness of this world.

"S, sorry, I need to make preparations for a tea ceremony during my next time off."

Olivia got flustered and apologized.

"N, no need to apologize, I was the one that asked, after all. R, right. You're busy as well, Leon."

Yeah, I sure am busy.

I felt bad towards Olivia, who held her textbook and notes while looking lonely, but I can't forget my original purpose here.

I have to find a bride that I can maintain a businesslike relationship with.

In the first place, I rank low within the class' caste.

I've been frantically making requests for a good partner, a girl with a kind and nice personality, within the higher ranks. Though there are girls who are kind and nice, those girls don't approach people like me since they're aiming to rise up in terms of their household and their future.

Aah, what a cruel world this is. No wait, wasn't it like this in my previous world?

Olivia thanked me with a smile while looking into my eyes.

"Leon, thank you for today."

Her eyes sparkled while she smiled, but it was directed towards me, a guy who had lied in order to get out of the situation. This girl gave a genuine word of thanks.

I felt shameful from the embarrassment.

Even though I lived longer than Olivia in my previous life, I had to lie and pretend that I could help with her studies for the sake of my tiny pride... I felt ashamed of myself.



I was in my room within the boys' dorms.

I called over my friends Daniel and Raymond, and then we snacked on sweets and drinks. They're not the kind of sweets that would be offered to girls, but the fried, greasy kind.

Considering that there are carbonated drinks, it seems like this world is in a pre-modern era, approaching towards being modern.

Thinking about it like that, there's also the matter of uniforms. Is it just a matter of course since it's an otome game?

Daniel was eating some french fries.

"Did you hear? Two of the rich people have already established marriage plans. Furthermore, they were people that were kind to even us, Milly and Jessica... I'm way too envious."

Raymond pretended to be calm in front of the depressed Daniel. However, it was obvious that he was feeling down and could cry at any time.

It was inevitable since Raymond had taken a liking to Milly.

"It's obvious that they would go for nice households rather than ours. It was a lost cause from the start... well, I'm happy as long as Milly is happy."

The two were in low spirits after what they said.

The rich group made a display of all their merits, and took the offensive in asking girls for marriage.

They made speedy engagements that left no gaps.

Even the rich were frantic.

Milly and Jessica were the ideal partners for the boys, or rather, the finest ones, so now the rich guys are scrambling for the next best girls. It's difficult for people like us to get in contact with them. Inevitably, the girls that guys like us will get involved with...

will be the cruel ones.

If one was from an earl household or above, an outstandingly prestigious family, or a rich household, then the story would be different. Those guys will already have a partner decided.

It's like that with Julian's fiance, Anjelica. Due to that, the boys with the highest rank aren't frantic about marriage.

Daniel chugged a carbonated drink.

"Damn it! With this, my hopes for the school year are gone! There are only cruel girls now!"

There were a lot of girls who looked down on boys.

Raymond nodded.

"We were unlucky for this first year. There are too many prestigious nobles, starting with his Highness Julian. We just can't compete with them."

There were too many boys with unrivaled looks who had come from rich, well-established families, so the people around had looked at us harshly.

We were at too different of a level to be compared, making it difficult for guys like us in the lower ranks to invite a girl.

Julian and the others had the lineage, demeanor, assets, appearances... and above all, a fiance, so they were able to take it easy.

"Anyways, Leon, are things going well on your end? Haven't you been spending a lot time with the honor student recently? Did you give up on marriage?"

I sipped on some juice while explaining to an uneasy Daniel.

"I haven't given up. It's just that I keep sending invitation letters and I keep getting rejected."

Raymond has a bad mouth, but he seemed to be worried about me.

“Your careless sympathy is going to be your own undoing... If you get too close with the honor student, the girls will be unfriendly towards you. It would be better to keep your distance.”

Rukul, a third year student, had said something similar before.

Marriage with a girl was tough for some of the seniors, so they ended up having to accept some pretty harsh conditions. For example... allowing for lovers outside of the usual demi-human slaves.

It was a humiliating agreement where one would have to look after the wife and her other lovers since she was the one giving birth to the heir. There were many boys who had no choice but to accept such conditions.

Amongst them, some of the boys entered a bigamous relationship, and others have to dish out money for their wife to live in luxury with her lovers. Those were the best circumstances for girls.

According to the girls, they're the ones who are giving birth to the heirs, so this was natural for them.

My previous world had more upright circumstances.

Daniel asked me a question.

“Leon, your brother is definitely in the regular class, right?”

“Right.”

My older brother, the second son, wanted to enroll in the advanced class as well, but it was impossible to get the large amount of money needed for it after the eldest brother had enrolled.

I wanted us to share the hardship together, but unfortunately, that wasn't the case.

“The girls in the regular class are upright, so what's with the ones in the advanced class...?”

The girls in the regular class are relatively decent.

Marriage certainly seems to be tough, but it's better compared to the advanced class.

The reason for that is because they don't purchase slaves that serve them.

In fact, the girls that are particularly cruel are the ones in the advanced class—especially the ones from a baron household and above, but still below an earl household. Those above earl households basically aren't allowed to have slaves. Earl households can go either way and can have trouble deciding on it, but oddly, a lot more weight was placed on the opinions of the girls.

...The partner I'll have to marry will be right from that particular range.

"When I heard my older brother talk about it..."

"Hmm?"

"...I wanted to hit him."

Why are girls in the advanced class this cruel? This being the world of an otome game is the only explanation I can come up with, but I can't help but be irritated about it.

"It would have been better if I had taken the regular class. If that had happened, then I wouldn't be going through this hardship."

Raymond agreed while seeming like he was going to cry.

"Why does marriage have to be so relentless for us?"

What would the two think if I replied by saying that it's because this is the world of an otome game? Raymond then brought up some rumors within the academy to distract us from our whining.

"Come to think of it, it seems that those surrounding his Highness Julian have become noisy recently."

I listened to the conversation while sipping my juice and going "Hmm." To begin with, we're talking about a realm beyond our reach.

It was an interesting topic of discussion, but one that we're unrelated to.

Raymond was just telling a story to pass the time, and he didn't place much importance on credibility.

From my point of view, the people around Julian are normally noisy. Perhaps one of the game's events occurred? I can only assume so.

Daniel joined in.

"You're talking about that? That girl... Marie? The kid that seems to have been bullied by a lot by the girls?"

It would be natural for them to hate her since she's gotten close with the crown prince.

I thought as such, but Raymond began to continue on—

"This is a continuation of that rumor, but I heard that the leader of the ones bullying her is his Highness Julian's fiance—the daughter of a duke household. There's gossip about his Highness getting enraged after realizing that. There's quite some credibility to it, so it might be true."

—I spit out my drink and started coughing violently.

"H, hey, are you alright?"

"Leon, do you know something?"

The two were thinking that perhaps I knew something and wanted to hear it, so I brushed it aside by saying "No, my drink just went down the wrong pipe."

While wiping my mouth, I also wiped my cold sweat.

The two then cleaned up the table.

However, I have an interest in what Raymond said. Based on what I know about the game's events, there's more to the matter of the crown prince getting enraged at his fiance.

Furthermore, I'm close with Olivia.

I haven't seen her getting intimate with the capture target boys.

Just what the heck was going on?

## 2

I had been thinking that I shouldn't get involved with the otome game's events.

It would have been fine for a mob to watch from a distance like a mob should. I thought that the story was unrelated to me, but things aren't looking good now. I had a hunch that leaving things as they are would be dangerous, so I investigated some things myself.

Since Olivia's the only girl from the advanced class that I'm closely acquainted with, I spoke to her.

In the library, I asked about Julian's relation with Marie.

"I'm sorry. I don't know the full details of it either. All I know is that at some point, all the girls turned cold towards Marie, but it calmed down now."

"...Is there anything else you know? Have you made ever made contact with Marie?"

A girl has snatched away the position of the protagonist.

I had considered the possibility that this world has nothing to do with the game, and that I was just mistaken.

However, this doesn't seem to be the case.

"I haven't spoken with her before, but... I did encounter her a couple times. I went to the school library a few days after the school entrance ceremony, and that's when I heard a voice call out to me."

I understood from Olivia's behavior that she didn't really want to talk about the matter she was discussing, since she was casting her eyes downward while seeming sorrowful.

Yet, I wanted to know. It may be intrusive on Olivia's feelings, but I'll have to do at least this much to get information about Marie, the ominous woman.

“I want to know no matter what.”

Olivia lifted her head.

“...Leon, do you find people like Marie attractive?”

Judging from how embarrassed she looked, it seemed that she misunderstood this as being a discussion about love.

Being in love with her? Disgusting.

Olivia was surprised when she saw me make a repulsed expression.

“Huh?! That’s not it?”

“I don’t really like her.”

“I, is that so?”

Olivia thought for a bit, and then proceeded to talk about her relation with Marie.

“When I was thinking about looking into one of the library’s rooms, Marie showed up and told me to go away because I was being a nuisance. There was also a time where I saw her in the courtyard. I was similarly treated like an nuisance, so I thought that maybe it was something I did and asked her about it. When I did that, she said that she hated women like me.”

Olivia made a bitter smile.

So Marie hates Olivia?

There are a lot of girls that would hate a commoner for coming to a noble’s academy, but something feels odd about the part where she said that she hated women like her.

Olivia was worried while I remained silent.

We then heard some voices when us two had ceased talking.

“We’re doing it in a place like this?”

“It’s fine. Aren’t you and I the only two people here?”

It seemed like a jovial conversation between a boy and a girl. Judging from their delighted tone of voice... are these two lovers?

Wondering just who in the world would let such an envious development unfold here, I crouched down and wanted to check the behavior of those people.

“Leon, what are you doing?!”

Olivia cautioned me with a low voice, so I answered back in a low voice as well.

“Well, I’m just curious. Things like who’s getting intimate with who are important information for us. There’s also my curiosity. Now then, who is it that’s...?!”

Upon seeing what was there, Olivia seemed like she was going to unintentionally raise a voice, so I covered her mouth.

I held my breath and paid close attention on not making a noise.

There, a boy with purple hair... Brad, had embraced a small, delicate girl with blond hair.

Come to think of it, Brad was the character who’s often in the library.

Olivia was also taking a long, hard look at the situation.

Furthermore—the one that guy was kissing was Marie.

It was after school in a library room. The two were glued to each other, and they moved their arms around each other’s backs as they embraced one another. I never thought that I’d see such a strong kissing scene like this in the library room.

The two of us slowly left that spot and fled from the library room.



Marie Fou Lafuan was on the way towards her dorm from the library room.

She recalled her sweet time with Brad, and traced her lips with her fingers.

“Hehe, this world really is the best. It’s splendid that there are few stupid boys like the ones in my previous world, and that this world rightly recognizes the rights of women.”

The school building was dyed orange from the evening sun.

While holding down the urge of wanting to skip and hop, she headed to the girls’ dorms.

“Julian and the others have even reprimanded the stupid boys that were bullying me and silenced them... this really is the best. Now that the bullying has stopped, my second school life will be fun~”

This world was Marie’s ideal world.

After all, she was in the position of where the protagonist should have been.

She embraced the illusion that the world revolved around her.

Just around the corner of the corridor in the academy building were the figures of Julian and Jilk. It seemed that they were looking for Marie.

“Marie, so you were here.”

The two approached her.

(These two are always together aren’t they. Could it be that they have that kind of relationship? I heard that even back then, homosexuality was a thing, so perhaps it’s that.)

While harboring cruel thoughts in her mind, she straightened herself and made a slight smile.

It was easy for Marie to act out the part of the ideal girl for these two, especially for Julian.

“You Highness, did something happen?”

Julian surprisingly gave her a warning.

“Stop using ‘your Highness.’ Julian is fine. I was talking with Jilk about this, but do you not have an exclusive servant?”

Marie nodded.

She then made herself look slightly embarrassed in front of the two.

“R, right. Actually... since my financial situation is tough, it’s hard for me to arrange an exclusive servant.”

(My parents don’t want to waste money. If possible, I would have wanted to reincarnate into a wealthy household)

Hiding the displeasure she had about her home, Jilk proposed something to the seemingly admirable Marie.

“In that case, his Highness and I can cover the expenses. You’ll be lonely without an exclusive servant, Marie.”

In her mind, Marie made a triumphant pose towards the proposal and voiced her appreciation.

(With this, I will have a lover that I don’t need contraceptives for! There weren’t many girls who didn’t have one, so I was getting fairly concerned. All the same, this is a surprising world that lets women openly carry along lovers. Well, I’m glad about it so it doesn’t matter.)

On the inside, Marie was a little curious about the fact these two were going to give her a lover, but she went along with it while believing that this was how the world worked.

“Th, thank you. Your hi... Julian, Jilk.”

She made an embarrassed expression while saying Julian’s name, but beneath the surface, Marie was actually relieved.

Jilk guided Marie and Julian.

“Now then, shall we prepare a carriage and depart? Let’s head towards a prominent slave firm in the royal capital.”



There were rooms in the girls' dorms that were spacious and extravagant.

They were available for girls from well-established families of an earl rank or higher. Among them, there were some special rooms arranged for those who had connections with the royal family.

The room Anjelica used was one of those.

In the room, a girl who was one of her followers arrived.

"Anjelica, we cannot allow that woman. Isn't his Highness purchasing a sub-race slave as a gift for her? You aren't even allowed to own one, though."

The girl couldn't see the face of Anjelica, who was standing near a window.

Her expression was warped with bitterness.

"...Leave it be. If you understand the meaning of having a demi-human slave, then you know what kind of relationship he has with that girl."

"B, but."

Anjelica, a young duke woman, could purchase several tens of demi-human slaves considering the scale of her household.

However, she couldn't do it precisely because she was the daughter of a Duke's house. Above all, she held the position of being the fiancée for the crown prince.

She was a girl who would become the queen in the future, so having other lovers was no laughing matter.

After the girl left the room, Anjelica took a nearby object into her hands and threw it onto the floor as hard as she could.

"Stop fooling around! You're... you're getting so infatuated with an inconsequential girl! I'm—I'm doing this for your sake—just for your sake!"

It was easy to guess that Anjelica was rampaging from her outward appearance and

her violent personality.

Just a while ago, the girls bullying Marie had been questioned by Julian and the others. They weren't really told to, but they ended up spitting out Anjelica's name.

The girls belonging to that group were not part of her followers, but had said that they were from the same group under the dicey situation they found themselves in.

It's likely that they wanted to distract themselves from their everyday routine by bullying Marie, who had gotten carried away. Since girls were treated with importance in this society of nobles, there were many who didn't show proper self-restraint.

However, cowering in front Julian and the others when being questioned, they blurted out Anjelica's name.

Due to that, Anjelica was blamed by Julian and the others for Marie's bullying. She denied her involvement, but they didn't believe her.

After that, Anjelica's position within the school weakened.

Now, there were an increasing number of girls that were trying to earn Marie's favor.

There was also a group of boys that were approaching Marie, perhaps noticing what was happening around them. They mainly consisted of second or third sons, people who weren't going to be heirs, that wanted to get closer to Julian and the others.

It was particularly obvious that the girls were now harboring ill feelings towards Anjelica.

"You say I ordered them? You have no proof of it, and yet you believe the words of that woman..."

What frustrated Anjelica was that Julian only believed in Marie's words. He used the words of the bullies as a pretext to treat her like a wrongdoer.

It was unbearably frustrating for Anjelica.

A unity was made between the bullies and a group of people who were trying to empower themselves by spreading bad rumors about Anjelica and undermine her.

That much was still okay.

Anjelica didn't mind such small things.

However, the words Julian had said was what hurt her heart.

'We may be engaged, but at the academy, you're just a student. Don't interfere.'

—That's what he said to her.

Anjelica shed tears and sat down where she was.



“I was... for his Highness... I was raised for the sake of his Highness! Only for the sake of his Highness!”

Anjelica loved Julian.

However, Julian didn't love her back.

He only thought of it as a political marriage.

Ever since the engagement had been decided, Anjelica had worked hard. She pushed herself for Julian's sake, but not an ounce of her work had been appreciated.

The one Julian wanted was a woman like Marie.

“Your Highness... why did you say that to me... why!”

She covered her face with both of her hands, and Anjelica continued to cry as her tears ran down.

### 3

“Hey, stupid brotheer!”

It was the morning of our day off.

The one who came here to the boys' dorms was the animal, I mean my sister, who pridefully carried her slave around.

While yawning in my room, I checked the time, noticed that it was still seven in the morning, and lied back down onto bed.

“Don't doze off! What in the world are you doing! What are you doing!”

I didn't know the reason for her uproar, but I wanted to enjoy myself and fall back asleep.

“How improper of you, sister. Yesterday's lessons involved the boys training their martial arts. I'm tired, so let me sleep.”

The girls got to have fun playing sports, while the boys had to get caked in mud while

doing long training runs and martial arts practices. Since this was a world where it wasn't odd for one to lose their life fighting monsters or participating in a war, training was very strict.

"This isn't the time to be sleeping! Stupid brother, give me a detailed account of the first year class. Right now!"

My older sister, the second daughter, forcibly woke me up, leaving me wondering what she was in a hurry for.

Lifted up by a cat-eared slave in the morning, I sat down on a chair while rubbing my sleepy eyes and yawning.

"Information about the first year? Wouldn't you know more about that than me?"

"I heard some strange rumors, so I came here to check. You're more or less a student in the advanced class."

How impolite of her to say "more or less."

"Information? Aah, come to think of it, the class' Madonnas, Milly and Jessica, have chosen whom to marry. It's kind of a disappointment since they were really good people, but there's no helping it."

"I don't care about pointless stories like that."

Pointless? For us boys, it's a story that would put us to tears.

"Do you know about a girl named Marie?"

While I was reacting with a twitch, my older sister continued to talk and order me around.

The passionate kissing scene in the library came to my mind.

"...She's in his Highness Julian's group, and is intimate with him."

"Only with his Highness the crown prince?"

"...She's intimate with other prestigious nobles as well. Good for her, right?"

Even if flirting around is disapproved of in the academy, people still hear rumors about it. The rumors surrounding Marie have especially risen.

“There’s also a young girl from a duke household, right? Do you have detailed information on her?”

“You think I know? I only heard rumors like how his Highness the crown prince got mad at her.”

My sister pondered, and then made a stern face.

Now it was my turn.

“So, do *you* have a detailed account of her? It seems there are rumors spreading around about how that duke daughter ordered people to bully Marie.”

“Huh? Are you an idiot?”

My sister got angry and called me an idiot. I’d prefer if you showed some more self-control after having stormed into the boys’ dorms in the morning. Well, considering that you have that lover with you, you probably don’t have a sliver of self-control left.

“With a social status that high, even if she’s not ordering people around, those around her are selfishly moving. In the first place, if she was really serious about crushing a woman she’s against, then that woman wouldn’t be alive. The scale of a duke household is no joke. This is why men are useless.”

While feeling peeved, I asked a question to my sister, who had been looking down on me.

“So that duke woman is unrelated?”

“They’re separate matters. Since girls that were in her group did it, she still has to take responsibility, though.”

“Isn’t that unreasonable?”

“That’s the way the cookie crumbles.”

It seems that the world of an otome game is also difficult for girls. No wait, perhaps it

just for the villainess? In the game, did the villainess... not order for this happen? It's been ten years since I regained my memories, so my recollection is faint.

My sister looked at my face and made a serious expression.

"The second year and third year are also panicking. Above all, we don't want any more strange trouble around his Highness the crown prince. We have things we need to do as well. You need to seriously gather a little more information. Then, report it to me afterwards."

Who in the world does this woman think I am? I'm not your pawn. Well, I will investigate since I'm curious about it, though.

"You understand what this means, don't you?"

"Those girls are bothersome."

"Idiot, you utter idiot! Stupid brother!"

My sister, who had been noisy in the morning, grabbed me by the ear and said something as if ordering me around.

"His Highness the crown prince will inherit the throne as long as nothing happens! You understand that the people he's pleased with will be set for life, right? On the other hand, those that he's displeased with will be done for!"

This talk has nothing to do with a baron from afar.

On second thought, it has a lot to do with my sister, who wants to live in the city. If she gets married to someone bad, and that person garners Julian's antipathy, then there's no hope for success in her future career.

"Being able to marry and safely graduate is enough for me, so I'm not interested in this matter."

"Are you really a man?!"

In actuality, I just don't want to get involved with Julian and his surroundings. I was thinking that maybe there were benefits to getting close with him, but... getting close with him also meant getting dragged into what's to come.

That's a no-no.

—After all, a huge storm will befall upon the kingdom in the future.

That is if things go according to the game's story, though.

"Anyways, you say that it doesn't concern you, right? Well, there's no benefits nor drawbacks about this matter for me either."

It seemed that my sister was just wary of me getting involved and causing trouble upon the family.

"They wouldn't take any notice of a baron from afar."

However, the fact of the matter is that there really is something that has caught my attention.

I'm wondering what that Marie girl might do in the future.

My sister gave me a warning.

"There's a grade party at the end of the school term. Don't do anything stupid and make me lose face. I need to pick a man I want."

My busy sister headed out of the room.

"Ah, one last thing, did you even find a marriage partner?"

The look of my grinning sister had irritated me.

My sister wanted to marry and had been searching for a boy nonstop. I'm envious that she at least has a choice.

"Don't cause trouble if you find one."

"I thought you'd say that. Don't think that you have charm just because you stand out a bit. Why don't you polish your skills as a man?"

I laughed scornfully.

“How do you feel having bought a slave using the money from a man that has no charm? I’m all ears, my dear sister.”

Thereupon, my sister yelled “Go to hell, stupid brother!” and left the room.

Now that I was alone, I got up from my chair and stretched.

Luxon, who pretended to be an ornament in the room, rose up.

[It’s been quite lively for the morning.]

“So the first term is going to end... I wonder if it’s fine to just think about the party and the usual nobles?”

This is the world of an otome game.

The event for the first-years in the academy was modeled after those from the schools in Japan.

Well, it was game marketed towards Japanese people, so it was inevitable that it would be like that, though...

“A school term... I entered a dungeon with my friends and ended up holding tea ceremonies by the end of it all.”

[Even if there were zero results, the time spent was still valuable, right master? After all, my master is basically a lazy person. You moving around is by itself a great achievement.]

“Do you bear a grudge against me?”

[I dislike new humans, so that means I dislike you, master.]

“So you’re a sad AI that pushes me around. Be ready to keep pushing me around for as long as I live.”

[Sounds fun. All things considered, life at the academy seems truly hectic.]

In addition to attending the daily lessons, I also enter the dungeon for extra cash.

I've used that cash to fund tea ceremonies and invite girls, but it ends up failing repeatedly.

Things really have passed in the blink of an eye.

"...Say, can you gather information?"

Despite having a bad mouth, Luxon is basically faithful.

[Is this about the duke woman or that Marie girl? I possibly can, but even if I investigate information like their three sizes, I won't tell you.]

"...Please tell me."

[I refuse on the basis that it's not necessary.]

"Is that so? In that case, can you investigate whether or not what my sister said was true?"

[You want definite proof about the rumors? Does it concern you, master? You said you weren't going to get involved, but are going to change that policy?]

"I'm just curious."

[So it's just a spurt of curiosity? How hopeless you are. Well then, I'll go check the rumors.]

While saying that, Luxon's surface projected the surrounding landscape, making it vanish like it had blended in, and left the room to gather information.

This thing can do anything.

# Chapter 7

## White Glove

### 1

It was only a mere matter of time until the school term would end.

The grade party had become an established custom, but these parties held within the academy were extravagant.

No words could describe the quality and quantity of the cuisine lined up on tables. The boys participated while wearing their school uniforms, but the girls pretty much wore dresses.

The boys ogled the dressed-up girls, who had demi-human slaves stand next to them.

My line of sight automatically locked onto the chests of the girls as well, and I found it hard to avert my gaze.

I cleared my throat and made a serious face.

“Was that chest just now an F cup? That’s not it, I meant to say that the food here is amazing.”

I returned my gaze to the table, where Daniel was eating a large meaty dish on a plate. Raymond was amazed at that sight.

“This is the first time I’ve been to such a large party. The academy is tremendous.”

“Daniel, don’t talk with your mouth full. Thinking about the scale of this party, and how it’s held per grade, the royal capital really does seem tremendous. It’s a lot different from the poor barons in the countryside.”

Luxon had said something to me before.

The academy was doing this to show off the power of the royal capital to those from the countryside. Indeed, just this party alone showed the difference in their wealth.

I believe there's the possibility that it's also to show off to the rich, spoiled young nobles.

Surrounding us were boys from the same environment.

Students from the regular class were also participating today, meaning that there were many people participating in the party.

Daniel surveyed our surroundings.

"There are also a lot girls from the regular class who are dressed-up. There are too few girls wearing the uniform."

Raymond pushed up his glasses.

In front of him was a slender girl whom he took a liking to.

This guy is a taciturn person.

"There's a wide range of dresses ranging from pricey to cheap. It seems that there are even ones that go for two thousand dia."

That's two hundred thousand yen for a suit of clothes! That's when converted into Japanese currency, though.

Well, I don't know what's cheap or expensive, but the lowest cost seemed to be two hundred thousand.

Meanwhile, Marie, the current hot topic, had appeared in her uniform. The surrounding students created a commotion and noisily talked amongst each other.

With this situation at hand, the honor student who wore her uniform as well, Olivia, didn't stand out at all.

All things considered, a girl from a viscount household should've been able to prepare a dress... and as I was thinking of such things, Marie went over to the prince and the others.

The prince's group, the one that held the highest rank, welcomed Marie, but...

Julian was a bit surprised upon seeing Marie in her uniform.

"Marie, what happened to your dress?"

"U, umm, I couldn't prepare one."

Trying to appeal to her, the surrounding boys each said "We could have given you one if you said so," to Marie.

Jilk smiled.

"This does feel more refreshing than a gorgeous dress, though. Marie, how about we head to a tailor for a dress next time? There's a shop in the royal capital that I visit regularly."

"I, I can't do something rude like that."

In response to her modest attitude, Julian started a conversation amongst five people while seeming a little excited. It seems that those five are fighting for Marie's interest.

There's more apart from that.

For boy mobs like us, this party was also a chance for glory. According to our upperclassmen, it seems that this is an opportunity for couples to form.

"Well then, are you two ready?"

Once I called out to the two, Daniel set down his plate.

"Yep, I've eaten enough."

Raymond adjusted his glasses.

"We'll have to do our best."

The three of us immediately began to take action.

We went around inviting girls over.

With the kind of mood set in place here, it was possible that the girls may have become more lenient on letting us marry them. At this point, we were thinking that it would be fine even if our partner had a lover.

“Whoa! I found a trio of girls over there! Let’s hurry and try our luck!”

The other boys were making moves as well, so the three of us headed towards where the girls were, but—

“Huh? Come back when you’ve looked at a mirror.”

“Countryside barons? I don’t need a hillbilly.”

“Bumpkins will be bumpkins, so just go find some bumpkin girls to call out to. We’re only aiming for viscount households at the very minimum. Furthermore, remote regions... are out of the question.”

“How sickening, you boys are desperate for marriage. You can just see how shallow the people at the bottom are.”

“A man isn’t good if they don’t have more assets.”

“There’s a big difference between you and people like his Highness the crown prince.”

The girls lightly brushed us off, and their exclusive servants, their demi-human lovers, looked down on us. Their masters were the girls, and not us. Due to that, there were a lot of slaves that took a dismissive attitude towards boys.

Furthermore, a slave getting attacked would lead to an intense investigation being done.

They knew that they’re in a position safe from assaults, so they looked down on us.

“W, well, we’re just chatting, so—”

One of the girls used her chin to signal a cue to her servant.

Upon which, the muscular, Daruma-like sub-race servant thrust us away. *(TLN: Daruma’s are round, stout dolls)*

When the surrounding people gathered their sight towards the three of us tumbling, the girls laughed and the boys either laughed along with them or looked at us with sympathy.

“Try again. No wait, it still won’t work out unless you pray to be born as better man in your next life. See ya, bumpkin hillbillies.”

The girls and slaves around looked at us and laughed.



We were outside the party venue.

“Damn it! We got carried away!”

Daniel spoke without trying to conceal his anger.

Raymond, who sat on the bench with his knees under his arms, looked up into the night sky.

“If only we could redo our lives... I suppose that’s all I need to say.”

...This being my second life, I felt a bit mixed.

We heard happy-sounding music and laughter coming from the party venue.

We couldn’t bear with the mood inside the venue, so we went outside to escape. There were girls who laughed upon seeing us in that situation.

The ones who were laughing were the girls in the advanced class and their slaves.

Perhaps pitying us, the girls in the regular class had averted their gazes.

How miserable.

“...I’m kind of fed up with it all.”

Daniel was about to say something towards what I had said, but closed his mouth and looked down.

Raymond was also silent.

As the head of a baron household, I had to marry a noble lady no matter what.

When one owns a household... their legal wife has to be a noble lady. Otherwise, the people around us will go “Isn’t that unbecoming of the household?” and become cold.

My father married Zola because the drawbacks of not doing so were not to be taken lightly. It sometimes became the excuse for starting a war. There would be people saying that our actions don’t match our rank, and that we’re a vile house.

Due to that, the boys became frantic and the girl’s position only strengthened even more... leading to the current situation of the academy.

Us three fellows sat on the bench, and blankly stared into the sky.

“Those girls gave me an unpleasant feeling.”

Daniel agreed with what Raymond said.

“I know, right? Boys are scrambling to marry since the world will turn cold towards them if they don’t do so by graduation. The circumstances are way too different from girls, who have time to spare.”

Not all of the girls in the academy were particularly terrible, but the proportion of cruel girls was way too high.

Hence, there were many boys who didn’t find life at the academy pleasing.

I then remembered something detestable.

It was something the upperclassman Rukul said—

“It seems that in the academy, there were boys that there were boys who got fed up with women, and started chasing after other boys... but they had been smiling before enrolling in the school. Now, they weren’t smiling.”

Daniel and Raymond nodded.

There were boys who left the academy disgusted with women while going for other

boys.

It seemed that there were girls who liked romance between boys, like my little sister before I had reincarnated. There's no saving this world.

Enroll in school→come to hate how cruel women are→go after boys→give fujoshi's great joy. Rinse and repeat for each new school year.

Such a cycle happened.

It was pretty much a rotten spiral... I just called it that because it sounded cool. You see, when considering how these sad events repeat each year, I can't really use the term rotten chain here. No wait, can't I still use it? *(TLN: Based on what I looked up, 'rotten chain' refers to the idea that a fujoshi's children will also be fujoshis, creating a generational chain of them. My guess is that MC labeled the current situation as a spiral instead of chain, but backtracked when realizing that the idea behind calling it a chain still applies to the situation)*

Time passed by in silence.

Thereupon, we could not longer hear the musical performance within the party venue.

There was a live musical performance in there. Taking out my pocket watch, I confirmed that it wasn't yet time for the party to end.

I thought that the performance was taking a break, but when I strained my ears, I couldn't hear any laughter in the venue either.

I could hear an occasional voice, as if someone was shouting.

"Hey, doesn't something seem odd?"

Raymond turned his gaze towards the venue once I said that.

"Now that you mention it, there seems to be a strange commotion."

Daniel got up.

"Should we take a look? We don't need to go inside if we just peek through a window."

Raymond stopped him.

“I don’t want to be shamed even more than I have already been. If we’re spotted, we’ll be targets of ridicule. Though, I certainly am curious.”

The three of us showed signs of interest, but while we were talking about not going back into the venue, there was a girl who came outside.

The girl looked around, and then rushed over when she noticed us.

She was a girl in a uniform, Olivia.

“Leon! This is serious!”

## 2

When returning to the party venue, the place was wrapped in a strange atmosphere.

The students were watchfully waiting while clinging to the walls, but there was a group in the center being noisy.

I asked Olivia about the situation.

“What in the world happened?”

“It started out as a small quarrel. However...”

In the center were five people surrounding Marie. In addition to them, I could also see the figure of a pretty elf with blond hair and blue eyes, “Kyle.”

Anjelica raised her voice in front of the seven people.

It was a shout filled with grief.

“Why can’t you listen to me?! I’m—I’m doing this for your sake, your Highness!”

The prince was absolutely cold towards her quivering voice.

“Your words are not fit to be heard. End of discussion.”

“Please wait. If you know the character of that person, why do you still accept her?!”

I'm not sure what had happened, but I understood that Anjelica was desperate and trying to appeal to the prince.

When I looked to Olivia, she continued talking.

“Um, when Anjelica saw Marie holding hands with a boy other than his Highness the crown prince, she got angry. Then his Highness the crown prince said that she shouldn't be noisy over just that much.”

He forgave his girl even when she went after other men.

That was the kind of guy Julian was.

I definitely would hate it if something like that were to happen, but the prince seemed to think that it was fine.

Marie, wearing her uniform, hid behind the prince.

She took an attitude that would make someone want to protect her, while Anjelica on the hand wore a red dress, makeup, and appeared to shine.

Quite the contrast, right?

Anjelica and Marie looked like exact opposites.

Marie had guys and pretty boys surrounding her, but Anjelica had nobody near her.

Brad stepped forward.

“So the daughter of the Redgrave family has become this wretched. Look, there's nobody by your side.”

When Anjelica looked at her surroundings, the rich students and her supposed followers both turned away.

The students who held animosity towards her didn't act hostile, but they grinned while watching.

“Do you all know what that woman's done? All of you have been——”

Everyone held out their hand.

However, the boys weren't in a panic.

"We know."

Anjelica was surprised when the blue-haired Chris said that.

"What?!"

I felt that Chris had smiled for just a moment when looking at Marie. He was a guy that would keep a blank expression while swinging his sword, but when he made that expression, the girls around him had blushed.

Is it really because his looks? Is it his looks? It's his looks, isn't it?

"She had saved me. She listened to my troubles. So—I want to protect her."

I felt it was praise-worthy that he was able to make such a confession while all the students were watching.

The next one to step forward was Greg.

"Your argument is way too shoddy. Him directly saying that he liked her should give you enough of a clue of what's going on."

Jilk held his hand over his mouth while smiling.

"That's right. She's a lovely woman. Though, I'm sure that the one Marie loves the most is me."

Anjelica, who was at a loss for words, looked to the prince.

Julian made a slightly huffy expression

"Jilk, I think you're wrong. I'm the one Marie loves the most."

When he said that, the girls, who had been silent, then raised shrieks of cheers.

"Did you hear that just now?!"

“I want him to say that to me too!”

“I’m jealous. On the other hand, that duke woman is quite unsightly.”

Anjelica sneered.

She cast her eyes downward while clenching her fists.

“...Do you not intend to stop playing around while attending the academy, your Highness?”

Julian lowered his gaze once Anjelica said that.

“She’s the only irreplaceable woman for me. Anjelica, I didn’t dislike you before I had entered the academy. However, I cannot forgive your attitude towards Marie.”

The girls around Anjelica laughed at her.

“Did you hear that? The duke woman’s done for.”

“This is pretty much the same as him breaking off the engagement, isn’t it?”

“I always hated that girl.”

They were slandering her to their hearts content now that her position had weakened.

“I wonder if this is what girls feel when they see a harem? It’s kind of unsettling, and it’s painful just to look at this scene.”

“What’s wrong, Leon?”

Olivia, who was next to me, tilted her head.

Daniel and Raymond were surprised looking at Anjelica’s expression.

“H, hey, isn’t this really serious?”

“Judging from her face, it looks like she’ll resort to violence at any moment”

As if deciding on something, she then took on a blank expression like she had given

up. The light in her eyes had disappeared, and I felt that I could see something dark dwelling within.

Anjelica threw something at Marie.

“—Huh?”

While Marie was taken aback, the thing that Anjelica threw had fallen to the floor. It was a white glove.

“Pick it up, you sellout of a woman. You witch that would deceive his Highness.”

It was a challenge to a duel.

In moments like these, picking up the glove is a sign of accepting the duel.

“Come to think of it, there was also a setting like this. The duel event, was it?”

While I was muttering such things, Raymond got into a panic.

“You must know what this means! Do you understand the meaning of this duel?!”

A duke woman challenged a girl from the viscount family to a duel.

That’s just what it looks like on the surface, though.

“His Highness Julian will stand as her representative—so it’ll be a duel between the duke woman and him, right?”

Once a duel rises, it’s considered shameful if a boy used a representative. However, there are no complaints when a girl has a representative take her place.

In the game, a boy the protagonist has raised the love meter with would take on the duel proposed to the her by the duke woman. It’s quite possible that things are heading towards *that* route.

The argument from just a bit ago gave me a bad premonition.

“...Anjelica, I’m disappointed.”

The prince, looking at his fiance with a look of scorn while furrowing his eyebrows, seemed to be reaching the peak of his anger.

“Marie, pick it up. It’ll be fine. I will take your side. I’ll work as your representative.”

Jilk followed along with the conversation.

“I can’t let his Highness be the only one looking good. According to the rules of the academy, girls are not limited to one boy as their representative. I declare that I will also participate.”

Greg hit his palm with his fist.

“This is looking amusing, so I’ll also get in on this. Come at me, anyone!”

“This is why you’re a meathead... but, calling her a sellout of a woman is inexcusable.” So how about I mend your ways? While we’re at it, we’ll also have you apologize after the duel. Naturally, I’m participating as well.”

Brad looked annoyed, but also seemed to be in high spirits.

Chris, crossed his arms.

“I’m confident in my blade skills. Let’s see if I can fight as Marie’s sword.”

Marie wiped her tears with her fingers.

“Everyone... I’m scared, but I feel safe when all of you are here. I will accept this duel. Anjelica, I will fight with all I’ve got.”

Kyle was amazed by the heroic image his master was portraying. This boy, who had a bit of a sharp tongue, was good-looking and had graceful movements.

“You really are a foolish master. How about you not forget me? I can assist, you know.”

Marie smiled.

“Thank you, Kyle.”

...It’s just as I thought.

“This is the reverse harem route.”

“You’re spouting out nonsense again, Leon. Anyways, now that it has come to this, what’s going to happen to that duke woman? Is there anyone who would go up against those five people?”

Raymond agreed with Daniel’s doubts.

“His Highness has scored top-notch marks, and the others have terrifyingly excellent ones as well. There aren’t any guys here who would battle against those five. The most frightening is Chris, the candidate for the next master swordsman. He’s not someone you can afford to make enemies with.”

Most of the boys disliked fighting. Any normal boy would definitely reject fighting against the prince.

This wasn’t a practice match, but a duel.

The boys following Anjelica up until now didn’t want to get involved either.

When Anjelica looked around her, the boys all simultaneously averted their gaze.

Greg added fuel to the fire.

“Hey, is there no commendable fellow out there who will help this girl? I’m going to start pitying her if none of her followers have the guts to stand up... She’s the one that proposed the duel. She can’t back out, even if she has no representative.”

A voice of ridicule towards Anjelica filled the party venue.

Everyone was either laughing at how nobody would help her, or was looking at her with sympathy.

According to the academy’s rules, bringing along someone from the outside to work as a representative was prohibited. It was sort of an implicit rule given how it wouldn’t be good if an adult entered a duel between children.

In the game, Anjelica broke the rule and still lost, piling shame on top of shame.

However—

“Hey, anyone want to bet what kind of unsightly side to her will be exposed?”

“She won’t be able to cling to her family anymore. She shouldn’t have proposed the duel. After all, she definitely won’t find a representative for her.”

“Perhaps she’ll just represent herself. If that’s the case, then I hope she gets beaten black and blue.”

—The reactions of the girls were cold. Way too cold.

Though they were pretty complaisant in front of Anjelica around the time of school enrollment, perhaps they’ve gotten more cocky now that the situation had changed?

They were acting as if she was no longer a duke woman... so maybe they thought that since she made the disgrace of causing the engagement to fall apart, her life was over.

I believe that in the game, things concluded by having some ugly man from the countryside being forced onto her.

The normally-tough Anjelica looked around while seeming impatient.

Her sight met with mine.

Anjelica, a girl with a violent temper who never thought about the consequences, was evidently in disorder. I felt that she was getting desperate, and her eyes told me that she wanted help.

However, I clenched my teeth while looking downwards.

“I, I’ll do it even if I don’t get someone to act as a representative...”

Greg laughed scornfully.

“What’s the matter? What happened to all that spirit from just a while ago?”

The people around Anjelica looked at her very coldly.

The coldest among them was the prince. Even though she was more or less supposed to be his fiancée.

“Anjelica, I suppose you’re ready, right? You can’t back out at this point. You’ve already thrown your white glove at Marie.”

Really... just why is this happening?

I can’t ignore Anjelica.

Olivia grabbed my arms when I took a step forward.

“U, um... what do you plan on doing?”

Looking at her face of unease, I started wondering why this girl was here. A woman named Marie was taking the spot of where Olivia should have been—actually, it’s more like she snatched away the position of where Olivia was supposed to belong.

...What should I do? I then heard an answer.

Daniel came in to stop me.

“You idiot. Why are you trying to get involved? There’s no point!”

Raymond agreed.

“This is the kind of duel where the result has been decided before the fight has even begun. Besides, whether you win or lose, you can’t ignore the representatives over there. Your opponents are his Highness and the others, you know?”

The three were stopping me, but I gave a grin.

“Well... it’s just that I hate those guys.”

It’s not like I’m close with Anjelica, who was being scorned at. I can’t say that I feel no sympathy towards her either. The biggest reason for why I’m doing is because of my own feelings.

I pushed my way through the people and stepped forward, causing everyone to gather their attention to me.

“Here! He~re! I’ll be the representative for the duel~!”

### 3

I announced that I would be the representative while raising my hand and taking a light tone, and while enduring the gazes of everyone around me going “Who is this guy? Can’t he read the mood?”, Greg stared into my face.

“Who the hell are you?”

It seems he really doesn’t know.

Such is the painful reality for mobs.

Brad looked at me as if he was evaluating me.

“If I’m not mistaken, this is the guy who found success as an adventurer before enrolling. I heard that he has plans to be an independent baron, but was it really all his doing?”

He was obviously looking down on me.

Well, thinking about my marks and position, I suppose he would disregard me.

I ignored him and continued talking.

“Anyways, You have to nominate me as your representative, Anjelica. C’mon, hurry up.”

Anjelica looked worried.

“Err, ah...”

“Look, permit me. Just say those words and it’ll be settled.”

“I, I... permit you.”

After forcing a confused Anjelica to permit me, I turned toward the prince and the others.

“So, I, Leon Fou Balfault, will take on the role of the representative. I assume that’s no problem for his Highness and the five of you, right? I’d like to settle the method of the duel, but before that, how about we decide on the wager?”

Marie looked at me dumbfounded.

It seemed that she didn't think I would be someone to get involved at all. I recently had Luxon gather information, so there's no doubt about it.

This person—is a foreigner to this world, just like me. Someone who had reincarnated, or perhaps undergone something similar to that.

She was someone who recognized this world as that of an otome game's. She's probably a girl from my previous world. If she was a guy in her previous life, um... err, well, I guess it's okay if a guy likes otome games. Thinking about it like that, it would mean that a former boy is going after other boys and making a reverse harem... I shouldn't ponder about this too deeply. I'll just consider her a former woman.

I turned to Anjelica.

“By the way, what's the reason for you proposing this duel, Anjelica? I'm a bit troubled if I don't get that cleared up.”

Both Anjelica and those around me were perplexed. They had faces of disbelief in the fact that I had stepped forward while speaking in a light tone.

However, perhaps due to me changing the mood, she told me her aspirations.

“...For her to stay away from his Highness. That's all I want.”

The people around us started whispering.

“Did you hear that?”

“How disgusting~, could she be jealous?”

“Truly unsightly. She's being forceful now since she can't get him to look at her using her own charm.”

Anjelica clenched her teeth while looking down.

“So, since this is a duel, I'd like to hear what you guys want as well.”

When I turned towards Marie to ask her, the prince stepped forward to block my sight.

“Are you going this far to try and break us up? It seems that you don’t know who the real witch is. Anjelica, even if you break up our relationships, your feelings for me will never be mutual!”

Anjelica muttered something.

“I know that. I know that, but I’ll pull that person away, even if it’s the last thing i do...”

I clapped my hands to urge on the prince and the others.

“C’mon, let’s leave this for later. Look, hurry up and tell me your conditions. Hu~rry~up.”

Marie’s faction took offense, but I didn’t care.

Marie stepped forward and stated her conditions for Anjelica.

“I, if I win, then please stop doing these cruel things. I don’t think that... boasting the power of your household is a good thing.”

When thinking about how I had heard those words somewhere before, I remembered that was the line the protagonist had said. This girl was imitating the protagonist’s lines.

“Well, if we win, you and his Highness will break up. If we lose, we won’t get involved anymore. Sounds nice, right? Now, next is to decide on the type of duel. How about a duel where we borrow an arena and wear armor? I believe that’s the usual duel method.”

There aren’t many duels, but they do happen each year. There weren’t many reasons for a duel, but many were enthusiastic about them since they provide highlight scenes for boys.

In these cases, it’s typical to use armor—powered suit-like things. Someone saying that they have armor is enough to prove their financial strength.

Furthermore, the people around them will know about their fight, so if they win, they’ll earn honor.

For that reason, it was common for a form of duel to involve armor.

Chris looked at me with a sharp gaze. It seemed like he was about to lunge at me with a sword at any moment... He wasn't holding a weapon, but it felt like he would do that.

"Do you plan on winning against us? If you don't want to get hurt, then you should withdraw from being a representative. You can't compete against us with your ability."

Does this guy think he knows me? Well, since he only remembers people with prominent skills, I suppose he just forgot my name and was treating me like a worthless chip of wood.

"Huh? Why did you arbitrarily decide that I'm going to lose?"

I tried fanning the flames, and was met with a whirlpool of laughter from the people around.

"Did you hear that?!"

"He plans on winning. He really doesn't know his place."

"It seems this guy has a knack for making people laugh!"

"I can't help but laugh at this guy who became a baron by a fluke."

Not only the girls, but the guys also laughed at me. Well, those five were indeed prominent and excelling people within the first year students.

Furthermore, those five weren't someone a guy should pick a fight with.

Greg approached me. He brought his face closer to try and threaten me,

"Come to think of it, there was someone who ran off after calling out to a group of girls and getting tossed away by their exclusive servants. Was that you?"

He knew and called me out on it. This guy had a bad personality.

"...You can't compete with us. If you're just here because you want to stand out, then scurry home, small fry."

Greg had actual combat experience, so his intensity was different from the others.

Well, they really are an imposing group of people. That's why I'm going this far to protect this weak girl.

From the view of an outsider that wouldn't know anything, it just seemed like Anjelica was suffering from severe bullying.

...They really are an imposing group of people.

"Huh, what? Are you trying to talk me down? Perhaps you want the duel method to be a debate? How troubling~. I'm not too good at those kinds of things, you see. However, since I'm the one who initiated the challenge, I must accept it. It seems you don't want to fight, and instead want a battle of words. It can't be helped. Let's do our best and spar with each other."

Greg, who hated guys who settled things with words, had a vein appear on his forehead in response to my agitations.

Jilk intervened.

"We'll go with one-on-one matches using armor. However, there are five of us. We will allow you to gather up to five people within a certain time limit to participate. About the arena... well, summer vacation is just around the corner. We can borrow one for the day after the end-term ceremony."

Now that the conversation was reaching its conclusion, I nodded my head. However, since there's only a couple of days left, we probably won't be able to gather people.

"I almost thought you'd suggest one-on-five. Well, it's not a problem if it's five rounds of one-on-one."

It might be dangerous if all five attack me at once, but if it's still one-on-one, it should be fine.

Jilk looked at me with a doubting glance.

"Do you really plan on winning? Although it's rare at this point in history, it's still possible that you could lose your life in a duel."

The rule about putting one's life on the line slowly became obsolete, so now death in duels is the result of just being unlucky. It's sort of a special rule in the academy.

“I know, it’s fine. Can I ask one thing?”

“...What is it?”

“Why are guys making those faces like everything will be alright? I get that you want to look good in front of the girl you like. However, isn’t it too naive to think that you guys aren’t at any risk of death?”

Jilk narrows his eyes. It was really frightening when this guy, who’s normally gentle, gets angry.

“I heard that you had some achievements, but apparently you seem to be a let-down. It appears that you can’t judge your opponents’ abilities.”

Julian forced himself into the conversation.

“Leave it, Jilk. It’s as Leon says. We shouldn’t pass it off as a joke. You’re prepared to face the possibility of it, right?”

Marie, who didn’t step forward and was surprised beyond expectation, didn’t show signs of calming down.

With how confused she was, I was hoping that she wouldn’t heighten the situation regarding Anjelica. That would be an inconvenience for me.

Let me just say this now... I’m a pretty timid person.

“So, break up with your oh-so important lover, Prince. Oh wait? Since the other four are unrelated to this matter, even if you lose, they can still associate with her while you look on in envy. How’s that?”

The prince’s gaze toughened.

Though I was provoking him, I didn’t want him to get furious with me.

Actually... Anjelica, who was behind me, was no longer the focus of attention.

I wanted the prince to think seriously about the reason why his fiance was standing front of him.

I think it would better if each of those prestigious nobles were more aware about the fact that they're actually being deceived by one woman.

# Chapter 8

## Duel

### 1

It was the day after the party.

Marie was on top of her bed, holding her knees under her arms.

She chewed on the nail of her thumb while muttering to herself.

“Who the hell is that mob?! Why did he get in the way of my perfect plan?”

Yesterday, she said that she had felt sick and shut herself in to her room, but the capture target boys agreed on their own that it was likely due to the shock of being challenged to a duel.

“Everything will be fine. Those five can’t lose, and that mob seems unreliably weak, so it’ll be fine. Actually, just looking at him makes me irritated. He makes me remember my dead older brother.”

While she muttered about how worthless of a brother he was, her exclusive servant, Kyle, knocked and soon entered.

“H, hey, please wait for me to answer first!”

Kyle, who displayed a disgruntled attitude towards a cautious Marie, sighed.

“I’ll be careful next time.”

“You didn’t follow my warning this time either.”

Kyle, who was promptly preparing breakfast, had no problems in terms of his appearance or work. However, he had a small peculiarity in his personality.

Due to that, he remained unsold, and even when he was sold, he was returned to the

slave firm. That was his setting.

“There’s a larger portion of vegetables for today’s breakfast.”

“...I hate vegetables.”

“Please eat at least this much. You’re being a miserable master.”

He spoke as if his master wasn’t really his master.

(Despite being a stuck-up in the game, I thought of him as a cute little brother character, but being with him everyday is getting irritating. Well, I’ll forgive him since he’s a pretty boy.)

After being with him for several weeks, Marie thought it was good that the pretty boy cared after her.

She thought about how swell things would be if males who could do housework and treated females with utmost cruciality existed in her previous world.

“So what happened with the discussion about the duel?”

Kyle poured a drink into a cup and offered it to Marie.

“It seems we got permission to use the arena. It appeared that Jilk and Brad had a hard time persuading the academy. I only heard this from fellow servants, but it also seems that Leon boy’s marks are at the low end of the upper range. Everyone has been saying that he won’t win.”

“I, I see.”

With that, Marie felt relieved and ate her breakfast.

“Please recognize my efforts. It was tough going around listening to other servants.”

“Th, thank you.”

Her exclusive servant acted under the expectation that he would receive gratitude in return, but she put with it since he had good looks and did his work.

(\*sigh\*, I'm quite commendable. If it were any other girl, they would have sent this boy away by now. In my generosity, I'll tolerate him.)

Marie thought of herself as an open-minded person.

(My plans have gone slightly askew, but Anjelica will nevertheless be driven out. That woman really is an idiot for challenging me to a duel after just slightly provoking her.)

Knowing Anjelica's violent character, she purposely agitated her at the party venue. She made a display of herself by approaching Julian, and then afterwards clinging to a different boy and holding his hand.

(Now I need to make preparations for the summer vacation. I need to gather items in the dungeon, and also collect *that*.)

By *that*, she was referring to equipment that the protagonist normally would have.

Marie knew it would be the key to the future of the story.

(I'm really looking forward to this. It's only a little bit more until I'm praised as a saint...)



"Today and the day before have been really cruel on me."

Inside my devastated room, I folded my arms and looked up to the ceiling.

Luxon, who had disappeared, then showed up.

Luxon descended into my field of vision, and then projected an image onto our surroundings. I looked into a video which was floating in the air.

[Master, while you were out, some students had barged in and laid waste to your room. The perpetrators were from a group you belonged to, and the one who gave the orders was from a different group.]

It seemed that since I picked a fight with Julian, the rich group employed the lower caste group to wreck my room.

I came back from the school building, only to come across this cruel situation.

In the video. I could see the figures of Daniel and Raymond being ordered around.

“Those two were forced to do it?”

[It seems your friendship was short-lived.]

“They were just prioritizing their own future. Looking at how gloomy their expressions are while being ordered, I can’t blame them. You’re being narrow-minded.”

Getting agitated, Luxon talked back as if angry.

[I don’t want to be told that by you, master. Anyways, there are already students trying to start a bet on this duel within the academy.]

When looking at the image, it turned out that I was becoming the underdog. However, the bet hadn’t been established. The reason was that nobody was betting on me.

“I’m overwhelmingly unpopular.”

[Did you think you were popular in the first place? Anyways, I’ve completed my preparations. *That* item will arrive on the appointed day, but what will you do until then?]

I thought for a bit.

“Can you prepare ten thousand gold coins? No wait, perhaps five hundred white gold coins will leave a greater impact. There’s no point if I don’t have fun with it.”

[You really are a heartless person. Besides, was it fine to just arbitrarily accept a duel when you intervened? I didn’t feel the necessity in riling them up either.]

I was a silent for a bit before answering.

“...So you saw those five associating with Marie, right? I’m the type of person that likes to resolve troublesome things all at once.”

[The type that makes many blunders.]

“It’s just that I’m not interested in being involved with them for long. I want to finish this quickly. That’s why I felt like agitating them. Those were my feelings. I got angry with their attitude of looking down on others.”

[...Is that so?]

The academy is isolated from the outside, so it’s kind of like its own world. That principle also served as an unspoken rule within the academy.

To many students, this seemed like a duke woman picking a fight with the prince, who belong to the most prestigious family. It was obvious which side was stronger.

However, the trouble lies in when the talks about this don’t remain within the academy.

“Well, once I get the white gold, how about I head towards where the bookmakers are?”

If I bet this much, then all of the students in the academy will bet on the prince and the others.

It was good that since the people around me knew I had earned money from a dungeon, it wouldn’t be suspicious if I held a large amount of cash.

If they knew that Luxon could prepare gold or rare metals, there would definitely be the danger of them trying to kill me and snatch Luxon.

...Well, enough thinking about that. I’m really looking forward to this.

[In that case, I’ll prepare them at once. Please come and pick it up at the harbor. Oh, and your two friends are waiting near your room.]

Sure enough, once I exited the room, Daniel and Raymond were standing there with their eyes cast downward.

couldn’t blame them, seeing them so blue.

Ray whispered.

“S, sorry.”

Daniel also seemed frustrated.

“We were told not to get close with you anymore... we can’t oppose those orders.”

I passed by the two, who seemed like there were about to cry, and called out to them.

“There’s a bet involving this next duel, but if you place your wagers on me, you’ll be able to profit... I’m sorry, you two. I caused trouble for you guys.”

I left the scene at a fast pace.



I was in the academy’s dining room.

There were about five boys gathered there.

“What do we do? We’ve waited so long for a duel, but now it’s not even a bet at this point.”

“It’s obvious that the prince and his crew will win, after all.”

“There’s five of them at least... so perhaps we could change the bet to be about how many people that guy will be able to gather.”

They were the bookmakers in control of the bet.

I appeared before them while pulling a wagon. The five made a startled expression upon seeing me, but I acted indifferent and continued their conversation.

“Here we go, sorry about how troublesome the bet has been. Deciding whether I’ll win or lose is simple, right? Oh right, and this entire pile is what I’m betting.”

I opened a crate, and inside was a mountain of white gold that shined stronger than regular gold. The five gasped in front of the mountain of white gold, which was worth more than regular gold.

“With this much, the bet is established, right?”

Nobody was placing any wagers on me, so there was no bet. That being the case, I

thought it would be good to bet a large sum on myself.

This was a match with a victor that everyone was sure about. However, even when people can predict how to profit from the match, there will always be that one idiot who will make an illogical bet.

That one person would definitely be me.

“Is this all white gold? I, Is this really all white gold?”

Speaking in terms of the modern age, this would be worth about one billion to two billion, I believe? Well, it amounts to just that much.

It's way too big of an amount for a student to deal with.

“Of course. I'm the guy who captured a dungeon. What's wrong with betting all I have on myself?”

The five people were breathless and began to check that everything was indeed authentic.

“W, with this much, we'll have people that will place bets.”

“We have to make this public at once!”

“People will get excited this time!”

What mattered most was that things were looking fun.

While thinking so, I heard a voice from behind.

“...Baltfault, we need to talk.”

I looked behind me, thinking for a second that it was my older brother or older sister coming to address me, but it turned out that Anjelica was taking the lead for some reason.

The place fell silent.

The place where I was called to was an unpopulated room.

It seemed that it was normally a place that boys could borrow to hold tea ceremonies.

“I said that I wanted to use this place to hold a discussion with you, so they gladly lent it to me. I’m on good terms with the teachers.”

Could it be that teacher’s, no, mentor’s doing? If it were that instructor, who was the embodiment of a gentleman, then he certainly would be this considerate towards her.

The pleasantries of it, makes me shed a tear.

“...Baltfault, you will withdraw from this duel.”

Anjelica had a slightly haggard face while telling me to drop out of the duel.

“Even if I back down now, I won’t be able to save face anymore.”

I don’t really care about honor. I was participating because I wanted to.

Anjelica made a feeble smile.

“You don’t want to do it anymore, right? They turned your room into a mess. It seems that they’re planning to thoroughly threaten you like this until the time of the duel.”

It appeared as if they were trying hard not to give her even the one in a million chance of winning.

It seemed that Julian and the others weren’t aware of this.

This was a move made by the followers surrounding the prince.

What wonderful loyalty!

However, I won’t forgive them for picking on me.

I’m a small guy. A mob, furthermore.

So, I'd like things to return to normal if possible.

I usually wait for turmoil to calm down, but I decided not to give in to the pressure this time.

"I have no power anymore. I can't do anything you expect me to do."

I sighed.

"Did your household say something to you?"

Anjelica strongly clutched her arms, as if hugging herself.

"...They said that it was imprudent of me to propose a duel. But, but... I had to do something. Anything. I wanted that woman to stay away from his Highness! My thoughts turned fuzzy because of that. When I wrote back to them saying that, they told me to be docile. It's over for me. I'm being sent to a remote region under house arrest. In the worst case scenario—"

—It seemed that it was an internal decision. It appeared that she had to make up for her mistake with her livelihood.

I didn't think that such a thing will happen, though.

"You've got it wrong. To be honest, I don't really care about a duke household."

Anjelica lifted her head and made a surprised expression.

"Th, then why did you come forward at that time? Are you an idiot? You're definitely an idiot! Listen, it'll be over for you whether you lose or win in the upcoming duel. To start with, your opponents are his Highness the crown prince and other prestigious nobles. What do you plan on doing in the future now that you've picked a fight with them?!"

In response to Anjelica, who kept talking until she was out of breath, I made small, meaningful smile.

"I don't care. I have no need for noble status or honor. Do you know how people in the lower caste are treated in the advanced class? Each day, they're working their hardest to be self-sufficient, trying to earn the favor of girls. I'm sick of it already. So in that

case, I thought that I'd rather beat up all of the guys I hate."

"You're going to get your family involved in this trouble as well!"

"Though things may appear that way, I'm an independent knight. It's just temporary, though. Well, it's the kind of thing where I'm considered separate from my parents' household."

"T, temporary?"

I planned on being independent. When I said that it was temporarily, Anjelica made an awkward face. However, it seemed that my point got through.

Well, I was implying that it was to vent out my stress, but... just like Anjelica, I wasn't fond of that Marie girl.

"So, you want Marie to stay away from his Highness. I want to beat all those guys up. You see, I think this calls for us to join forces."

Anjelica hesitated while taking several steps back.

"Are you mad? They're powerful people at the top of the year."

That wasn't a problem.

It may have been tough if this duel happened in the third—no, second year, but at this grade, anything could still happen.

"It'll be fine. Though I may not look like it, I'm quite strong."

"Are you even trustworthy?! C, come to think of it, I did hear that many of the adventurers who capture dungeons have a few screws loose in their head. Are you one of those types of people?!"

"How rude! I stepped in because I have a chance of winning. In the first place, you were the one that initiated the duel!"

"L, like I said, that was my mistake. I'm taking responsibility for it. You can stay at the academy. You don't need to get involved... well, coming forward at that time was plenty enough."

She might have thought that while everyone was seeing her as the enemy, I was coming to help her without considering gains or losses. Anjelica likely thinks on the inside that I was playing the hero.

For small mobs like me, a hero is something far out of reach.

“No, withdrawing after coming this far is kind of... embarrassing.”

“...Do you realize that your opponents include Greg and Chris? Those guys are seriously strong.”

It was as she said. Not just those two, but the other three also stood out as the strong ones within the grade.

Right, within the grade.

“In addition... just what are you planning to do by betting a large sum on yourself?”

Did I have reason for why I bet a large amount? I did.

I should also mention that I don't like gambling.

“Would you like to place a bet, then? If you bet on me, you'll make a profit.”

“I have no need! Does it look like I'm troubled with money?”

It's things like this that make me remember she's the daughter of high-class family... well, whatever.

“The harassment will also end soon. There's only a few days left until the duel.”

I left the room while saying that.



It was the day of the battle.

The area in the academy was very spacious.

The audience were protected by a magic barrier, ensuring perfect safety.

I was in the academy's arena. When thinking about about how many students came here to duel... well, I didn't really feel much.

While changing clothes in the waiting room, I looked at my figure.

[It matches you. Well, that's a given considering that this is an article I prepared for you, master.]

I wore pants and a vest over the dark grey main suit that clung onto my body, which was of a color that matched with an aircraft.

There was a part that guarded the neck.

As expected, these clothes emphasize the outline of my body, which is something I'd rather overlook.

"It's different from what I had thought. I demand you remake it."

[I refuse. Even if the color and design aren't what you expected, that doesn't change its performance. It's a bother if you demand me to change it because you don't like it. Please bear with it.]

Does this thing really think of me as its master?

When I wore a jacket and exited the waiting room, it turned out that Olivia was waiting there.

"—Ah!"

Perhaps leaning on the wall while waiting, she got into a panic and then moved closer to me. I felt that the distance between us was exceedingly close.

"U, um—I can't do anything, but I'll cheer you on! I'll be rooting for you, Leon!"



It was a strange feeling being cheered on by the protagonist.

Normally, she'd be on the side of Julian and the others.

"Did you place a bet on me? If so, you've made the right choice. You're about to make a large profit."

When I made a thumbs-up and was about to leave, Olivia denied involvement with the bet.

"Huh? I didn't place a bet. I don't think people should gamble."

"O, oh."

Being told that with her pretty, tranquil eyes, I started feeling ashamed about betting a large amount.

Could this be the power of the protagonist?

It was as if a halo was glowing behind Olivia, too dazzling for those of a crooked heart.

Once the two of us headed from the waiting room to the arena, the five opponents were already present there.

They were already wearing the armor they were proud of and made a display of it to the audience.

Rather than calling them armor, they were more like robots, and their sizes spanned almost three meters. They were items akin to a powered suit, wonderful weapons modelled after a human, and could fly in the air.

"Oh~, what flashy coloring."

A row of armor with flashy ornaments attached were lined up, starting with the crown prince's white one.

A unified booing erupted once I appeared.

When looking at the audiences' seats, I could see the figures of both Daniel and Raymond. When I looked over at them, I could see their red tickets that they were

hiding from the people around them, meaning that they had placed a bet on me.

Those who were betting on the prince and the others got a blue ticket.

“So they went through with it... well then, I’ll also do my best.”

Once I appeared, Anjelica came rushing over.

“Hey! Why did you come without preparing armor?! Don’t tell me with a confident face that you don’t have any!”

She wasn’t holding back on me.

I looked through the roof-less arena, into the sky.

The blue sky had spread out today.

“It’ll be fine... it’s arriving right now.”

I pointed with my finger towards a black speck in the sky. Luxon, who was hiding inside my jacket, called out in a voice that only I could hear.

[Arroganz is here.]

### 3

A large box descended from the sky and then its speed slowed down before it hit the ground.

Once the front portion of the box opened, the side and top portions also opened to reveal a suit of armor.

When I used it before, it wasn’t for battle, but for a test ride. However, it’s appearance right now had the style and dignity for something to be used in combat. It was the perfect armor, which made me feel sorry when I first used it to dig a hole in the floating island.

However, I was concerned about the name.

“...What meaning does Arroganz have?”

I felt like I had heard it somewhere before... a dreadful name, but I personally liked it.

[It's the perfect word for you.]

“Is that so? I suppose you can tasteful every once in a while.”

Unlike the currently commonplace stylish armor, the dark grey armor was built to be tough. The main body itself is larger than regular armor.

It was suited for combat, didn't have any decorations, and looked like a rugged robot.

The armor belonging to the prince and the others were of the slim type for high mobility, while mine was the heavy type that looked slow.

There were people in the audience that made a roar of laughter when seeing my armor make an appearance in the arena.

They were third year students who had gathered.

In any case, with this large of an event—I felt it was quite possible that students were gathering here to see the gallant figure of Julian and the others.

Thousands of people had gathered, but the audience seating was enough to accommodate them since the number of people it could hold was in the ten thousands.

Anjelica looked at me in doubt.

“Do you plan on fighting with this? Could it possibly be a lost item? If it is, you probably think that it's strong, right? Though lost items are impossible to reproduce, just because it is one doesn't mean it's strong.”

Olivia rested her hand against her cheek and tilted her head to the side.

“Though, it's kind of cute.”

“You're sense of beauty is strange. Not only is it unrefined, but it's unfit for the current battle.”

In the current trend of emphasizing offense over defense, it was common to have something move quickly to kill the enemy.

In other words, heavy armor appeared obsolete, behind the times.

I liked heavy equipment, though.

“If you take a look, you’ll understand.”

I went up to the stage inside the arena.

When I approached the spot where the armor was, violet armor descended onto the arena. It gave the impression of being long and narrow, and it carried a number of weapons resembling lances on its back.

Judging from its color, it was Brad.

The chest of the armor opened, revealing the figure of Brad.

“I’ll commend you for coming here and not running away. However, did you plan on winning against my armor with that old, outdated one you have? The manufacturing of this armor by a skilled craftsman alone requires white gold coins to—”

Ignoring his boasts, I opened the chest of my armor as well.

As I slipped inside, I placed my arms into the two compartments in front of me. I clutched the joysticks within. They were like joysticks from a game.

When I grasped them, the chest closed, obstructing my field of vision, but—

[Arroganz is activating.]

Arroganz started booting up in response to Luxon’s words. In front of me was an image that made it seem as if I was practically outside.

The interior mechanisms moved around and fastened onto my body. They protected the head, neck, torso, and so on.

Now that the preparations were complete, I looked ahead and found that Brad was still boasting about his armor.

“That guy is still bragging on?”

[Based on his story, the weapons he's carrying on his back are like drones. Should we deploy measures against them?]

That's not necessary for this person. After all... that purple guy is basically weak at hitting, right?"

In the game, he really was a pain to deal with since he would quickly go down.

When Arroganz took a step forward, Brad made a face as if he lost his temper. It seemed that he wasn't pleased about me ignoring his speech.

It was fine... I knew about the characteristics of his armor since Luxon had listened to him.

[...He took offence at your attitude.]

While Luxon said that, the chest closed and he took a position ready for battle, so I took out my weapon.

"Let's see... we'll go with the best blade."

Upon which, a shovel from the storage box of this thing's backpack popped out. Though it's main use was for digging holes, it was the best shovel-blade.

Since it was to be used with armor, it was definitely large, but... a shovel is still a shovel.



“Huh?!”

[We placed this top-tier shovel in storage after using it from last time, didn't we.]

“Take out a blade!”

[You're the one who has to specify that first, master.]

That thing definitely did this while actually knowing what I wanted.

While I readied the shovel, I could hear laughter from the audience, but Brad got enraged, perhaps thinking that I was mocking him.

“You, are you making fun of me by doing that?!”

I heard the voice of a teacher acting as a referee within the arena.

“Both of you, first on the agenda is to take the oath of a duel and—”

However, Brad, who was grandly rushing ahead, didn't stop himself.

Brad was holding a spear in both of his hands, pointing it towards me to try and pierce me. He aimed at my torso. It seemed that he was planning to kill me.

The tip of the spear was engulfed in light from an outburst of magic.

Luxon was impressed.

[What a magnificent rush forward.]

“You—”

The people outside couldn't hear the conversation between Luxon and me. It would definitely be troublesome if someone knew about Luxon.

I operated my armor, and moved it according to my mental image. The heavy armor lightly stepped to the side, immediately seized Brad's arm, and held it down.

“L, let go!”

“Alright, calm down. Look, we have to do the oath of a duel. If you don’t do it, you’ll get into lots of trouble, so follow through with it.”



Anjelica was in a cold sweat while watching the movements of Arroganz.

Next to her was Olivia, an amateur who knew nothing about armor and was cheering him on.

“Anjelica, it seems like Leon can hold out!”

Seeing Olivia like that, Anjelica could only nod along while going “S, sure.”

However, on the inside, she thought that what she was seeing was impossible.

(What were those movements just now? Can armor that heavy make such light movements? Impossible. Just what in the world is that armor? There more weight there is, the more burden its supposed to have on the pilot.)

Going by the theory about armor, Arroganz’s weight seemed impossible.

Furthermore, not only were its sudden movements surprisingly light, it also had power. There was no way it could have the power to hold down Brad’s armor with a single arm.

(That armor was specifically arranged for the heir of the Field family. It’s not one of the many mass produced ones. It’s a custom made armor. Is it really something that can be pinned down with one hand?)

The two people in the arena, the representatives in the duel, then spoke the oath.

It was an oath where no grudges were to be made, even if death occurred.

Anjelica couldn’t keep her eyes off of Leon’s armor and didn’t pay attention to what the two were saying.

A voice from somewhere around her had called out.

“What’s going on? Hurry up and start.”

“I betted everything I had on his Highness. Wasn’t this supposed to be where we get rich quick?”

“I even borrowed money from my parents’ house!”

Many in the audience wanted Leon to quickly lose.

Some of the students even went as far as to get a loan to bet on the victory of Julian and the others. It was the opportunity for both boys and girls alike to earn money.

Anjelica smiled.

“Ah hah, ah hah hah!”

When Anjelica laughed, Olivia glanced at her as if frightened.

“W, what’s the matter?”

“I suppose I can’t help but laugh. That man is a really cruel individual.”

Olivia replied.

“He’s not cruel! Leon is a kind person!”

“I suppose. I suppose.”

While indifferently brushing Olivia aside, Anjelica pondered.

(Though, why did he side with me? I certainly understand that he has a chance of winning, but now that I think about it, being my ally seems like a bad plan. It don’t think it’s because he has a poor head.)



Brad was losing his patience.

Within the narrow interior of his armor, the lukewarm condensation from his breathes were bouncing back to him.

“What the hell, what the hell.”

When he looked at his armor, there were dents shaped like fingers where his arm was held down. His armor had a metal-like strength, but was further protected by magic. A number of attacks wouldn't give it a scratch.

—It normally shouldn't be affected by how much it had been through.

Furthermore—it couldn't move at all.

He couldn't move to resist, and it didn't seem like his opponent was straining himself either.

Now waiting for the signal to start the duel, all his composure from before was gone.

“Now that it has come to this, I have no choice but to use them.”

On his back were long and narrow cones, spears with no handles, which he could use as a soaring weapon through magic.

He really wanted to kill him using a spear to make a display of his prowess towards Marie. Brad was concerned about his lack of martial arts, and pondered while holding back from using the spears behind him that were meant for magic.

(I'm going to lose at this rate. If that happens right in front of Marie... that will be grave!”

Brad's high talent in magic was his last resort.

He had a killing move that could create an assault of four spears and pierce the enemy from four different directions.

“Now then, the two of you—begin!”

Once the duel started, he unleashed the spears behind his back. There were four of them.

“No matter what armor that is, there's no way it will withstand four simultaneous attacks from—”

While Brad was speaking, the dark grey steel giant was approaching him.

Just then, he could see it grandly brandishing a shovel with both of its hands.

“—Huh?”



The violent sound of metal clashing against metal could be heard throughout the arena.

The two of us initiated an assault at the same time as the duel began, but when hit with a shovel, he was blown away to the wall of the arena.

“What power?”

The overwhelming difference in the performance of our machines caused everything to be over before my opponent could attack.

Even though it was just a strike with the shovel in a straight path, he had already reached the point where he couldn't attack using his pointy hat things.

[The full potential isn't being utilized. I'm impressed about moving armor using magic, but that's the only technique noteworthy. It isn't smart for him to have so many pointless decorations on his armor.]

...Does this thing bear a grudge about the fact that Arroganz was laughed at? Well, Luxon is a manmade creation, so perhaps it minds quite a bit.

I approached the purple armor that had been bent after hitting the wall.

My opponent tried to move, but I stomped on him.

A creaking sound could be heard.

“S, stop! It hurts—help!”

Though my opponent's armor was dented, my shovel had not a single scratch. Perhaps it would be good to keep battling like this using the shovel.

I ignored Brad's pleas for help.

“Listen here, I might just end up flattening you. So, you better admit defeat, and make it quick.”

[Forcing someone to yield using overwhelming power... as expected of my master. There aren't many people who resonate with the word coward as much you do.]

“...Do you hate me or something?”

[No, I'm praising you. After all, the word coward is a compliment in a competition. One doesn't fight unless they think they'll win. I'd like to be where you are as well.]

—Right, I got involved because I could win.

While holding the shovel in my right hand, I trampled on the purple bastard.

I should mention that it was true when I said that I wanted to beat these guys up. I remember saying in my previous life that I would knock the daylights out of these tiresome bastards.

As I gradually strengthened the power in my trampling, I could hear a strange sound, perhaps from the important part of Brad's armor, the main frame, turning crooked.

“Hey now, you might end up dying if you don't hurry and admit defeat.”

“I admit it! I admit defeat!”

I stopped my movements once Brad, on the verge of tears, shouted out the recognition of his defeat.

Then, I slowly lifted the right foot I was using to trample on Brad, and turned my head around to look at the arena. The spears he had fired were laying on the ground of the arena or had pierced into it.

The audience in the arena fell silent.

I looked in the direction of the referee.

“Referee, announce Brad's defeat.”

When saying that, the referee shouted my full name.

“Th, the winner is Leon Fou Baltfault!”

Only the sounds of a few people clapping could be heard in the spacious arena.

“It seems there are some people who are clapping.”

I’d understand if it were just Anjelica and Olivia clapping, but there were several more that were clapping as well.

When looking at the people through the camera in the machine’s head, I saw a teacher, my mentor, straightening his back while clapping.

...My mentor was a gentleman, even at times like these.

# Chapter 9

## Personal Grudges

### 1

I had a few reasons why I stepped forward as a representative, but the most prominent one was my personal grudges.

I had a grudge against the capture target boy characters.

These were the five that my sister forced me to captivate in the otome game.

I had to painstakingly make moves on them and listen to their sweet talk.

Just thinking about it riles me up while the memories resurge.

Let me do this.

I was in the arena.

I pushed away the scattered debris and objects that were in the way, took the box that Arroganz came in, and moved it to the arena's outside.

Standing in the center while waiting, the situation regarding the prince and the others took a strange turn.

Arroganz's microphone picked up the voices of the prince and the others.

"I'll go. That wimp Brad was indeed weak, but that thing over there is a behemoth. It's too much for you guys to handle."

"—You're making light of us. Are you trying to say that I'm inferior to you?"

While Greg and Chris were arguing, the prince and Jilk looked over at me.

"That Baltfault fellow was someone who conquered a dungeon, wasn't he. I see, he was

that confident since he had this armor.”

“A lost item, I suppose. However, I’ve never heard about armor this strong laying dormant until now. From appearances, it looks like a power-type.”

There was an aura of discomfort that rose from the unexpected result that had happened.

There were loads of students who held no doubts that I would lose and the prince’s side would win. To make matters worse, many of them had bet a large sum of money.

My microphone also picked up voices of relief, like “There would be no point in coming here if we didn’t get to see this much,” or “It’ll probably be over in the next round, though.”

Luxon made some data adjustments.

[I have revised our spear-based battle techniques based on data from the battle just a while ago.]

“Good work. Let’s see, next is Greg.”

Entering his red-painted armor, he got into the arena while holding a large spear.

Luxon checked the state of the opponent.

[I’ve confirmed that there are points on the exterior that had to have been repaired. Judging from the signs of prior damage, it seems that he has a lot of experience using this armor in battle.]

“Aah, this guy is tough. He may be strong, but...”

Greg Fou Seberg had a rough appearance and had the most experience as an adventurer out of the five. He was the type that stresses a lot of importance on actual combat.

That much was fine.

I thought of him as a reliable character during the combat side of the game.

Greg pointed his spear at me.

“You said you were Baltfault. I will remember that name. However, you’re getting cocky. It seems like you have a lost item with strong power, but the result of the first battle happened because of that armor’s power. It’s not your own power.”

It was quite like he had said, so I couldn’t refute that and even wanted to applaud him.

“What’s wrong with that? I thought about this at the party as well, but you open your mouth pretty often. If you want to chitchat, I can invite you to tea next time.”

I agitated him in a roundabout way, and the results were instant.

“...I’ll crush you!”

The referee announced the start of the duel.

“Begin!”

While wielding a spear, Greg shortened the distance between him and me.

Perhaps after watching the previous battle, it seemed that he didn’t plan on letting me attack. For that reason, he attacked successively, but—

“Gah! What’s going on! Why is this happening!”

I defended against his continuous spear thrusts, slices, and strokes using my shovel.

In addition to the sparks from metal clashing against metal, the faint light coming from the opponent’s spear was indeed quite radiant.

However, there was one thing about this guy—

“Your movements are good. You’ve got the willpower too. But... you need to pay more attention to your tools!”

I fling off the spear with my shovel, breaking off the balance between our armor. Since his was the lightweight type, it could slip away from a heavyweight.

Greg’s red armor tried to take a distance by flying into the air.

Armor were originally weapons meant for flying in the air.

However, I reached out with my left hand to seize Greg's right leg.

"Y, you!"

He attacked the left hand of my armor, but it didn't leave a single scratch, and nothing broke.

The armor Gred used was an older type, a mass produced one that was only dressed up.

It's red color was only for show.

Despite this guy's abilities, in the game, his setting was that he didn't pay as much attention to his equipment. It led to him sticking with second-rate tools.

Thanks to that, he often went down during the war part of the game, making me get a game over many times.

Throw away that strange pride!

Arroganz's left hand crushed the right ankle of Greg's armor. I knew that his actual legs were fine, but I heard shrieks from many girls in the audience who didn't know that what I crushed was only the structure of his armor.

I took out my shovel and thrust it into the head. Letting go of the shovel in my right hand, I then used it to crush the arm of Greg's armor.

"Hey hey, just try and run away now~."

While I grabbed his other arm this time and crushed it to torment him, I heard Greg yell.

"Damn iiiit! Let me go!"

"...As if I'd let you go, idiot~."

I relied on the performance of my build to destroy Greg's armor. While making sure not to injure Greg himself, I tore out the arms of his armor.

Greg's actual arms appeared.

Arroganz is one size larger than the usual armor.

\*"Are you having fun torturing me?! You're no man! If you're a knight, then fight like a knight! You're only able to win because of your armor!"

He yelled whatever he pleased to vent his discontent.

"Knight? I'm not officially a knight yet. While I'm at it, if you come to a duel with an old model of armor and lose, wouldn't it be because of your armor? You're better off lamenting over your insufficient preparation to get a newer one. Actually, you'd be better off feeling ashamed about the fact that you looked down on me before. Though, I suppose it's fine if you want to keep making excuses. Go ahead and say that you lost because of the difference in the power of our armor!"

When I tore off the chest portion of his armor, Greg's face appeared.

Perhaps frustrated that he couldn't do anything in face of this overwhelming power, his face was dyed in anger, but also in impatience—it was a very complicated expression.

Quite like a child destroying a toy, Arroganz destroyed Greg's armor. If I were Greg, it would've been a scene of trauma.

Well... I'm not going stop, though!

When Greg knew that he couldn't use his armor anymore, he got out and stood in front of me while holding a broken piece of his armor.

"Don't be stupid! I haven't lost yet. I'll fight to the death!"

I felt like stopping after being moved by his unwavering heart—not. Stopping would only be bad in my eyes.

"Hmm~, but you see..."

"Hurry up and come at meeee!"

While Greg was using the piece of his armor to slash me many times over, I didn't

resist.

After all, he wasn't doing any damage.

In the first place, the difference between the power of a living being and of armor weren't at a scale where they could compete.

"—I, unlike you guys, am not inclined to bully the weak."

Thereupon, Greg's move movements stopped.

"W, what did you say? What did you say just noooow?!"

"I said that I don't take a liking to bullying the weak like you guys do. Did you not hear me?"

"S, stop kidding me! Just when did we bully the—"

"Ah ha ha ha! You really do like to chatter, don't you. Well, since you were making light of others and showing up with an older model of armor, I thought that you had a lot of confidence in your own abilities, but... people at your level are pretty common all across the world. My abilities aren't at the top either, but since you had a lot of confidence during the time that the duel was proposed, I had some hopes for you, and yet things turned into this sorry state... you're way too much of a small fry. Tormenting small fry like you is giving me a bad aftertaste, so I'm going to quickly end this. I'm unfamiliar with this feeling~."

I politely told him that he was weak.

Oh, how kind I am!

"Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaargh!"

Greg launched an attack while screaming, but it seemed more pitiful than gallant. The opponent, who got called out as a small fry in front of a large audience, was going to be treated as a small fry and lose... It pained my heart to see such misery.

Well, not really. My heart didn't ache at all.

These guys were better off understanding what their strength amounted to.

Perhaps not wanting to see any more than this, the referee stepped in to stop us.

“...The winner is Leon Fou Baltfault. Greg Fou Seberg will step down. Clap your hands for the brave fight between these two!”

In response to the referee’s voice, which was full of sympathy and lacked spirit, Greg crumbled onto his knees and sat down where he was.

There was a sparse clapping in the arena sent towards us.

I muttered.

“With this, three remain.”

Luxon was cold towards me.

[Quite the cruel outcome. Any normal person would hesitate from cornering their opponent this much.]

“Do you even realize? It’s better off if these guys faced reality. I hate people who get cocky.”

[Should I prepare a mirror? Those words apply perfectly to you, master.]

...I was aware about that, but hearing it being said still made me angry.



The students in the arena were no longer excited.

“The match just wasn’t on his side. We aren’t concerned with the knights’ way of fighting.”

“What an idiot, it’s supposed to be a duel.”

With this, two of them have lost. Well, things will probably wrap up with Chris...”

The spectators in the arena agreed that Greg’s outcome wasn’t any surprise.

“Isn’t that guy’s actually weak?”

“I wonder how good he is at combat~? He was so noisy, and yet he could only do this much.”

“A disappointment to my expectations. I have no interest in weak guys.”

Anjelica was in a cold sweat when seeing the results of the match with Greg.

“He would go this far to flaunt the difference in power?”

Anjelica didn't think Greg was weak.

It's just that Leon was way too strong.

Greg was too unlucky. He lost because of his old armor? That couldn't have been it. Even if he had prepared the latest model of armor, Greg still would've lost.

Arroganz held just that much power.

(In the first place, why would he be his opponent using that armor he got from the kingdom?)

Olivia got a little angry.

“I'm glad that Leon won, but he went too far. He should apologize to Greg later!”

Anjelica shook her head towards Olivia's honest beliefs.

“He shouldn't. It would only hurt Greg's pride even further.”

However, Anjelica cast her eyes slightly downward.

(...Bullying the weak, was it? I suppose in the eyes of Baltfault, I'm just a young girl.)

Leon agitated Greg at that time by saying “I'm not like you guys.” She guessed that had to do with how he found it unpleasant when Julian and the others kept persecuting her at the party venue while she had no allies at her side.

She didn't know if the person himself was aware of that, or if he acted subconsciously.

“So... that makes me weak? How miserable. I wanted—”

Anjelica looked up at the sky.

(I wanted to become stronger for the sake of his Highness.)

## 2

After tidying up the arena, Chris and his blue armor came down.

He was holding a large sword in both hands, and had a different kind of sword on his back.

He was a young expert swordsman. Not just a swordsman, an expert swordsman.

In the game, his status was higher than any normal swordsman, and had a title that recognized him for his ability.

His father was a master swordsman who had been harshly teaching Chris the sword since he was a young age.

His calmness stemmed from his inability to display his emotions.

However, he was unrivaled when he held a sword... I didn't like this guy either. Not only was he a character that was hard to capture, but he also can only use a sword.

Due to that, he didn't possess any long ranged attacks, which made things difficult in the war part of the game. The habits of these past three people were too tough to handle, leading to many game overs.

Just thinking back to it made me angry.

Readying his large sword and armor, Chris held his weapon to the side, resembling the Waki-gamae stance in terms of my previous life. *(TLN: Waki-gamae is a Japanese martial arts stance involving a sword.)*

Chris spoke.

“—I am not negligent like the other two were. I'm going all out from the onset.”

“Is that so? In that case, perhaps I'll also go all out.”

Perhaps still irritated that I was holding a shovel, he flared at me.

“How long do you plan on using that tool? That’s not suitable for this place.”

“You’re not the one to decide that now, are you?”

The referee announced the start.

“Begin!”

—Well, despite what I said, I did think he was a strong character. He actually made sure not to be negligent, unlike the other two.

There was no hesitation when he moved in a straight path to slash at me.

“Luxon, deploy the drones.”

[The drones are being deployed.]

Drones successively descended from the weapon containers on my back. Firearms were installed on the spherical drones.

There were eight of them.

“—Wha?!”

As they were heading towards a surprised Chris, I made my next move.

“Open fire.”

Pulling a trigger on a joystick, the drones all faced towards Chris and began firing.

Chris hurried in an attempt to avoid them, but there wasn’t much he could do when surrounded by eight drones. The damage from the machine gun attacks of the drones piled up.

Perhaps thinking that he wouldn’t win if only defended, he tried attacking the drones, but Luxon was operating them.

[How futile.]

When he tried to attack them, they would go around and attack him from behind.

However, Chris responded immediately and took measures to prevent them from going around him by stepping back to the wall. It may have seemed like a good choice, but...

“Alright, checkmate. Will you admit defeat?”

While I was carrying the shovel and didn’t move, Chris got emotional.

“You! Are you satisfied with this method of fighting?! There’s not even a trace of the knights’ way in it! What are you fighting like this for?!”

I knew that with him being particular about the sword, he wanted a knight-like fight, but to be frank, I had no interest.

“Is that all you wanted to say? This isn’t a bout. No matter how much you guys are keeping this up as a duel, it’s still a fight to the death. It’s bad to rely on firearms, you say? I never heard of a rule like that. In the first place, aren’t I, the one going against you five, the one that should be pitied? No wait, perhaps that was out of line. It’s fine if it’s five rounds of one-on-one, so I suppose it can’t be helped if I don’t receive any sympathy. All things considered, the gap between us is too big, so I was thinking about going easy on you. I even thought about going through with that fair-and-square way of the knights that you guys were talking about.”

Chris tried to moved while I kept incessantly talking. Luxon, not overlooking that, began having the eight drones around me all fire.

In order to not take his life, they used special bullets that reduced damage, but soon unable to move, Chris then used his giant sword as a shield while leaning down.

“You’re making light of me... Nobody would acknowledge a fight like this!”

“That’s fine All that matters is the outcome. You guys lose, and I win. There are few people who care about the means to the end. Ah, but you guys will probably say that you’re all those kinds of people. Your standings would worsen if you just said that you clumsily lost, after all.

“Aaaaaaargh!!”

Chris, using his willpower to push his way through the storm of bullets, reached where I was and swung down his sword. Due to Chris' magic power and sword speed, it looked like he was swinging down a blade of light, but I caught his left hand and crushed the large sword.

"As expected of an expert swordsman, that was superb."

Smoke was fuming out of Chris' armor, and the referee announced the winner.

"Chris Fier Arkwright is unable to battle! The winner is... Leon Fou Baltfault."

When the referee said my name, I felt like he had no enthusiasm in his words.

I could hear a sobbing voice from the armor.

"...Why? Why did I lose? I worked harder than anybody else. I persevered longer than anyone else... I wanted to be recognized."

I had some sympathy for Chris, who was forced to work hard due to circumstances at home, but this matter wasn't related to that, so I didn't really care too much.

"Boast about your misfortune in front of that prideful girl. You'll surely receive sympathy, then."

[You're such heap of garbage, aren't you?]

Luxon's words stuck to my mind, strangely enough. Well, perhaps I really did overdo it a bit. However, these guys deserved to suffer defeat.



There were voices of anxiety from the audience.

"H, hey, Chris lost."

"What the heck. Isn't that unfair?"

"...Say, that Leon person managed to conquer a dungeon solo and earn the position of a baron, right? Could it be that he's really strong?"

“W, wait a minute. If that’s the case, then has the victor been set in stone? I’m going to lose everything I own!”

The audience started getting impatient after realizing that the bet they thought they would absolutely win might not go as expected. Meanwhile, the students that had looked down on Leon started to change their understanding of him.

Olivia had a face that looked as if she was about to cry.

“Anjelica, I’m... really sad. I’m glad that Leon won, but this is too cruel.”

Anjelica spoke to Olivia.

“Don’t say foolish things. Even Leon might lose if he lets his guard down. He had to take vigilance with his opponent.”

“I, is that so?”

She nodded and spoke about Chris.

“His swordsmanship instructor comes from an earl household. Chris’ father is the number one swordsman in the kingdom, earning him the title of master swordsman. That boy was able to earn the title of expert swordsman, which is only a step lower.”

Olivia was impressed.

“How amazing.”

“Sure, amazing.”

(That boy couldn’t even lift a hand or foot against him, which means... the foster brother, Jilk, is probably getting flustered.)

Looking at where Julian and the others were, she couldn’t see Jilk or his armor.

Julian was comforting Marie, who had gone pale, and when Anjelica saw that scene, her chest tightened in bitterness.

(...his Highness.)



While Chris was being taken out of the arena and towards the medical office, Jilk was preparing for the next match.

He gave some instructions to the mechanic of his armor.

“Load all the weapons there are. I’m going to use both bullets and magic bullets.”

The mechanic widened his eyes.

“They’re not items to be used in a match!”

“This is a duel!”

The normally kind Jilk was getting impatient and lost his composure.

His green armor had feather-like decorations.

That armor was equipped with a rifle which gave off a dignified aura, and not a sword, but an axe. It was equipment that made it look quite like he was going to a battlefield.

“Can you remove the decorations and install additional armor? Afterwards, prepare hand grenades and similar items.”

The mechanic was troubled.

“Jilk, I’m limited on the parts that I have on me right now.”

Jilk casted his eyes downward, then lifted his head.

“Don’t worry. Just do what you can within the realm of what’s possible.”

While the urgent modifications to the equipment were being done, Jilk thought about the fight while not looking at his surroundings.

(I have to stop him by all means necessary. If I don’t do that, his Highness’ reputation will suffer damage.)

Jilk lived for the sake of his foster brother, his close friend. If they lost here, Julian’s

reputation would drop significantly.

Not accepting that fate, Jilk took all means necessary.

He picked up a bomb that was laying nearby.

“...I’m going to head out for a bit.”

While the parts on his armor were being exchanged, Jilk stepped out of the room.



“\*yawn\*~, I’m tired.”

There was a temporary break, so I went out of the arena and into the waiting room to rest.

Once I finished my business at the restroom, Olivia and Anjelica rushed over.

“Leon, where did you go?!”

“I was worried about you.”

I tilted my head in response to their reactions.

“Huh, what?”

The two exchanged glances.

“Err, um, we heard that you were in a bad condition.”

I narrowed my eyes.

“Me? I was only taking a break.”

Anjelica became a bit suspicious.

“A girl who called herself your sister appeared. Olivia confirmed that by looking at her face... and she said that you were looking unwell, so she wanted us to see you.”

My sister was worried about me? Not a chance.

She didn't want to meet me since I picked a fight with the prince, but I definitely did cause some trouble for her. However, would she talk to me at this time?

While thinking of such things, Luxon spoke to me. The two people in front of me couldn't hear it.

[Master, an explosive was set on the exterior. Your older sister was the one that set it, but someone ordered her to.]

...I thought so. It's most likely that she was threatened into it.

She felt ashamed since I had picked a fight with the prince in the academy. This is where Jilk comes in.

I may be a heap of garbage, but Jilk was the scum of the earth. Well, I believe that guy would stop at nothing for the sake of Julian, and would do anything.

[The one who ordered her was your next opponent.]

While hearing Luxon's report, I breathed a slight sigh while thinking about how my suspicions were on point.

The two looked uneasy.

"I see... so you know my sister. What actually happened was that I was holding in the urge to go. My stomach started cramping. I thought I was going to leak. That was a more difficult struggle than the duel."

When I said that, Olivia looked flustered and embarrassed.

"S, something like that can't be helped, can it?"

Anjelica looked at me with a cold gaze.

"Do you think you should speak like that in front of girls?"

"I suppose you got a point. I went to go pick flowers then. The arena doesn't have any flower beds though." (TLN: "Going to pick flowers" is an indirect way of saying that someone went

*to the restroom.)*

When I said that, Olivia made a bitter smile.

Anjelica held her hand against her forehead.

“That explanation was... well, never mind. You’re going to make a mistake at some point if you don’t fix your normal way of speaking. Leaving that aside, it’s almost time.”

“In that case, I suppose we should go.”

Luxon gave me information as I headed to the arena.

[The explosive was set on the back of the exterior. Since the armor of this world contains important mechanisms in that spot, it seems that the perpetrator intends to seriously stop us. After calculating the quantity of explosive powder, it seems that it’s an amount that can take the life of a pilot inside any regular armor.]

The normally kind guy was the most frightening... things like that were a common trope these days.

### 3

When I entered the arena, my sister was no longer there.

Well, I was grateful that I didn’t have to talk with her. I didn’t know what I would discuss with her, other than about the bomb, but... it was installed secretly.

Anjelica was watching Jilk’s green armor standing in the arena.

“Oh look, I’ve kept my opponent waiting. It seems that things are finally getting serious.”

Jilk came out with equipment that made it look like he was going to a battlefield.

As I entered my armor, Luxon made a report to me.

[It seems to be the type that detonates in response to a specific magic.]

Bombs like these were a means of attack in the game as well. I didn’t use them, though.

“Guys like Jilk are the most frightening type. He excels in his marksmanship, but he’s also an all-rounder with average or excellent abilities in other fields. He can adapt no matter the situation.”

Julian is better in close range battles, while Jilk is a character that triumphs in long range ones. He had no peculiarities, was easy to work with, and was excellent. He was a reliable character in the game.

Well, he was also an irritating character who had a high degree of difficulty in capturing him.

Getting down onto the arena, Jilk voiced out.

“—You’re strong. I’ll give you my respect for that.”

“Why yes, thank you.”

Once the referee signaled that it had begun, Jilk aimed a rifle in his right hand towards me. He soared into the air from the onset and pulled the trigger without any hesitation while throwing a grenade.

[It’s a smokescreen.]

“It seems he’s not playing around.”

My surroundings were wrapped in a white smoke.



In the white smoke, Jilk soared up until he reached as high up as he could.

Since flying too high results in disqualification, he flew up to the very limit of what he was allowed to, and decided to attack by using his rifle and grenades from overhead.

“I hope that he’ll go down with this.”

He played a hand that he didn’t want to use that much.

He reached out to Leon’s sister and handed her a bomb. He didn’t give it to her directly, but instead had a schoolboy be the middleman.

If the matter became public, it wouldn't hurt Julian's reputation, and it would just be seen as a schoolboy acting rashly while worrying about Julian.

The arena was encased in smoke, but a magic circle appeared before Jilk. Inside it, Leon's figure showed up, which was what Jilk was looking for.

"You're a danger. I will dispose of you here."

He pulled the trigger of the rifle.

His rifle was used by the military, and had the ability to pierce through armor. Taking it out during a duel within the academy wouldn't garner much respect, but his opponent was Leon.

He couldn't say that he was able to play it safe after his opponent had flaunted an overwhelming difference in ability so far.

"...Your life ended the moment you went against his Highness. I will give you a spectacular finish here!"

The bullet hit Leon's armor, specifically the head.

It was clearly a shot meant to take his life.

However—

"W, what?!"

Leon looked up at the sky as if nothing had happened.

He showed off by waving while looking calm.

"Tsk!"

He threw a grenade and readied his rifle. He loaded a bullet into the bolt action mechanism, and fired.

Jilk had used his last resort, resulting in the calmly standing armor in front of him getting wrapped up in an explosion. In order to activate the explosive he had set, he released a specific magic towards Leon. The magic itself had no meaning, but its

reaction with the bomb caused a large explosion on Leon's back.

"He'll take damage from this direct hit!"

However, he couldn't find Leon's figure within the arena. It did not seem like he had disintegrated, it just looked like he had disappeared altogether.

"Where is he? Where the hell is he?!"

Then, Jilk felt a sense of discomfort when a shadow, one that could block the sun, quickly appeared. There was not a single cloud in the sky, though.

When he looked up, he saw Leon's figure in the rear.

"Yo."

"!"

He readied his rifle while Leon took a nose dive and headed towards him.

He pulled the trigger, but even though it was a shot to the armor at point-blank, the bullet was repelled.

"How did you withstand that explosion?"

"What a heavy blow that was. If you catch my drift." *(TLN: I was a bit confused on what the MCs double meaning was here. Apparently, he was implying that he knew the blow was a lethal one. Thanks, Emperor Shazik)*

Jilk, realizing that what he said hinted at multiple meanings, then took out his battleaxe and swung it. Leon stopped it with his shovel, and Jilk began to talk to him while not letting the audience hear.

"—You know nothing."

"Look in mirror and say that. You are not sane."

"Do you plan on dueling with his Highness? Your life as a noble will end."

"That's fine! The advanced class makes me want to throw up! I'd do anything to be free

from it... and be free from people like you!"

Ordinary boys could sympathize with what he said. Even though they weren't too fond of him, they would somehow find room to leave that aside when starting a conversation about their troubles.

However, contrary to what Leon said, he showed willpower.

Marie's face popped up in Jilk's head.

What a marvelous woman she was. She understood him quite well, and seemed like his own ideal woman.

It didn't take long for him to become obsessed with her.

She was not from the royal palace. Unlike the usual girls around him, she made his heart feel at ease.

"For the first time! I've come across my ideal woman!"

"Great, that means I have one less competitor to deal with. You can go enjoy yourself playing around with love to your heart's content."

When he received an attack from Leon's shovel using his rifle, the rifle flew out from his hands and onto the floor.

(The difference in power... is too big.)

Julian's face also popped up in his mind.

The figure of his close friend, who would look delighted when talking about Marie.

"What do you know?! His Highness and I truly love her! It's not like I need to monopolize her. I just want to make her happy!"

"In that case, how would you feel about giving up?"

Leon seemed dispassionate, but each and every blow of his was heavy.

The armor Jilk was operating would creak each time it received a blow, as if it were

screaming.

“I will use whatever I can to not lose to you. If you plan on doing anything to his Highness, I will risk everything I have to make sure that you—no, your family will pay!”

He was just like someone in love.

He was sad at first, and thought about giving up... but it wouldn't be love if he gave up with just that much.

Jilk was prepared to do anything for the sake of not himself, but for Julian and Marie.

“...Such threats are cowardly when in a duel.”

“Go ahead and say whatever you want.”

The two were fighting in the sky, and the audience in the arena couldn't hear their voices.

Jilk felt something happening, and when he was trying to figure it out—

“I will use whatever I can to not lose to you. If you plan on doing anything to his Highness, I will risk everything I have to make sure that you—no, your family will pay!”

—He heard what he had said just a moment ago.

“W, what?”

Jilk was soon confused.

He had never heard of such a magic like this. Perhaps it existed and he just didn't know about it, and maybe it was newly discovered.

He thought it was Leon mimicking his voice, but it seemed different from that.

Leon began playing back the conversation they had.

Jilk clenched his teeth in regret.

“You threatened me just a moment ago. So, I decided to threaten you as well. Let’s see, I can take this over to your household. I wonder what your family would think. Threatening someone when it seemed that you were going to lose in a duel would be tantamount to ending your life as a noble! Ah, on second thought, I wonder what your beloved Highness and Marie would think if they heard this? They would definitely scorn you. No wait, they would definitely report this to the academy! Then, all of the students in the whole school would hear about it!”

Jilk soon reorganized his feelings.

“T, that voice alone isn’t proof.”

In this world, there weren’t any machines or magic mechanisms that could record a voice yet. Due to that, it would be difficult to vouch for this as being evidence. It would be difficult, but there was another factor to consider.

“You doubt that this could be used as evidence, isn’t that right? Even so, everyone would think that my household is suffering from stress. They’ll think ‘That guy really did something to them.’ Then, wouldn’t everyone also start doubting his Highness? They would think ‘Could it be that his Highness does these kinds of things?!’ The reputation of your beloved Highness would sink.”

While Leon continued on in a happy manner, Jilk pretended to be as calm as possible.

He endured Leon’s fire attack while trying to figure out how to break out of the situation.

“His Highness is not involved. This is my own action”

“You’re not the one to decide that, you know? The people around you will get tied into it, even if you don’t want it to happen... Besides, you all decided not to listen to Anjelica back then, right? Why do think that the same thing won’t happen to you guys?”

Jilk found himself flustered and at a loss for words.

It was as he said, they didn’t pay any attention to Anjelica’s arguments back then. They didn’t know about the matter of Marie being bullied, and yet they disregarded Anjelica when she said that she didn’t order for it to happen.

“T, that’s!”

“Enough—lie down.”

Leon’s voice turned cold for an instant, and he trampled on Jilk in the air, causing him to drop down onto the floor.

Like that, his consciousness started fading as he hit the floor.

“He even bothered my sister. Now then, I wonder what to do...”

Leon had already lost interest in Jilk. In any case, after being thrust into the ground, Jilk’s armor was tattered and likely couldn’t move.

The last thing he thought was,

(Your Highness, this is dangerous. You cannot... fight... him.)

That’s when his consciousness blacked out.

# Chapter 10

## Love

### 1

Marie trembled while looking at the grey armor standing in the arena.

(What? What is that? I never heard about there being a strong person like this. I... I don't know who this is!)

Once the grey armor took its foot off of Jilk, people in charge soon rushed to get him. It seemed that his life wasn't in danger, and that he just fainted.

Kyle was surprised.

"Will things really be fine? The four of them lost while not being able to do anything at all."

Julian clenched his fist.

He looked at his white armor.

"—I didn't think he'd turn out to be such an opponent. However, my armor was made using the best technology in the kingdom. Marie, don't worry."

Marie made a stiff smile.

(Didn't everyone else say that and still lost?! That really isn't helpful. That reminds me, these guys were useless during the war part and suffered defeat, so I made my older brother clear the game.)

Marie thought about her previous life.

It was a form of escapism, not wanting to accept the current situation.

(My older brother was terrible! I told my mom that I went on a vacation, then he

died—and afterwards, my position in the family was non-existent! They didn't even help me when my partner ran away after we married! It's all my brother's fault! I see, that Leon guy is similar to my brother, and it's making me irritated!)

Julian took off his coat.

Then, he put on a whole-body suit that were like tights. Regular clothing became a hinderance when getting into armor, and when thinking about it, the outfit used were garments similar to tights, which emphasized the outline of the body.

Marie had some thought after seeing it in real life.

(This is kind of stupid. Though in the game, I was a little excited by his muscles appearing. I'd prefer if he at least wore a vest or pants like that copycat of my older brother.)

Once Julian entered the armor, the eyes of its helmet glowed. It had two eyes, and pretty much looked like a robot.

Kyle looked at the white armor with a gaze of yearning.

“How nice~. I'd like to have that as well.”

Marie shook her head.

“You're not a knight, you can't. Besides, you wouldn't be able to move it since you're an elf.”

“You never know unless you try. There's a chance it could work since I'm only a half elf.”

“No. Besides, having armor—”

Thereupon, Marie thought for a bit.

(H, huh? Humans and sub-races shouldn't be able to make children... well, since this is as game, I guess that these details are left unclear.)

Julian got into the armor, and looked at Marie.

“Marie, I’m off.”

Marie searched in her head for the words to respond to Julian with.

(At times like these, it’s definitely—)

“Alright. I’ll be praying for your victory, Julius.”

“Ah, leave it to me!”

Her speech and manner mimicked that of the protagonist’s. In front of the five people, Marie acted like their ideal woman.

(\*sigh\*, I’m tired. In the first place, it’s seriously tough to imitate the innocent and helpless protagonist who has her head full of flowers.)

She had been doing her hardest to take the position of the protagonist in her second life.

She lied in wait at the proper locations, drove away the protagonist, and then mimicked her speech and manners to charm the boys.

It was very easy for Marie since she understood the tastes and personalities of the five, and things went according to her calculations.

As evidence of that, she was able to quickly knock Anjelica off of her pedestal. However, an irregular being appeared.

Leon.

(Anyways, I need to do something about that mob. Or rather, what will I do if we lose? I think if this were the game, I’d get a game over.)

The matter concerned her livelihood, so she wanted Julian to win by any means.

(Right. I can’t let it end here. I need to enjoy myself more in this world. Others were able to have many boys fall in love with them and then live a life of luxury. My previous world was just cruel. I was finally able to reach happiness... I need that mob-like boy to lose!)



The white armor descended into the arena.

It looked quite like it was shining, and was the kingdom's strongest armor. A stronger version would appear later, but for the time being, this was the most powerful one.

...I cannot stress enough that no other armor matched up to it.

"I didn't expect that you'd make it up to me. I commend your struggle."

In front of the prince's arrogant attitude were pleasant cheers from the audience.

Perhaps it was those idiots that bet all of their wealth. However, I'll be the one to win.

The prayers of the audience won't make it to the heavens.

First of all... I knew that I was only an insignificant person.

The reason why I stepped into the duel was because I had Arroganz, but also because the prince and the others were still first year students.

If it were the end of the year, they would have begun developing and we would have been about equal. They were talented people that would become strong by the end of year, and at their current level, their lack of strength came from their lack of experience.

If I were to strike, it would had to have been now. This made things convenient for me.

"So you would be proud of beating down a small fry... is that right?"

I tried agitating him, but the prince barely reacted.

He held a shield in his left hand, and a sword on his right.

Coming from his backpack were two cannons mounted at the shoulders with revolving magazines.

It was a very extravagant armor, one that suited royalty.

It felt odd having an battle where my opponent... was someone originally connected to the protagonist.

I wanted to ask if he was really okay with Marie being the one he would protect...

“Your Highness, is it alright to ask a question?”

“If I can answer it.”

“What do you think about the honor student, Olivia?”

The prince’s response was weak. It seemed that he didn’t know why I asked such a question.

“Olivia? I heard that she was doing her best here, but what about it?”

“...Is that so?”

I readied my shovel. This was a surreal scene now that I thought about it. Though, perhaps it would be good to switch to a blade now?

If I came here with a shovel, perhaps it would be better to fight with a shovel until the end.

The referee made a slightly pained expression.

He was looking at me... with an expression that said “You know what this entails, right?”. I wondered if he wanted to tell me not to cause any injuries.

The referee raised his arm and then swung it down.

“Begin!”

However, when the cue began, neither Julian nor I moved.

It looked like the prince was waiting while holding his shield out in front.

Luxon seemed dissatisfied with that.

[Is he trying to stall the fight? What a hopeless person. The difference in ability is

obvious. It may be superior compared to other armor, but it still amounts to just armor.]

“In that case, all we can do is take the initiative.”

Arroganz made giant steps and thrust the shovel at the shield. Upon which, the prince fended off the attack and then used the sword in his right hand to slash at me.

I stopped the blow using the handle of the shovel, causing sparks to form.

“I’m not done yeeeet!”

He made continuous attacks using his shield and sword.

I caught them using my shovel, and repelled them while stooping down. Perhaps thinking that the prince had overwhelmed me, there where passionate cheers coming from the audience.

“These guys just don’t want to lose a bet.”

[They would be relieved if you lose, master. After all, you’ve been trampling on their emotions, even though you’ve done that for a while now. From the standpoint of the audience, they probably think you’re a nuisance.]

“Don’t say that! Whoa!”

A quick thrust from the prince approached me, and I slipped down as if I was sliding away on the floor. He did the same too. He glided across the floor as if he was on skates, and assaulted me using his sword.

When I stopped his slash, I heard the prince’s voice.

“I will not lose. For the sake of the girl who prays for my victory—I will not looose!”

The glow on his blade grew brighter, perhaps due to his crazed emotions.

The blue flames coming out of the back of the prince’s armor were quite beautiful.

“I’ll acknowledge your techniques.”

“Coming from you, that’s not praise. But anyways, I’m not going to give up either.”

I intercepted and repelled each blow he made in his crazed vigor using my shovel. I knew quite well that the abilities of the person piloting that armor were of the top.

“As expected of his Highness Julian. Your vigor is different from the other four. Perhaps the other four have been on your mind? Maybe you don’t want to lose since being the only victor might mean having more time with Marie!”

“Don’t jest! What do you know about us?!”

The blue flames on the back of the white armor grew stronger, and their force increased. I realized that he was upsetting the difference in ability by putting a strain on his armor.

It seemed he had gotten serious...

“I don’t know anything. I just don’t think what you guys are doing is good.”

When I looked over at the audience to see Olivia and Anjelica, they turned their gazes towards me.

Olivia cheered me on by linking both of her hands together as if she were praying.

Anjelica had a complicated expression. I suppose she didn’t like seeing me fighting with the prince. No wait, perhaps she was worried about me injuring him?

I continued fighting while talking with the prince.

“Your Highness, how does it feel to be totally in love with another person? I can’t comprehend such a feeling, you see.”

“No wonder. So that’s why you’re able to so calmly intrude on the affairs of others. If you really did have someone you love, you wouldn’t have caused an uproar by doing this duel! It would have been better if you knew what love was so that you would have backed down!”

I can’t speak for others, but couldn’t those words also apply to him?

“Is this about Anjelica? Well~, I do believe that she loves you, your Highness.”

“—She doesn’t”

“Huh?”

The flames on his back increased in force, heightening the armor’s speed.

He was faster than the other four, and made quick slashes.

Things were getting quite serious with just that.

“There’s no way that what she’s feeling is love! She doesn’t consider my own feelings! She’s the same as all the other girls in the royal palace! My life as a royal was forced onto me! I didn’t want to be born into royalty. I lived in the royal palace, where nobody saw me for myself, so—”

It couldn’t be helped. After all, he was the crown prince—the heir to the throne.

I wanted to tell him that, but being born into royalty doesn’t mean one would always like their situation.

“Marie is the only woman that recognizes my feelings.”

There weren’t any types of women that he was looking for in the royal palace, so was able to easily be deceived in the midst of his turmoil.

Olivia was originally supposed to step in here. That was in the game though.

Things have gone awry thanks to someone else who reincarnated here.

She led those five guys by the nose in an act of unthinkable disgrace.

“The same goes for you, who keeps saying those self-important things! Your words are cheap! You can’t call yourself a knight when you’re just a boy who got arrogant after coming across a great power! Are you having fun? How do feel about using that power to overwhelm others and then scold them with a condescending attitude?!”

“—It feels great!!”

“Wha?!”

When I tried kicking the prince's armor, he blocked it with his shield. He flew towards his behind in an instant and fired from the cannons on his shoulders, but I didn't guard against them.

Arroganz shook. I did not get a single scratch.

"It's the best feeling! It's refreshing being able to use my overwhelming power to pin down you domineering, vigorous people and rebuke you all. I do have a problem with your companions who don't talk back, though. Well, I suppose the ones that talk back in spite of losing will only invite misery! So, let me tell you something. I certainly may be arrogant, but you guys won't be able to win against me. How does it feel knowing that? How does it feel losing to a guy of a lower rank than you, your Royal Highness?!"

"Yoouuuu!"

I held down my opponent with an overwhelming power while condemning him.



This was getting addictive.

Furthermore, my opponents were people looking down on me... so my feelings of guilt were thin.

Luxon held the same opinion as me.

This thing's voice didn't leak out. My conversation with it didn't leak out either. It was very capable.

[He's done refuting you at this point, master. Though, I suppose he can't talk back from the shock of losing the argument. All things considered, humanity is quite trash-like. I'm impressed.]

When I bashed the shield that the prince was holding in his left hand, smoke started rising from it, perhaps from the burden it caused.

The shield warped, and the prince threw it away. The fingers of his armor were bent, and it seemed that his hand was no longer usable.

"I'll say one more thing. Do you even understand your own feelings, idiot?! Do you even have a vague grasp of my own feelings?! Furthermore, do you even know Anjelica's—"

"Shut uuuup!"

When he slashed at me with a sword, I used my shovel to lock weapons with him, causing us to come face to face. I held the advantage in terms of weight and size.

The prince's armor seemed like it had been overcome with burden.

"You didn't want to be born into royalty, you say. Have you ever been at risk of being sold off to perverted old women? Have you ever experienced having to be servile and lower your head to ask a girl to be your wife? Have you ever been told by someone that they hate the countryside and that they also have additional lovers too? It's wretched. Do you know the feeling of seeing people's entire lives turning miserable after marriage and yet being told that you're being raised to be someone's lover, do you?!"

I spoke my honest thoughts, and there were definitely many boys who would agree

with me.

I could see the figures of boys in the audience either nodding their heads or shedding tears in understanding.

Everyone... I'm going to enact a just punishment upon this spoiled boy who knows nothing about this world, so watch me from there!

"W, what are saying such things for?! Aren't you guys free?! All you have to do is find a good partner!"

I bashed him many times over in anger. Each time, Julian would shake inside his white armor, and cried out in an attempt to withstand the impact.

"Free?! Finding a good partner? You say that I—we are free?! Don't treat us lightly, you spoiled brat! Have you felt that your chastity was in danger?! Did you put your life at risk?! Did you get on a tiny boat?! Have you ever set sail into the sky?! You're allowed to have a beautiful fiancée and you get to play around with another girl... what is there that you don't want to be born into royalty for? Aren't you the one enjoying yourself?! Get a grip!"

"I am not playing around! I'm serious!"

"That's even worse!"

He normally should have been the lover of a girl from a viscount household. Perhaps he was at one point?

In any case, I don't know the details, but getting the daughter of a duke household as a fiancée is not something to be ignored.

Now that I was talking about this—will the elite, or rather the kingdom as a whole, be safe in the future?

The same goes for the influential nobles.

Everyone having the same kinds of women around them was only going to create problems.

I blew away the sword using a full swing of my shovel, seized his arm, and crushed it.

Now that he couldn't use either of his arms, he took a distance and started using his cannons to fire.

I avoided them and waited for his shots to stop.

Since there was a limit to his ammunition, he would soon run out of shots.

“\*sigh\* ... isn't this enough? I'm done playing around. Your opponent is over there. Got it?”

When I used my thumb to point at Anjelica and Olivia in the audience, Anjelica had a sorrowful face. I bent forward and waited for the prince's reply.

Anjelica took a liking to the prince. No, I can say that she loved him. This duel happened because she wanted Marie to separate from the prince.

The prince, who had stopped fighting, spoke.

“...Not done.”

“Huh?”

“It's not over yet. I would rather die than let Marie be taken away! I will not accept defeat. If you're going to kill me then do it! This is a duel! I forbid this duel to stop until either you or I die!”

He intended for nobody to get in our way.

He had become defiant.

Since it was someone from the royal family saying this, it could be taken as order for nobody to step in and stop us. Talk about double standards... he's fine if he's the one doing it, but gets irritated if others try it.

However, now that it has come to this, dealing with him would be troublesome.

“Alright, how about I torment you until your heart breaks?”

Luxon muttered its surprise in a low voice.

[This turned out to be the worst kind of conversation to take place. However, the words you said just a while ago were filled with more genuine emotion than I had felt before. That's my evaluation.]

That was obvious. They came from real experiences I had.

Denouncing people felt great! I wasn't here for negotiations.

## 2

Although both arms of Julian's white armor had broke, he still struck Leon's armor.

A sense of desperation could be felt from that image.

Anjelica clutched the handrail while looking at him going against Leon, who held an overwhelmingly strong power, and wept.

"It seems... you're being serious, your Highness. It seems you really like that girl."

Anjelica wiped her tears and accepted that her feelings didn't reach him.

(I see. I have to step down. If that's what his Highness wants me to do... then I'll resign.)

Her line of sight focused towards the other side of the circular audience seating.

She glared at the face of Marie, who held a gloomy expression.

(However, I will not approve of you. You are not someone who can stand next to his Highness. You're only a hinderance to him. That's the only thing I won't allow.)

Even after resigning, she would still try to pull Marie and Julian apart. She thought about it being for Julian's sake.

That woman had four other men near her as lovers—and someone like her should not take the position of the queen.

The woman managed to ensnare five people in a short time.

It was possible that she would further increase the number of men she had.

If Marie became the queen, it was obvious that the seeds of conflict would take a sudden increase.

Furthermore, the royal palace wouldn't stay silent about it either.

Anjelica glared at Marie, who became pale and dismayed from seeing Julian getting worn out.

(No matter what happens to me, I will drag you down with me. I absolutely will not let you do as you please with his Highness.)

It was heartbreaking to tear apart Julian's relationship with a girl he claimed to love, but it was something Anjelica planned on carrying out no matter what.

Thereupon—

“T, that can't be right!”

—Olivia cried out.

“Perhaps you love Marie, your Highness the crown prince. But, but! Anjelica loves you! After all, she has been watching this fight while looking pained the entire time! It may have been hard for her, but she kept watching with a sad expression while not looking away! You can't say that isn't love!”

Anjelica spoke to Olivia in a hurry.

“H, hey, stop.”

She grabbed Olivia's shoulder and tried to have her back down from her agitation, but Olivia didn't stop.

Her voice was well-heard, and her yelling attracted the attention of others.

The audience in the arena, both students and teachers, gathered their gaze towards her.

“Why are you in denial?! Are you saying that it's not love unless the feelings are mutual?”

“That's enough, stop. Olivia, stop already!”

“No, please let me say this. Anjelica, your feelings are love. The one receiving the love is free to either take them in or not. However, don’t just deny it altogether!”

Olivia’s words also reached Marie.



...Anger.

That was Marie’s honest feeling.

(This is why I hate good girls. Her head is full of flowers, isn’t it? Love is annoying when the feelings are one-sided! It’s very annoying. Hearing her speech is making me irritated.)

Marie disagreed.

However, when Olivia won over the people around her with her clear voice, Marie revealed a frustrated face.

—She felt like her true self was being exposed.

She became largely aware of the fact that she was being a sham.

She snatched away the position that belonged to another girl originally.

The one who originally had rich and influential boys leaning towards her was Olivia. Even though her position was snatched away, she still shined.

(What’s with her supporting a somewhat strong mob? I have everyone. That’s definitely better than being with a comical mob who just happens to be strong.)

Olivia looked straight at Marie.

Her stare was frightening.

She took just a step back, feeling as if her deceit had been seen through.

Marie felt as if Olivia was saying that she would take back her position that had been coated in lies.

—Something occurred at that moment.

“—Is that all you want to say, girl?”

Julian squeezed out a voice.

Julian replied to Olivia in a muffled voice coming from the inside of his armor. His tone was filled with fury.

“—Is it love if it’s forced onto me one-sidedly? Is it love if the girl only sees me as the crown prince? I... I’ve found a woman who will look at me for who I am. She understands me. This is love. This is what love is! Anjelica, have you ever tried understanding me? You’ve been forcing your feelings onto me. That isn’t love. Don’t get involved with me ever again!”

Marie regained herself after hearing Julian.

(R, right. I’m not in the wrong. She’s the one that’s wrong. What’s up with the protagonist standing with the villainess? If this were the game, wouldn’t they be going against each other? Just go and fight with each other!)

Julian still planned on fighting.

“So, let’s continue. This duel won’t end until one of us dies. I’ve resolved myself. How about you?!”

The grey armor simply stood while shouldering a shovel.

(Julian is the crown prince. If it were a noble, they would be able to read the situation. How would you feel about killing the prince of your own country? You’d realize that you need to lose, right?)

Thereupon, Leon... started tormenting Julian even more than before.

“You’ve resolved yourself, you say? You mean that you hadn’t been prepared in this fight? Are you saying that you’ve resolved yourself on your loss? Are you looking down on me? Actually... that’s the way duels went in the first place. We don’t take the lives of others simply due to an unspoken rule within the academy, but if we got serious, things would soon be over. Didn’t you notice? I’d be fine even if I had to deal with all five of you at once. Your fun ends here. I was being cautious since you guys were so

confident of your strength, but you're all weaker than I thought. Give me a break. When it's like this... it seems like I'm the one who's bullying the weak."

In addition to criticizing him, he also made a complete fool out of Julian and the others.

Marie thought for a bit.

(W, who is this guy? He's a completely terrible, naggy person who complains about others, like my older brother!)

"Could it be that you didn't prepare yourself before, but now that you're losing you are? I know that you're being stubborn, trying to win by using your life as a shield. However, it's quite apparent that you're faintly hoping for me to back down when you said that. I suppose that I'd have to accept defeat when realizing that I can't kill you, the crown prince, right? How nice. You're his Highness the crown prince, so you use that to win battles. I will commend your stubbornness in using your status to the maximum degree while still claiming that you didn't want to be born into royalty!"

Everything in the stadium had a thought in their heads.

—This guy is the worst.

Though he was harshly torturing him, there was no fault to his argument. In fact, Julian didn't talk back, nor did he move. There was the faint hope that Leon's heart would waver at least somewhat.

However, Leon hadn't budged one bit.

"Look, tell us that you lost. Beg me to let you win because you don't want to be separated from your cherished Marie. Tell me that you didn't expect to lose, and that you beg for forgiveness. No wait, you can even make it an order as the crown prince!"

Julian refused.

"T, that's not possible! This is a sacred duel. It is courtesy for both of us to fight!"

"Huh? Are you saying that I should do what you want and admit defeat? Your Highness Julian, how harsh of you~. No matter how you look at it, wouldn't admitting defeat here be an insult to this sacred duel~? We can't just turn back after coming this far. Or perhaps you're going to make a perfect speech that will move me deeply? Well, I don't

think my heart will waver, though. Despite there being five of you, hearing you makes me want to tilt my head and treat it as a joke. My heart has not moved a single millimeter. On the other hand, I am impressed by how often you can make lame speeches!”

The mood in the arena worsened.

The crown prince’s displeasure grew as Leon agitated him. The cries of “Your Highness the crown prince, finish off that guy!” gradually grew louder from the girls in the audience.

(This guy is revolting. It seems the worst kinds of men are everywhere.)

Many girls and boys were booing Leon.



I breathed a small sigh inside Arroganz.

Luxon talked to me like I was the worst person.

[You had a lot to say, didn’t you. Are you feeling the greatest right now?]

“I do think I said too much. However, I’d be bothered if those five didn’t realize their own situation at least a little bit. These guys will be the center of the country in the future.”

Right, I would be bothered if these five remained the same as they were right now. At least, I’d be bothered if they didn’t realize their position of being at the top of the top.

Furthermore, it would be bad if they didn’t calm down at least a little... and if Marie keeps deceiving the five.

[Were you trying to force yourself as a villain? Was it fun?]

“...To be honest, it was really fun. Well, I don’t think I’ll do it again, though.”

With me as the villain in the arena, the voices supporting the prince were strong.

...That was fine.

Julian approached me while the people around booed me.

He tried to strike me, so I caught the blow.

“...Your Highness Julian, I will not back down.”

“Let go. Let goooo! You beast of a fiend who doesn’t even know the way of the knights! Even if I can’t win against you, I don’t plan to stop fighting this—”

Arroganz pinned down the rampaging white armor.

It was really good that there was this much of a difference in ability.

“Shall we have a serious discussion? Do you really think that you’ll find happiness this way?”

“W, what is it you want to say?!”

He claimed that both his love for a woman who had other boys with her, and him insulting his fiancée was genuine love. I shed a tear when thinking about how this guy was going to be the king in the future.

The people around still thought of him as a student, so they didn’t really realize this. No wait, perhaps the ones that did realize didn’t want to think about it too deeply.

It was obvious that in the future, something would trigger with Marie being in the center of it.

If a girl who was surrounded by five boys had a child, whose child would that be? It would certainly raise some doubts, and such doubts would definitely become a central topic amongst them.

If that happened, what would this guy do?

Would he come to his senses and find a woman to make a heir to the throne with?

Well, there’s a long ways to go before that.

Even though he’s the crown prince, having backers is necessary in this world. Powerful ministers and leaders—the feudal lord nobles.

The government wouldn't run smoothly with a king that people don't accept.

Factions or things of a similar nature can be serious for a king.

Furthermore, after doing some investigation, it turned out that the largest backers of the crown prince were the Redgrave duke family. Anjelica's household.

They unified factions and had them support the prince.

This guy was willingly making an enemy of his biggest supporter.

In the game, this was where the saint came in, but the problem was that Marie wasn't a saint. She was only a reincarnated person who was doing well.

In other words... a mob just like me.

She was going to mess up at some point. No wait, she was partially on the way towards that already.

I felt like I was going to have to clean up after Marie's mess.

### 3

I so wanted to say that she was my little sister from my previous life.

"Love is wonderful, isn't it. I'll acknowledge your spirit of going as far as to cast away your right to the throne in order to obtain it."

"...!"

Julian wasn't an idiot. He indeed knew about that.

Even though he knew, he still chose Marie.

Wait. In that case, didn't that make him worse than the average idiot?

"Would you indeed go as far as to throw away your current position?"

"Are you having a foolish laugh? Still, I would do that much for this girl. I don't need status or prestige. Having her is enough..."

“I think that people want you because of your status and prestige, though. I believe people would take no notice of you if you weren’t the crown prince, but just an ordinary Julian.”

Would Marie take no notice of him if he lost his status, prestige, fortune, and everything? I couldn’t help but think so.

She’s the type that may hang out with him because of his good looks, but wouldn’t think about marriage.

“That can’t be true! Marie would accompany me. Marie would still be with me—with us.”

I was saying all of this because Marie was a terrifying girl. Her mimicking of the protagonist’s actions speaks for itself, doesn’t it? So much so that I think Marie had a talent for these kinds of things.

I don’t think what that guy had was genuine love.

In the first place, if it really was love, then there wouldn’t be six boys around her.

“How nice it must be. However, if you lose, you’ll have to refrain from associating with her from now on.”

I let go of the prince and hit him as hard as I could with the shovel.

There was a dent in the white armor, and the prince greatly shook inside, throwing him off balance.

Luxon informed me of the preparations being ready.

[Analysis complete. Securing the safety of the pilot is possible.]

“Going easy on you is a pain. Here, this will end it.”

I let go of the shovel and used my right hand to make contact with the chest of the prince’s armor. Once touching it, Arroganz’s right arm started shifting. Its interior glowed, leading up to the next moment.

[Impact.]

As soon as Luxon declared that, an impact blew the prince's armor away into pieces. The audience shrieked once the armor had broken apart.

The armor had been smashed up, but the prince inside appeared to be safe.

It was nice that he didn't put up any resistance since he had fainted.

Once the right arm reverted back to normal, I retrieved the shovel I dropped and shouldered it.

The arena fell silent.

When I looked at the referee, he sent a doctor before announcing the victor.

They took priority in confirming Julian's safety.

When they realized that he had fortunately only fainted, the victor was declared.

"The winner is Leon Fou Baltfault... and therefore, the victor of this duel is Anjelica Rafua Redgrave. In accordance with the oath of a duel, the two—"

The declaration ended with them saying that the duel's loser had to obey the victor. At that moment, the blue tickets signifying the bets made on Julian and the others had fluttered about within the arena.

The arena was engulfed in the quite pleasant sounds of shrieks and jeers.

It was indeed pleasant to hear these boos directed at me.

"Give me my money back!"

"Cheater! As if such a duel can be acknowledged!"

"Give it back. Give back my money!"

I raised my shovel, and slowly turned around while recording the faces of the audience.

So many of them had the expression of despair, but some that had bet on me tucked their important red ticket into their pockets.

Then, I addressed the audience.

“Everyone... gamble responsibly!”

After saying that, they got agitated and started throwing trash at me. However, I magnificently avoided them while making a loud laughter, returning to where Olivia and the others were.

After landing the armor and appearing out of it, the armor automatically stored itself into a box and returned to the sky.

“...I wonder if I’ll be able to collect my earnings.”

[Wouldn’t that be a matter of course?]

The box disappeared into the sky, and I put on a coat that Olivia handed to me.

“How was it, my fair lady? I made a great success.”

Anjelica had a complex expression.

Well, it made sense that she had complicated emotions after seeing me beat up the prince she loved.

“Right. Thank you.”

Her face did not say that she was thankful. Her complexion was pale, and it seemed that she was concerned about the prince.

So, I spoke with a serious expression. I didn’t poke any fun.

“He has no injuries. He really just fainted.”

If something went wrong, it would have been Luxon’s fault. Not my fault.

Olivia also had a complex expression. Above all, she seemed to feel a sense of impending danger as she looked at the people around.

“H, hey, was that really alright? There’s something about the gazes from the people surrounding us.”

The students were glaring daggers at me.

There were those that were booing, and those that were crying.

“What am I supposed to do?! What happened to my entire fortune was because of you!”

“I beg of you, return it to me! I’m in debt. I made bets using borrowed money!”

“Who would acknowledge such a bet like this?!”

This was a good lesson for the children of nobles who make fun of society. I heard people talking about borrowing money, but those people were stupid to try doing it.

They were stupid for gambling when they didn’t know who the winner or loser would be. They would be better off if they only gambled when they were sure of winning, like I do.

Hmm? Wait a minute... these guys made bets since they were absolutely sure that I would lose, didn’t they...? Well, it doesn’t matter to me anyways. I won against five people and won a bet. That was the result.

“It’s fine to ignore them. Those people did bet all they had. They reap what they sow. If they study and do well, the academy might cut their tuition costs.”

Anjelica sighed.

“Well said. Those people bet on a large amount, knowing that things could possibly turn out this way, right? You really saved me this time. Thank you... I’ll show you a token of my gratitude afterwards. I’m going to head over to his Highness shortly.”

After seeing Anjelica disappear as she quickly headed towards there, we walked to the changing rooms.

Olivia was worried about me.

“Leon, why did you say such cruel things to his Highness and the others? Wouldn’t it have been better to say nothing?”

We talked along the way there, but it seemed that Olivia held some kind of delusion

about me. She seemed to think that I could have done better.

Actually, why was she this kind towards me? I had no recollection of doing many special things.

Perhaps it was just the protagonist being open-minded or caring? At any rate, wasn't it a problem that I was the only one she was close with?

"People are harboring hate towards me, just as planned."

"Is that okay? U, um, I think your marriage situation will be unstable from now on. Everyone's really angry at you."

"Aah, that's fine. I'll be dropping out of the academy."

Olivia made a odd voice, saying "Huh?" towards what I said.

However, she was quite the beauty. Even that expression she had looked cute.



It was just Anjelica and Julian in the medical office.

Julian had only fainted and had no injuries, so the doctors and nurses read the mood and left.

Anjelica shed tears when seeing Julian's figure.

He sat on the bed, and feebly hung his head, heard the result of the duel, and was shocked.

Anjelica knew that he didn't agree to it.

"Your Highness, I'm really glad that you're safe."

Julian turned towards Anjelica with an emotionless gaze.

"Stop your shameless acting. Wasn't it your duel representative that drove me this far into a corner?"

Anjelica couldn't reply to him.

He was saying that what happened was her fault.

“...Your Highness, please listen to me. What is it that I can’t do? I... I’ve been doing my hardest for your sake.”

Anjelica had tried hard to be a woman suitable for the crown prince. She made so much effort towards it that it became her pride.

As someone of a duke household, she had undergone severe training from morning until night in order to one day become a queen. It began with the numerous mannerisms of etiquette related to culture and the fine arts, and Anjelica kept persevering to become someone suitable for Julian.

That was why she couldn’t accept girls like Marie who were able to be near Julian with no effort at all.

Anjelica had to sacrifice many things for the sake of Julian and put in hard work since she was a child. Even so, she lost in face of girls like Marie who just suddenly showed up.

Julian made a slight laugh.

“For my sake? I think it’s just that you want the position of being the crown prince’s woman.”

“T, that’s not it! That’s not my relationship with you!”

“I’m not wrong. You’ve never seen me for who I was. I have proof too. Do you even know what my favorite dish is?”

“I, I do! It’s that soup—”

She described Julian’s favorite dish, but the reaction she got was negative.

“—Wrong.”

“Huh?”

“I like the grilled skewer foods that I get to eat when I sneak outside disguised. They tell me that commoner foods aren’t suitable for me, so I couldn’t say it to you though.

I'm sure that you would also want to deny me from such things."

She couldn't say what Julian's actual favorite food was.

When hearing that, Anjelica wiped her tears.

"I wouldn't! If you told me that, I would have immediately——"

However, Julian interrupted her.

"Marie noticed it without me even saying. When we went outside together, she understood me and invited me to a cart."

When hearing that, Anjelica's tears fell to the floor in large drops.

(...I didn't notice it, and yet that girl did? I've been by his Highness' side all this time, though.)

Perhaps feeling guilty, Julian made an apology towards Anjelica.

"...I know that this is rude towards you, and your household. However, the only one I love is Marie."

Anjelica's sobs intensified.

"T, that much is still fine. As long as I get to be your side your Highness——Julian."

Julian shook his head.

"I... cannot love you."

Anjelica, realizing Julian's feelings, decided to step back. She turned around to leave the room.

"Your Highness, I'm sorry, I won't say anything anymore. However... I'll be rooting for your happiness from the sidelines."

Julian made a cynical remark once Anjelica left the room.

"There's no use saying that at this point... I wanted to hear that from you sooner."

# Chapter 11

## The Foolish

### 1

In what kind of world are there men whose lives have been destroyed by women?

This otome game world with the crown prince and other boys.

Normally, they were supposed to love the protagonist, who was a saint. They spent time getting to know each other, and had a happy marriage.

It seems that these fools overlooked something important when they rushed through things.

The protagonist, Olivia, was meant to be connected to the crown prince.

It was futile to try and be an imitation of her. No doubt, it might have been better if one went through without imitating her.

I pondered a bit about the lackluster setting of this otome game world.

“Well, I understand the circumstances. So, you’re saying that I should clean up after you, correct?”

I’ll end my attempts to escape from reality here.

I spent a part of my summer vacation at Anjelica’s home—the Redgrave household.

The current head of the family, “Vince Rafua Redgrave,” was a dignified man with grey hair that was swept back. He had a tall and well-maintained body, and had a sharp glint in his eye.

Next to him stood Vince’s son and Anjelica’s older brother, “Gilbert Rafua Redgrave.” He had blonde hair and blue eyes, but closely resembled Vince.

He was in his early twenties.

Both of them glared at me.

I straightened myself and made a request.

“I don’t have any means of contacting the royal palace on my own. I can’t do anything at this rate. I have prepared white gold coins.”

The heap of white gold coins were what I had won from the bet. It was an unthinkable amount resulting from the borrowed money and personal expenses of foolish noble children.

I piled them up and had presented them to Vince.

Basically, I was taking out money and asking for them to protect me.

Was it shameful? If I was able to buy my life with money, then I would do it!

Gilbert was about to say something, but Vince held him back with his hand.

“You’ve gathered up a lot for a baron who has suddenly risen. The handicraft of the royal court indeed costs money. There’s also the fact that you took on the role of being my daughter’s representative at the duel. We’ll look after you. However, it would be troubling if you ask for us to protect this and that. You’re not under guardianship of us, and you’re not a fellow member of our faction. You followed through with my daughter’s short temper, but to say it in other words, that also means you stuck your nose into our affairs.”

I normally shouldn’t have been involved. At least, I wanted to so that, but...

In my mind, I made a triumphant pose.

I used my status as a student to its maximum potential, and got this dire situation to go the way I wanted it to. My life starts from here on!

“Yes. I understand. I want to be sure that my livelihood is spared and that the household doesn’t befall under any liability.”

Vince put his hands together on top of a desk.

“...Your honor has already dropped to the floor. Now you’re going to cast away your position?”

Even though it was nice beating up those five, going as far as to break their hearts was spoken ill of. The duel was far from honorable.

“I’ll relinquish my rank and title as a knight. I still haven’t received it yet, but I don’t have the qualifications to receive it now.”

This matter, a high sum of money and rank, and the title of a knight. I held these and used them to ask for their benevolence.

It was cheap price when considering that I had dueled against the crown prince.

I could also use this to escape from searching for a marriage partner.

Gilbert asked me a question.

“I want to ask one thing. What is your true aim? With that much power you have, it should be possible to overcome your situation and find success in life. It might even be possible for you to ascend up to a viscount household. I’m interested in what you’d toss that away for.”

I had gotten irritated, I wanted to beat up the capture target characters, and taking the opportunity, I wanted to escape from marriage-searching hell.

I had many reasons, but I spoke without saying any of them.

“I couldn’t leave his highness alone after seeing him being deceived by that woman. It’s for the sake of the nation, I suppose. I just thought that someone had to do something.”

Vince made a laugh as if amused.

“If those are your true feelings, then you’re quite admirable. Though, I would be quite troubled if you said that it was to amuse yourself. The royal court and prestigious nobles are in a mad rush thanks to you. The Redgrave family has also officially dissolved the engagement between his Highness and Anjie. He is not suitable for my daughter. Don’t you think so?”

I felt like I was being tested.

I didn't think he was looking for anything in particular. I was fine as long as my life was spared and I was freed from having to find a marriage partner as a noble.

I beat up those five to distract myself and perhaps to even no longer be a noble, escaping from marriage-searching hell. Aah, I was certainly reaching my desired result.

"I don't have much to say about the relation between the two of us. I personally just want him to study at the academy from now on. I hope he becomes a fine king."

"...I see. I may be changing the topic of conversation, but I have one request."

"What is it?"

"It's about my daughter. It seems that this matter took a large toll on her. As a parent, I can't watch her be worn out and lacking of spirit. I wanted to have her rest in the moderate countryside, but with the circumstances of our household, that will be difficult to arrange since we're a little busy."

Perhaps it was about settling affairs with those under their guardianship or people from the same faction as them. As a duke household, they wouldn't remain silent about Anjelica's followers betraying her.

Day after day, the parents and siblings of students have been coming to apologize, and things have been very busy.

It was a very big problem when children and clansmen sent as followers betray the head daughter.

There were many people who came to apologize to Anjelica, and it seemed that she wanted to rest somewhere out of reach.

"Your household meets the requirements for something we're looking for. Let her come with you when you depart to home. Several caretakers will be with her."

"Um, uh... s, sure!"

He was entrusting his daughter to a man. What did it mean? I was thinking about it,

but doing anything to the daughter of a duke household was unreasonable, so just having it in mind gave me the creeps. So I decided to treat it as if she was just going on a trip, and that I was in charge.

“Thank you. Now then, you may step back.”

“Excuse me.”

Once I left the room, I felt relieved. With this, my life at the academy will end, but I was feeling the best.

If I had any regrets, it would be that I couldn't learn about tea with my mentor anymore. He got angry at me for being distasteful during the duel, but he offered me delicious tea to drink.

“I wonder if that's really my only regret.”

Daniel and Raymond were also on my mind. I wonder how Rukul from the third year was doing? I was also regretful that I couldn't try out all of the popular desserts in the school cafeteria.

...It kind of seemed like I was enjoying myself at the academy before I realized it.



Leon left the office.

Gilbert looked at Vince.

“Father, what do you think?”

Vince laughed.

“It's as you said. If he was a well-behaved child who only thought for himself, then he would have stayed silent while watching at that time. There aren't many children like him, don't you think?”

The two looked at the pile of white gold Leon had prepared.

“...He has prepared a hefty sum of money, hasn't he.”

“He cast away his status and honor to criticize his Highness. He was quite resolved. Furthermore, he was able to earn the humor of the foster sibling. Normally, what he did would be the thing to be criticized. All things considered, the academy has many problems now like it did in the past. There are too many children who are oblivious to the ways of the world.”

The academy holds a somewhat special environment.

Since it was a place to educate the next generation of nobles, everyone was supposed to be treated equally on the surface. Such things were impossible, though.

This special environment was out of the public eye. With people fixated on the value of their clique, there were times where incidents occurred.

It was a miniature garden where ignorant people gathered. That was where the problem rose.

The current matter that happened was an issue that turned out to become a large fuss. Then, the students who returned to their households during summer vacation would come to know reality there.

Indeed, Anjelica’s followers would likely come to know the meaning of picking a fight with a duke household.

“Well, I do think there were plenty of other ways to do it, though.”

“Is that so? Wasn’t he just enjoying himself? I think Anjie was short-sighted to have proposed a duel, but he stepped up in a situation where everyone was her enemy and she couldn’t be saved... isn’t that a touching tale? He was like how a knight should be. Only on the outside, though.”

Gilbert asked what Vince’s real intentions were.

“What are you going to do?”

Vince grinned.

“He can be a benefactor of my daughter. He can cover for her. That’s what. It would be better off for you too if you had a reliable household, like a knight one. Don’t you think the Redgrave family will be peaceful after taking him in? After all, this matter has made

it clear that there are several unreliable households out there.”

The two looked outside a window.

An airship spanning over seven hundred meters was floating. They felt that it was something they have never seen made before, but the two felt an impression that it was a lost item discovered in a dungeon.

The Holfault Kingdom valued adventurers.

Leon’s achievements were something men yearned for.

“There’s a large price to pay for the power to beat up the boys of prestigious families so easily. However, how far are you willing to take him in? Are you going to prepare staff from our household for your daughter, who’s reaching adulthood?”

Vince placed his hand on his chin.

“That would be nice, but a somewhat poor move. If the sharp-eared and quick-witted lot get a hold of this, they would turn restless with desire. However, the first thing to do is to clean up this mess. I’ll go to the royal court. I entrust the territory to you.”

Vince got up, and earnestly set out for the handicraft of the royal court.



I was on an airship that imitated Luxon’s exterior.

Its name was “Partner.”

Robots with hands were managing the airship on floating pillars in the air. It was in ruins when I obtained Luxon, but Luxon collected broken machines, repaired it, and kept it in check.

It also worked as a defensive, legless guardian with its spherical armor.

The wind felt nice as I went to the deck.

Luxon, a spherical body, floated next to me.

[You're not going to go where those two are?]

The two he were referring to were Olivia and the heartbroken Anjelica, both of whom had followed me for the summer vacation.

The other people on-board were servants who were taking care of Anjelica.

“What are you talking about? You're going to trouble me if you expect me to say something wise to them.”

[Nobody expects anything from you.]

“Do you hate me or something?”

[I don't hate you, but I don't like you either.]

...If it were not the fact that this thing was capable, I would have grabbed its sphere-like body and tossed it into the sky.

“...\*sigh\* Actually, I don't know what to say to them. The engagement has officially been broken. To make matters worse, the discussions have failed, didn't they?”

Anjelica talked with the prince, but in the end, things did not go well.

In accordance with the duel, the prince's relationship as a lover with Marie has ceased.

They say that love dies away when there are obstacles, but the prince continued to love her even when their relationship had ended, and prays for her happiness.

He also said some strange things about protecting his chastity.

It seems he was concerned about having a pure body. Well, I didn't really care about such things. Some schmuck's chastity was inconsequential to me. Wait a minute, that actually wasn't good.

Despite how he was, he was the crown prince. There would be trouble if there weren't a heir to the throne for the country, and in the game, Julian was the only prince who appeared... this was a dangerous problem about the a new successor!

“I don't want to get involved since even if I said something, it wouldn't solve anything.”

[You're such a hopeless case that it's actually unprecedented.]



They were on-board a ship.

Olivia and Anjelica sat down on a bed in a place that seemed to be a guest room.

Olivia worried about Anjelica, who was thin from fatigue and anxiety.

After the duel, her talk with Julian did not go well.

It was summer vacation, so Olivia accompanied Anjelica.

Now she was listening to Anjelica's story.

"It's a funny story. Not a single one of my feelings could reach him. It seems I was quite the fool to lose to a woman so behind compared to me. I was utterly defeated by that girl."

Julian rejected Anjelica.

Even after separating them, he said that he wouldn't stop his love for Marie.

"You're not in the wrong, Anjelica."

"I suppose. I was just overwhelmed by a woman who snatched away my fiance. Go ahead and laugh. I suppose you could say that I won the battle, but lost the war."

She was able to win the duel thanks to Leon, but still Anjelica lost to Marie in terms of the result.

"In the end, there was no point in it. I got you and Leon involved in my selfishness."

Olivia cast her eyes downward.

"That's not true. I was only there to voice support... but in the end, it was Leon who was out there doing his best. There was something Leon said. He intended to drop out from the beginning."

Anjelica shed tears.

“I went to where his Highness was without saying any thanks. I should have properly thanked him at that time. I really am a terrible woman. I didn’t think he was that resolved...”

Olivia tenderly rubbed the crying Anjelica’s back.



—I heard the conversation of the two from outside their room.

[How heart-wrenching. I don’t know if I even have a heart, but do you not have any thoughts after hearing them?]

Luxon’s words struck my chest.

“...I feel bad for giving them the wrong idea.”

I indeed went into the duel with the resolve to drop out of the academy, but the real reason was to get away from finding a marriage partner.

I wished that they didn’t think so deeply about it.

I also wondered whether it was good time to go on a rampage back then, but it was a stray thought... I didn’t ponder that hard about it.

[What do you plan on doing now?]

“Drop out and look after my father. I’ll also be independent and live peacefully on that island I found.”

[...Will it go smoothly?]

“Well, I’ll try. I picked a fight with the crown prince. I would need to apologize with a lot of money for them to brush it off. I don’t think I would be killed. Huh? I won’t be killed, right? So why do I feel uneasy? Perhaps I should flee sooner?”

[No, there’s no point.]

This was the world of an otome game.

Now that all the noisy moments have ended, I felt a little lonely.

Well, my plans have changed quite a bit, but it should be fine as long as I kept doing my best.

I've worked hard.

That was why I've made it up to here. I'll leave the rest to Olivia, Anjelica, and those five guys.

## 2

It was summer vacation.

Marie was told to stay in the academy, and then a messenger from the royal came to tell her about what was to be in the future.

The messenger was a government official and spoke in an uninterested manner.

The contents stunned Marie.

"W, wait a minute. W, what do you mean by disinheritance?"

Gathered were Julian, Marie, and the other capture target boys.

Only the messenger was speaking calmly and in a professional manner.

"It's as you heard. His Highness Julian was disinherited. He is no longer his Highness the crown prince. From today, he is just his Highness. It has also been decided that the other four will be disinherited by their households. His Highness the crown prince... no, his Highness has broken the engagement with Anjelica, but the women engaged to the other four sent letters too."

Jilk, Brad, Chris, and Greg... the four of them received the letters from their fiancées with a slightly sad expression.

They understood that the contents of the letter would be about their marriages being

officially broken off.

Marie objected.

“This is too much for losing a duel! This is too cruel!”

Greg spoke to Marie in a slightly embarrassed manner. Everyone was oddly calm despite losing to Leon.

“This is fine. Marie, this is our resolve.”

“Huh?”

Chris began to speak about something they had hidden from Marie up until that point.

“We made a request to cancel our engagements a little while ago. Our households and fiances asked us to reconsider, but it seems that they had second thoughts after this recent matter. We had decided to officially break off our engagements. However, this is good. With this, we can properly come to know each other.”

Marie was the only one that didn't know, but everyone other than Julian was trying to keep it secret.

The result was disinheritance. They were no longer successors of their households.

Julian was the first in line to be the heir to the throne, but he was a prince that could no longer hope for it now that he had dropped considerably.

Even Jilk, who had been guaranteed a baron status after graduation, was now to be a knight. However, now he couldn't be given an official position since he no longer had a territory he would manage.

The other three had similar situations.

With the recent event, the four couldn't expect to be supported by their household.

Other than Julian, it seemed that they were judged solely on their utility value in inheriting a royal family. Royal families thought about making use of diplomatic marriages with those from other countries.

Julian hung his head.

“I cannot be by your side anymore, Marie. However, I will always pray for your happiness.”

Marie was attacked by a dizziness.

Marie’s misfortune was the real deal. Simply imitating the protagonist, Olivia, wouldn’t make her story come true.

Her current situation was the result of her outward charm and her experience from her previous life.

Greg laughed to give Julian a peace of mind.

“Hey, you can leave your share of protecting Marie to me. Besides, it’s not fun to lose like this. As an active adventurer, I’ll get revenge on that damn Leon. Maybe I should go on an adventurer to search for armor that’s a lost item?”

Chris made a small smile.

“Right. This may not be that bad.”

Brad seemed to slightly amused. He had an expression that looked quite relieved.

“We’re just four barons in name only. Well, with the four of us, we’ll be able to manage somehow.”

Jilk seemed a little sad.

“Your Highness, I’m sorry. Things wouldn’t have turned out like this if I had stopped him.”

Julian shook his head slightly.

He had faint smile, but seemed gloomy.

“You don’t need to apologize. As long as you guys protect Marie, then I’ll have a peace of mind wherever.”

Kyle put his hands behind his head.

“Everyone has been thinking a lot about you. How nice it must be, master.”

While making a smile as if that’s what she was thinking, Marie had plunged into darkness.

“E, err, right.”

(Huh? Don’t fool around, aren’t you being idiots?! Why would you all throw away your position and fortune like that?! I mean, you’re all without an occupation in the end now, right? How do you plan on living?! As adventurers? I would absolutely hate living meagerly like that! N, now that it has come to this, I need to think of something.)

Marie, who shifted to thinking pragmatically, felt ruined when seeing the boys laughing.

The government official began to depart now that all has been said and done.

“Well then, I’ll take my leave.”

While thinking that the amount of work she would have to do would be more than what the government official was doing, Marie felt that her ideal future was growing distant.

It was liking having four boyfriends who were going to be jobless in the future.

It was too different from the result she desired.

(Why did it turn out like this?! This is not the future I wanted!)



The floating island I discovered was better maintained compared to when I had enrolled in the academy.

The robots were doing their best regardless of whether it was day or night, and were in the process of completing the territory.

I thought that sooner or later, I would be independent here, and while the disordered

kingdom was in a panic, I would be peacefully watching, but—

“Why do they have to follow me?”

When I came to see how the fields were doing as the robots were looking after them, Olivia and Anjelica followed me here as well.

Anjelica looked at the fields that had been lined up beautifully.

“Isn’t this nice? This is quite refreshing since opportunities like this are rare. After all, baron territories everywhere seem to be hectic while in the middle of development. Even coming to look would be a hindrance.”

My household was busy today due to my investment, and was in the midst of development all throughout. The waterways were being developed to improve the roads, and many various other ordeals were occurring.

The harbor was also being expanded, and was getting crowded as airships were coming and going nonstop.

Olivia looked at the fields with a serious expression.

She crouched down to look at the soil and our surroundings.

“How amazing. I’ve never seen land this beautiful despite people not being here.”

Anjelica tilted her head.

“Is that so? I thought that it was beautiful because people weren’t here, though.”

Olivia disagreed.

“It’s the opposite. The land can’t be this thoroughly maintained without there being people. Did robots do this? How amazing.”

I nodded. It was a pain to explain, so I just agreed with her while saying “How amazing indeed.”

Anjelica took a good look around.

“Huh? Something smells strange.”

It seems she was curious about the smell that was being carried by the wind.

“Aah, that—”

I guided the two towards where the scent was coming from.



There was an outdoor bath prepared on the floating island.

Only the structure had been set in place, letting Anjelica and Olivia look at the open scenery.

The water was a little hot, which made it feel a little different from the usual bath. There wasn't anything different to the water, but it felt like it stuck to the skin.

Olivia washed Anjelica's hair after she let it down.



“Anjelica, your hair’s quite pretty, isn’t it.”

“...It’s because his Highness said that he liked long, pretty hair. I plan on having it be a bit shorter soon. Grooming it is a bother.”

Olivia rinsed off the bubbles with hot water.

“All things considered, this is a nice place.”

Anjelica looked at the scenery while praising the floating island Leon held. The setting sun was in sight, but it felt luxurious to be in an open bath while watching the scenery.

Olivia felt the same way.

“It seems that he discovered it before enrolling in the academy and it made into his own territory. He plans on being independent here in the future... sorry.”

“You’re fine. His struggles are because of me. I want him to be independent here. It’s irritating that my current self can only hope that things will work out, though.”

They didn’t know how Leon’s independence would result.

Anjelica could only pray that her father would handle things well.

“Even so, the number of adventurers who achieve a success this ideal are few. Anything more than this is in the realm of heroes and adventurers from legends. No, even if he doesn’t do anything else, he might even become a fabled adventurer.”

This time Anjelica washed Olivia’s hair.

“Is it that grand? I had a strong impression that adventurers were people who challenged dungeons...”

“Right. Perhaps that’s the image commoners have since the initial earnings are immense for them. However, rather than earning through dungeons, nobles like to venture with airships. To discover new lands and challenge unknown dungeons. Sometimes lost items from historic ruins will appear. It seems that my father and older brother were mischievous back then and went on reckless adventures, so they hold Leon in high regards.”

Anjelica looked at Olivia's chest. Her own was big, but now that she thought about it, she remembered that Marie's were small.

(Perhaps he disliked women with big chests? No, I should forget about this already.)

"Is it impressive that Leon discovered a new island with a small boat?"

Anjelica chuckled.

"Yeah, it's impressive. With what he did, it wouldn't have been surprising if he had died with just one small misstep. That was the biggest achievement made in several decades."

The third son of a baron household had made a great success. That enough was immense.

"...I envy you."

"Huh?"

Anjelica rinsed Olivia's hair while speaking her true thoughts.

"You're his lover, right? You're always together with him, so I thought that you two were getting married. I wanted to be like you two."

Olivia's expression turned cloudy.

"...The difference between Leon and me is too great, I'm not suitable for him."

Despite being in the advanced class, Olivia was a commoner. She couldn't be a good match for Leon, who was a noble.

To Olivia, Leon was someone in an unreachable position.

Anjelica then remembered that.

"My bad. That's right. You're the honor student."

Thereupon, Olivia spoke.

“I think... Leon likes you, Anjelica.”

“Why do you think so?”

Anjelica waited for Olivia’s response while washing off the bubbles.

“After all, he went that far to defend you. I’m envious of that. My heart aches a little thinking about whether I’ll get my turn.”

“...Liking me? That’s impossible. I’m a terrible woman. Otherwise, his Highness wouldn’t have abandoned me.”

The two soaked in the bathtub after washing themselves, then they gazed at the the beautiful sunset.



The two had entered the hot spring.

I didn’t want to miss this opportunity.

“...This is the moment I’ve been waiting for!”

My eyes were bloodshot from excitement.

The white steam and nostalgic scent made my soul tremble. This floating island was my field. I was free to do what I wanted.

“The long-awaited event has arrived!”

Luxon floated near me and spoke.

[It was nothing other than a success. Is grilled fish okay for a side dish?]

“Yeah, make it quick!”

On top of a table was the white steam coming from freshly cooked rice.

Since I had no miso yet, I made a soup with something that imitated it.

Grilled and salted river fish.

I'm sure that those two wouldn't understand, but I've been looking forward to this the whole time...

"I'm shedding tears."

[How nice. Feel free to worship me while chewing in delight.]

"I'll forgive you just this once. Now then, shall we dine?"

When I tried eating it, the taste was similar but slightly different. However, it was still rice. After breaking the grilled fish into pieces with my chopsticks and placing it onto the rice, I wolfed it down.

"Ah~, this is bliss."

[You do indeed look happy. Oh? It seems that an unknown airship is approaching the harbor.]

While I was eating, Luxon detected an airship approaching my household.

### 3

Barcus was busy since the morning.

"Luce, are you doing okay with the meal?"

"Yeah, that's fine, but... is, is someone really coming over? I don't dislike it. But, having the daughter of a prestigious household come over is a bit much."

The reason was that Leon had returned home in the morning.

Barcus, Leon's father, was at his wits' end.

"That idiot, to think that he picked a fight with his Highness the crown prince, and now he's bringing home the daughter of a duke household this time. He needs to be more considerate of my own heart. If I die from shock, it'll be his fault!"

Something like having the daughter of a duke household come over was unthinkable,

so they have been in a great haste since the morning in order to prepare.

An attendant from the duke household appeared in the kitchen.

“Excuse me. Since the preparations for the room you’re lending us have been finished, the assistants here await for further instructions.”

The assistant was wearing thick maid clothes.

She was raised as a high class maid, without a doubt—and simply put, the assistants were from notable families that came to work for the duke household.

They were knights working as retainers or those under their guardianship.

From Barcus’ viewpoint, they were not people he could treat rudely.

“Well, we’re fine over here, so you can take a break. The preparations for the room will soon—”

“We’ve already finished that some time ago.”

Barcus had been busy since morning.

A disaster soon struck him again.

He heard a high-pitched yell coming into the kitchen.

“Hey, these people are servants, and yet they’re not even listening to my orders!”

Barcus covered his face with both of his hands.

After apologizing to the maid in the kitchen, he hurried towards the entrance, and there was Zola. Lutart and Merce were there too, and both Zola’s and Merce’s exclusive servants were standing by.

(Why are there so many visitors today?!)

Barcus saw Zola drawing closer to the maids from the duke household. He appeared in front of the maids, suppressing the urge to scream.

“It’s been a while, Zola! What are you here today for?”

Zola hit Barcus on the cheek with her folded fan.

“What I’m here for, you say?! Do you even know what your incompetent son did?! The royal capital is in an uproar. How are you going to take responsibility for this?”

The eldest son, Lutart, fiddled with his long hair while showing no interest. Merce wasn’t interested in Barcus either.

“N, no, that…”

Barcus didn’t know how to respond.

Recently, his daily life had become really hectic, and he couldn’t keep up with a lot of things.

To escape from reality, he thought about things like “Perhaps Nicks should hurry up and graduate so that he can help out~.”

Thereupon, the maids gathered at the entrance, and stood in a line to greet their master.

“Welcome, our fair lady.”

Zola and the others turned around, and saw Anjelica.

Hiding behind her was Leon.

(You should step forward!)

He wanted to criticize his son, but he couldn’t interrupt, so he remained silent.

“How noisy. What happened?”

Seeing Anjelica squinting, there was a wrinkle in Zola’s brow.

“And just where did you come from, little girl? Anyways, since that absolute moron is behind you, you’re probably not from any significant household, though. I have some business with that waste of space hiding behind you. Step back.”

When Leon was about to step forward unwillingly, Anjelica held him back with her hand.

She had a stern gaze when Leon was looked down on.

“Aren’t you being quite arrogant? How about letting this little girl introduce herself?”

The corner of Zola’s mouth twitched.

“Wait, Zola. Let’s talk about this. Right, everyone come inside. C’mon. C’mon!”

Barcus, stopping the conversation and forcing everyone inside, thought about how he wouldn’t forget this day in his entire life, and wept.



“W, well, I see. I didn’t think that the Redgrave family’s daughter would come to a rural area like this.”

Zola, who made a complete reversal, was flustered and in a cold sweat.

While thinking in my mind about what an idiot she was, I listened to the conversation between Anjelica and Zola.

The two faced each other, and sat on sofas with a low table between them.

“Much obliged. However, it’s quite strange to hear about a wife that’s constantly away from the residence. It’s also hard for me to understand why the eldest son doesn’t help out with work. What is the eldest son, Lutart, doing currently? I don’t see him being a soldier, so perhaps he’s doing civil service?”

Lutart was not here.

Zola cast her eyes downward.

“R, right now he’s studying for the future of the royal capital.”

“I see.”

Lutart was nineteen. Merce was twenty.

Both of them weren't married, and lived in the Baltfault household's residence within the royal capital. Though it was called the Baultfault household... it was more like the Zola household. The residence in the royal capital where Zola and the others were living was prepared by my father.

It was nice being able to see Zola getting embarrassed, but just then, my father told me "Do something," with his eyes.

"L, leaving that aside, what business do you have here?"

Zola behaved modestly and asked about what she was doing.

Anjelica made a tiny smile.

"I'm just sightseeing. I went to a newly discovered floating island today. There was a hot spring, and it was a nice place."

Zola made an expression of delight.

"If you're happy, then I'm happy."

"Yes, so I'll be in your care for a short while."

Zola froze after hearing that.

"H, how many days are you planning to spend?"

"I don't really have a plan. I suppose it will be until my household comes to contact me. Be at ease, I will pay lodging expenses for having a baron household letting me stay here. Of course, it will go to the barons."

When hearing that, Zola said "By all means, make yourself comfortable," but... she took her children back to the royal capital the next day.

To be honest, it delighted me to see Zola scurrying home. When I applauded Anjelica, she had a complicated expression. I shed tears when she said "It seems you had some hardships," but my father and mother looked at me with a calm gaze while not understanding.

Couldn't they have been a little bit kinder to me?



The floating island was my territory.

“You don’t need to go out of your way to use the hot spring, my house has a bath.”

I went to go see the two, who had taken a liking to the hot spring. They went there on an almost daily basis.

Anjelica smiled.

“Isn’t it fine? This is a place that people rarely come to. Besides, it feels a little pleasant on the skin.”

Of course. This was the world of an otome game where women dominated men. Turning that around, if one was able to earn the favor of women, they would be able to find success. And the one who gave beauty effects to the hot spring was... Luxon!

Luxon really was useful.

“The beauty effects are quite outstanding, aren’t they. Alright, I’m going to make easy money off of this in the future.”

“You really do like to think in terms of money.”

As I made that decision, Olivia touched her warm cheeks.

“My skin became smooth. Furthermore, the milk we drank after getting out of the bath was delicious.”

“How nice.”

They seemed to have enjoyed it. Well, thinking about it the other way, it meant that my territory might only be seen for its hot spring. Since there were no tourist attractions at my parents’ household, the two would probably be bored there.

Anjelica looked at Olivia and got close to her. She touched her bare skin.

“Your skin is quite nice. I’m jealous, Olivia.”

Olivia seemed to be having fun, and allowed her to do as she pleased.

“Aren’t you quite pretty yourself, Anjelica? I’m jealous of your beautiful hair.”

Seeing the two having a pleasant chat while being lightly dressed from having just gotten out of the bath was... a scene that I was thankful of being able to see. I’ll store this spectacle I was seeing today into my memory. I’ll store this within the hard drive in my head.

When I looked at the two, Olivia looked at me. I was glad that I didn’t reveal any sign of tension. At times like these, I made a poker face. I was a gentleman, after all.

“What’s wrong, Olivia?”

“Um... it’s ‘Livia.’”

“Huh?”

Olivia told me to call her by a nickname.

“Call me Livia.”

She said so while looking at Anjelica and me.

It made me feel a bit uneasy.

“I, is that bad? Back at home, everyone called me Livia, so I wasn’t sure about being called Olivia...”

Aah, I see. She wasn’t used to being called that, and it felt like she was being treated as a stranger.

Anjelica smiled.

“In that case, call me ‘Anjie.’ People who know me well call me that.”

Anjelica allowed us to use her nickname.

“Um, is that okay?”

While I was surprised, she nodded as if it was natural.

“I’ve caused you trouble, and on top of that, I’m indebted to you. If you don’t want to do it, you can call me like before. Well, I suppose you wouldn’t want to get acquainted with such an unpleasant woman like me, though.”

It seemed like Anjelica, who was being self-deprecating, was putting on a brave front after the uproar of the duel.

Olivia—Livia made a slightly angry face.

“You can’t say that about yourself. Anjelica—Anjie, you’re a wonderful lady.”

“You’re saying nice things to me... His Highness didn’t look this way, though.”

She felt down after being so forcefully rejected by the one she liked. Actually, her being able to act that tough was quite praiseworthy.

All things considered, it was quite curious that the villainess was surprisingly decent. Thinking about it, the reason why the protagonist was bullied in the game was because she approached her fiance... Well, anybody would get angry at that.

Perhaps it was also because they didn’t like a commoner being in the academy, and there might have been some other reasons, but I didn’t really remember.

Perhaps it was because she didn’t have any sub-race lovers accompanying her, or that she didn’t own any high-class items?

The villainess had no lovers, was earnest, and was a rich beauty... Was Julian really okay with abandoning her and picking Marie?

“Anjie, you shouldn’t criticize yourself so—”

“...I’m the worst. His Highness said that he was happy, and yet when I think about him, I can’t forgive him. When I wonder just where I went wrong, I can’t help but hate Marie. I’ve thought many times over about getting revenge. Even though I’m supposed to love his Highness, I sometimes find myself hating him. Now I don’t know if I really do love him. It would be natural for him to cast away a woman like me. I would hate someone like me as well.”

Livia was worried, but I went to work.

“I think you’re fine, though.”

“Huh?”

“Well, when thinking about what they did, I think I’d only forgive them if I got to knock their lights out.”

The people in the academy were getting roused and arbitrarily blamed Anjie, but when thinking about it, the real fiend here was Marie. It was definitely not a good thing that she deceived men who already had fiancées.

No matter how much this world favored women, that wasn’t allowed.

“You want revenge? Great! Let’s go full-out!”

As I supported her, Livia criticized me.

“What are you saying, Leon?!”

Anjie was slightly surprised.

“It’s okay to... take revenge?”

“Let’s do it!”

“You can’t! Leon, don’t tempt Anjie!”

I asked Livia a question.

“It’s not right to just sit here and do nothing about it though, right?”

“Y, you’re right, but...”

In reality, it was over for someone when they made fun of the noble community. I wasn’t sure if it could be called revenge, but at any rate, the duke household was going to begin work on numerous things now. They would think about dealing punishments, but that matter was different from this. This was a matter of Anjie’s feelings.

“I know the best method of revenge.”

Anjie gritted her teeth.

“R, really?”

“Anjie, don’t be swayed by him!”

Livia told us that revenge was bad, but I told her to calm down and then explained.

“In this world, the best way to get revenge is to make yourself happy.”

“...That’s revenge?”

Anjie looked at me with a doubting gaze, so I unveiled the smattering knowledge of my previous life. This was what my knowledge culminated to.

“In the first place, it takes a tremendous amount of effort to make the other party unhappy. Even if you take revenge on them, you’ll have nothing left yourself, resulting in mutual destruction. Rather than having all that effort be for naught, you’re better off using it to seek your own happiness.”

Livia tilted her head.

“Um, and that becomes revenge?”

“In society, there’s this thing called karma. Julian and the others will likewise receive punishment, and they’ll have to face reality even if they don’t want to.”

Making enemies of a duke household didn’t mean that their backers would sit still and do the same.

Anjie pondered about it. She still doubted it.

“...It’ll be revenge if I become happy?”

I nodded.

It was healthier than running around trying to seek revenge. Or rather, since things would get serious for Anjie if she tried to get revenge, I wanted her to let it go so that

I wouldn't get rolled up into it.

"Make no mistake. Once they understand reality and are at their worst, flaunt your happiness. It's a struggle until Julian will look at you and will regret abandoning you! It's a more refreshing sight for a bitter heart compared to inflicting pain and torture! Just imagine Julian in anguish, begging to be back with you!"

Perhaps imagining it, Anjelica seemed eager.

"R, right. I'll make a display of how happy I am!"

Livia, perhaps in agreement, supported Anjelica.

"Right! If that's what revenge is, then I support you. Anjie, let's do our best to seek revenge!"

"Yeah, we'll surely get revenge! Against Marie, his Highness, and the other four!"

Seeing these two smiling while talking about revenge made me ponder.

The refreshing scene of two beauties smiling together... didn't really suit with what they were saying.

If I were to speak honestly... the scene of the protagonist and villainess holding hands while smiling and swearing revenge was frightening. Could this be the birth of the strongest team?

I felt just a little bit of sympathy for Marie and the others.

...I was the one that started this, though.

# Epilogue

## 1

Summer vacation was slowly nearing its end.

However, I was worried due to Vince not coming to get in touch with me.

I suppose that the work of the royal court was something that took time?

“I’m getting tired. I wish it would get done soon.”

When I was going out to the field to work, my older brother Nicks complained to me.

“You’re being really carefree. If you get careless, you’re going to get executed. If it ended at just that, it would be fine, though I can’t help but worry that I and everyone else would get wrapped up in it as well.”

Colin, the fourth son, didn’t understand.

“Brother, he defeated five opponents in a duel, right? Isn’t that amazing?”

My older brother yelled.

“He won against opponents he shouldn’t have fought! Colin, this matter isn’t unrelated to you either!”

I was tired from working since morning, so I stretched.

In a location slightly away, Anjie was being taught field work by Livia.

The maids were watching while uneasy.

When they tried to assist her, Anjie stopped them, not letting them give even a single hand.

“So you do this here, and—eek! What is this meandering creature?!”

“Anjie, that’s an earthworm.”

“Earthworm? I’ve heard of them before, but... eek! Livia, is it okay if it touches your hand?!”

“This little thing doesn’t do much. Come now, continue on.”

Colin pulled on my arm.

“Brother, which one are you marrying?”

“Huh?”

I shook my head in response to Colin’s question.

Making a move on Livia or Anjie? C’mon now.

Livia was the honor student and a commoner right now, but would be a saint in the future.

Anjie was the daughter of a duke.

I couldn’t do any tomfoolery like trying to make a move on people out of my reach.

“Look, Colin. They’re an honor student and the daughter of a duke household. They’re too far away from my strike zone, marriage is impossible.”

“What does strike zone mean?”

My older brother said “Here we go again,” and resumed his work.

“The honor student girl is a commoner and it would be difficult to marry her. The daughter of the duke household has too high of a social position, so I wouldn’t suit well with her. Understand?”

“Hmm, I don’t!”

“Ha ha ha, how honest of you, Colin. Alright, get back to work.”

“Oka~y.”

I did like them, but in terms of my strike zone—both of them would be an out for me. They weren't even remotely close to that strike zone.

I could already picture the ball.

Livia would be like the ball bouncing before it reached the mitt, and Anjie would be like a wild pitch that was too high.

Even if I wanted to swing the bat, I couldn't.

Darn... I liked how they looked too.

Leaving that aside, now was the time to act for the future.

Well, there weren't any changes regarding the situation at the duke household, so all I could do was wait.

I didn't think that anything bad would happen, but... I did prepare a mountain of white gold. It should definitely be fine.

...If not, I would be in trouble.

Also, there was one more person working on the fields.

"My nails are dirty. My hands hurt."

The one complaining was Jenna, the second daughter.

I told my parents about her placing the bomb onto my armor, and there were other circumstances too, so she spent the summer vacation working like this. I was thinking that something more than field work ought to have been done for her lending a hand in the assassination attempt of her brother. Well, I suppose that I also should consider the fact that she was half-threatened by a gang that the prince's foster brother ordered around, but—I thought that the standards of this world were strange for letting her punishment be something boys like us normally do.

"You were able to be pardoned with this light of a punishment. You should be thankful."

"If you didn't cause a problem, I wouldn't have had to set a bomb."

Well, I suppose she was right. So I also forgave her. To tell the truth, it really didn't do much damage.

"I don't want to work in the field~."

I had a thought when seeing my sister complain.

This world of an otome game really is cruel.



It was the day after.

An airship from the duke family arrived at the household.

It seemed they came to pick up Anjie, but a government official from the royal capital took the opportunity to ride as well.

It seemed that the matter regarding me had been decided.

I was surprised that a very high ranking individual amongst the government officials came.

Feudal lord nobles are grouped by a hierarchy, but royal court nobles, who held no territory and followed the king, were sorted into classes.

Feudal lords could also be a part of it, but they only accepted barons or greater, those that could meet with the king.

The king was placed at the top-most position, so the crown prince was placed at second. Royalty were below the second rank, and the substantial government officials that took the next top-three ranks were the cabinet ministers.

Going all the way down to below the sixth rank were those who had the privilege to meet the king. Many feudal lords were appointed to these ranks.

Feudal lords who were barons and above were automatically granted this rank, and I suppose the classes within the royal court were things like chief clerk, section chief, or other things like that.

Well, such classes existed. There were also royal court nobles who held a rank, but explaining such circumstances was a pain. Or rather, I didn't know it very well since it didn't concern me.

However, the government official that came was of the fifth rank—someone that was a higher rank than even my father.

Due to that, my father got nervous.

It turned into a conversation between them on our residence, but the official was smiling.

“Oh dear, this has been quite the clamor. The duel and the engagement being broken off caused an uproar. I did not overlook the topic of the crown prince being disinherited.”

“R, right.”

My father was listening to him while nervous, but the official kept talking as if he didn't notice anything. What to do... these talks about disinheritance made me quite uneasy, but now wasn't the time to cut into the conversation.

Huh? Wait a minute... Julian was disinherited? That was a bit troubling.

“There have been voices within the royal court calling for the Baltfault family to take responsibility, but those were put to an end thanks to the movements of the duke household.”

It seemed that Vince had been working hard.

Thank you, Anjie's papa.

“U, um, as for the treatment of the Baltfault family?”

My father couldn't stop himself from asking.

The government official answered with a smile.

“Rest assured. You will not be asked to hold liability. Rather, Leon has now been officially recognized as an independent knight. He's currently in school still, but the

royal court will carry out the formalities for bestowing him the position. At any rate, a knight has been giving his Highness advice regarding his foolish conduct. They want him to follow the example of other students.”

...My father was relieved, but the situation was becoming all the more ominous.

Going through the rites of becoming a knight before even graduating? I didn't want to hear about such things.

This time I asked a question.

“W, wait one moment. Will I be held liable? Will I have to do something like being stripped of my rank as a baron?!”

“I have not said such things. Although there was some heated discussion, you were officially given the baron rank, Leon. Congratulations.”

Being declared a knight, and then becoming a baron.

...Wasn't this going to make my plans go amiss?

I didn't want to show up at the academy now. I did what I pleased because I didn't think I would go back there!

“All the same, this—”

“Right. All the same, we're not here to talk about this.”

Was he shifting to another topic now? This person was shrewd.

As my eyes were filled with anticipation of it being something good for once, a sheet of paper was held out in front of me.

When I was reading it while wondering what it contained, my father screamed “Aaaaack!”. I also wanted to shout like he did.

The official told us the situation with a smile, leaving me in despair.

“Leon has been allowed to ‘go above’ the sixth rank in the royal court. Congratulations. You've been promoted.”

...I didn't hear anything about being promoted!



They were on the airship of the duke household.

Livia and Anjie were on the deck while chatting.

“He’s being promoted in rank by the royal palace, right? Though, I feel like those kinds of things are irrelevant for feudal lords.”

Livia, not knowing the circumstances, received a detailed explanation from Anjelica.

“Although there certainly isn’t much meaning to it for feudal lords, it means that they were given more recognition than the many others below the sixth rank. In layman’s terms, its a matter of giving treatment to those who stand out among the rest.”

“And that’s a reward? Leon, isn’t pleased with it.”

“It all depends on one’s way of thinking. This may be off-topic, but the eighth and ninth ranks are for those who have been knights their whole life. One can enter the seventh rank from heritage, but ascending one rank above that would require many years of loyalty and some large achievements.”

Livia couldn’t comprehend it very well.

“By many years of loyalty, do you mean something like ten years?”

“That would be fine for the eighth rank, but for the seventh rank and above, one would have to think about relations not just on the individual level, but also on a household level. It’s at the point where parents and their children would have to earnestly work under them for three generations. It would take a century to be promoted from below the sixth rank to above it without accomplishing any major feats.”

Livia was surprised when hearing that.

“If, if so, it means he gained that much recognition, right?!”

Since he was promoted, Livia was delighted after realizing that Leon wouldn’t be given any further punishment.

“That’s how it is. Well, from the perspective of the royal palace, there’s no harm in giving him a promotion. Leon’s not a noble of the royal court, so they don’t need to pay him any annuity. Still, I didn’t think that he would be promoted, though.”

The favorable treatment he received was at the level where Anjie started getting suspicious.

There was a bizarre situation in regards to the royal court. There were many cases that made people wonder why they chose the course of action they took. She had no choice but to believe that this was just another one of those cases.

Anjie concluded that there must have been individuals and groups that had something to gain from Julian being disinherited and Leon being promoted.

Livia was unfamiliar with these kinds of things, and didn’t understand that well.

“...I really thought that he would be demoted from a baron, though.”

Livia then remembered something.

“Come to think of it, Leon said that he spent the money he gained from the bet!”

“What? In that case... could it have been the power of money? No, but doing such a thing would... hmm.”

The two couldn’t answer, so they changed the topic.

“This may be a change of topic, but it seems that Leon is going to go through the rites of being declared a knight before the new school term. Would you able to come?”

Livia was a little embarrassed from being invited.

“B, but, I’ve never participated in such things... I don’t have an outfit either.”

“Don’t worry about the uniform.”

Not good.

I was brought into the royal palace. Perhaps thinking of it as just a castle with a king would be better. Though it's called a royal court, there's a certain atmosphere in the area. Perhaps it would do good to think about this lightly.

I put on a knight outfit with over the top decorations, my armor Arroganz was decorated the assembly hall, and to make matters worse, there were many participants.

"What the? Why are there so many people attending?"

As I was grieving in the waiting room, my parents, who came to the royal capital for this day, looked at me and wept.

...My mother was cruel on me.

"You've become so elegant. I used to think you were a foolish child back then, but you were actually quite wonderful. Your mother is really proud."

My father was also crying.

"I never thought that you would become a knight this quickly. For goodness' sake... I'm tearing up."

My older brother and older sister wore uniforms.

"Huh? What happened to the other part of the family?"

My older brother thought it odd that Zola and the others weren't coming, but my older sister knew from the beginning that they wouldn't.

"They're not going to come. In the first place, Leon is now part of an independent, separate Baltfault household. One above the sixth rank at that..."

My older brother and sister continued their conversation.

“Say what?”

“At this rate, if Leon enters the royal court, he would probably be sought after by girls.”

“Leon being sought after? Wasn’t this the guy that made the students in the whole school resent him? We don’t even know what’s going to happen once the new school term starts.”

“How foolish. He was promoted. It means that Leon was recognized by the royal palace. Only an idiot wouldn’t be able to realize what that entails.”

“In that case, I suppose that it’s fine even if he returns to the academy.”

“I don’t know about that. Wouldn’t it be rough? After all, there are some kids who got their entire fortune taken away by him.”

“I wonder what will happen. I suppose it’ll be made clear in the future.”

“You’re being noisy. I don’t know what will happen either.”

Damn it! I’ve gone and earned the hate of the students in the entire school, and returning to the academy was going to be frightening. In the first place, I never thought that I was going to return there.

If I knew I was going back, I would’ve made adjustments, and wouldn’t have done something like robbing people through a bet. Curse me and my reckless behavior!

In the worst case scenario, if it got to a dangerous point where my family would get rolled up into it, I would have had to think about getting everyone to board Luxon and escape. I got carried away.

I suddenly became aware of the crowd.

“The father of the former crown prince is the king, right?”

My father calmed down and shifted his attention to me.

“That’s only natural. Don’t act strange in front of his Majesty. If you do anything, your head will go flying.”

I ignored him and continued talking.

“I wonder how he feels about... promoting the person who beat up his son.”

My father pondered while folding his arms, and averted his gaze from me.

“...To tell the truth, it wouldn't be enjoyable. I would hate it if it were me.”

Of course.

No matter how bad his son was, I didn't think that he would enjoy it. I wanted to ask him what exactly he was thinking.

No wait, I actually didn't want to know.



It was the next day.

A knight was born.

It was unusual in the Holfault kingdom for someone to be officially recognized as a knight at sixteen years old and be given a rank at the same time.

His rank was above the sixth.

A success for an adventurer.

Furthermore, criticizing the crown prince for his foolish behavior also counted as one of his achievements.

In fact, it was said that he showed his ability by defeating four people from famous households, but the exact reason why he did that was unknown.

However, there was no denying that a powerful, young knight was born in the Holfault Kingdom.

Many swarmed into the royal palace to see such a knight.

It was evident that Leon was gathering much attention.



It was night.

My school life would continue starting the next day, so I came to the student dorms.

I was scratching my head in front of the staff at the academy's lobby.

"My room changed?"

The staff member at the reception desk made a stiff smile replying to me.

"R, right! Leon Fou Baltfault, you're already a knight and a baron. You're a student, but we took that into account."

The room that I was shown to on a map was at a higher grade than the one before.

"I see. In that case, I'll take the key."

"We'll guide you there at once! You can leave your luggage transportation to us."

The staff member took my luggage, briskly—or rather, nervously catering to me.

The difference between how they treated me before I enrolled and how they did now was clear.



I spread out onto the bed in my spacious room, staring up at the ceiling while mumbling.

"Why did things turn out this way?"

Luxon, who floated next to me, gave an honest reply.

[Isn't this the result of having acted careless? You assumed that because I was here, you could more or less do anything unreasonable and still be okay, which proved to be fatal when you got carried away and participated in the duel. You thought that making blunders would still be fine, but you shouldn't have have behaved violently, doing whatever you pleased. This is a matter of dealing with the consequences. You paid a large sum of money for your life, knowing that much of it would flow towards the work

of the royal court. The result was a promotion, or rather, an outcome you didn't want. Well, to put it plainly... you reap what you sow."

"Thanks for the exact answer. If you had already noticed it while the ordeal was still in process, you should have said it out loud, you idiot."

[Even if we did try to correct this mid-way, there wouldn't be enough information to go off of. If I were to speak honestly, then even I'm a little surprised of this result.]

What a useless AI.

"Damn... thanks to that, I'm back to the life of having to search for a marriage partner."

[Isn't that fine? It's possible that the girls' opinions of you may have changed now that you have been promoted.]

"You think they'd change?"

[Yes. Not the ones that made bets on the duel, though. That's likely why you're enemies with around seventy percent of the academy's students. I had been gathering information, and it seems that both boys and girls have been spending the summer vacation earning money through dungeons like never before.]

There were those that bet everything they owned, and fools that borrowed money. They should not have gone that far in their belief that they would win.

Well, if it were me and I didn't know any better, then I would have also made a bet on Julian and the others.

[By the way master, as a result, there has been a lot of abusive slander about you, with people calling you things like a coward, the worst sharp-tongued jerk, and so on.]

"That's the information you found?! So doesn't that mean my reputation hadn't changed for the better?! On the contrary, didn't it get worse?!"

[I saw many that hated you, master. However, you seem to be popular amongst a portion of the boys. They talked about how you said the things they wanted to hear."

"That makes so glad, I might shed a tear!"

Marriage had become more difficult than it had been before I enrolled in the academy.

I was definitely reaping what I sowed, but if I knew that it would have resulted in this, I would have restrained myself!

[Well, isn't this okay? This world where women domineer over men may be tough, but marriage isn't everything. If one doesn't care about their reputation, they're free to do anything other than handle marriage. The power of money is potent in particular. You could find girls who are having financial difficulties.]

“Hmm~, isn't that cruel? If that's the way you're thinking, than aren't you the worst?”

[That's exactly the way you would solve it, master. So, I've prepared a mirror. Look at it and voice out complaints to your heart's content. Your complaints and grumbles would all apply to you as well, master.]

I then saw a large mirror in the room.

...Huh? Did Luxon really prepare one? Was it just to voice its sarcasm and dislike towards me?

“You... have quite the free time.”

“I don't want to hear that from you, master. Besides, I'm busy. Want to know? First of all, gathering information in the academy is—”]

I immediately ignored the thing and closed my eyes.

At any rate, this was troubling... I didn't think that those five would be disinherited.

Just what was going to happen from now on?



Three days had passed since the opening ceremony of the new school term.

It would be hard to say that my life at the academy was going well.

The people around were avoiding me.

It was a relief that Daniel and Raymond came to give me an apology, but it would take time for our relationship to be like it was before.

Perhaps having felt indebted towards me, the two were a bit awkward when they spoke.

However, it seemed they were doing fine without me.

According to Luxon's investigations, neither Anjie nor Livia seemed to be troubled in their academy life. Three days had passed and I still didn't know what would happen, but people seemed to have calmed down around those two.

It seemed that Anjie was getting fed up with her followers desperately trying to regain her trust, but other than that, things were the same as before.

Livia continued studying during the summer vacation, and had already reached a level where I could not understand whatever she was saying.

She had already begun studying the lessons of the second-year class.

I was afraid of being asked to help with her studies.

I wanted to apologize and have her forgive me for pretending to be more competent than I actually was.

However, there was also a problem.

It was about Julian and the others.

They didn't separate from Marie. While it seemed that they were no longer lovers, they had formed a group of seven, including Marie and Kyle, and challenged dungeons many times.

It seemed that Greg and Chris were trying to build up their strength so that they could have a rematch with me.

For Jilk and Brad, it seemed that their main goal was earning money, since they no longer received support from their household.

The same was true for Marie.

Marie's viscount household had been in financial trouble from the beginning. It seemed that she was challenging the dungeons under the expectation that she wouldn't receive support from them.

In addition, Julian was also participating with Marie and the others. They argued that they had "come together by chance to tackle a dungeon," but that was a stupid excuse.

While my reputation plummeted drastically after the duel, it seemed that there were girls who became sympathetic towards the prince and the others, cheering them on.

All things considered, the seven of them seemed to be having fun—no wait, one of them didn't seem to be having fun.

That person was the ringleader, Marie.

She seemed to be hiding a side of her that was suffering from her loss of status, honor, and fortune. Her other side made it seem like she was having fun.

Despite seeming like she was having fun to the people around her, Marie's laugh was from her having to face the troubling reality.

Her shrewd movements came to an end, and nothing felt more wonderful than thinking about how this definitely wasn't the result Marie wanted.

How refreshing. It seemed I would be able to sleep well that day.

I was sitting on a bench in the school courtyard, and while I was thinking about such things, two people sat beside me. I first assumed that they were Daniel and Raymond, but I thought differently when I noticed a certain gentle atmosphere and pleasant scent.

They didn't smell like those guys.

I looked up and saw Livia and Anjelica sitting.



“Leon, you’re by yourself again today?”

“Thanks for rubbing salt on the wound. I’m alone today.”

“Good grief, what to do with that manner of speaking you have? Leaving that aside, if you have free time, then come with us.”

Anjie had a slightly tired expression, perhaps from having to deal with her followers.

“Come with you? Where?”

Livia seemed to have a cheerful expression.

“There’s a stall with these great, famous crepes.”

As expected of an otome game world.

It was a fantasy world of swords and magic, complete with crepes and other sweets. A gentle world for females.

A world that would be the toughest for males.

“Do they have strawberry or chocolate?”

However, my body needed some sugar, so I was also interested. This bitter world was tough for males, so I would at least eat some sweets.

Livia answered with a smile.

“They do! Their strawberry jam is popular.”

Crepes seemed like a novel concept to Anjie.

“A stall? I don’t have much experience with those. I never got to purchase something from those since my followers kept telling me that I shouldn’t eat from them.”

Most of the girl followers who said that actually ate at those stalls. I believe Luxon made a report on something like that.

The two held hands, got up, and headed towards the crepe stall.

“Leon, hurry up.”

“Hey, be quicker.”

They walked while pushing my back.

The two were gentle and cute, but they were people that I couldn't lay a hand on.

..Wasn't it too unreasonable to have those closest to me be the ones that I couldn't do anything with?

The world of otome games really is tough for me.

# Interlude

## Luxon's Report

It was late at night.

Luxon, floating in the room where Leon was sleeping, turned its red eyes, or rather its lenses, and studied its master.

[Leon Fou Baltfault, age sixteen—male. A self-proclaimed reincarnated person who claims that this intense world where woman domineer over men is an 'otome game world'.]

Luxon was intrigued by the boy who claimed to have reincarnated and saw the world as that of an otome game.

Otherwise, it would have refused being used by Leon, and instead would have self destructed.

[It's interesting that he calls himself Japanese. At any rate, perhaps I've done all I can to see if he was a fake.]

A self-proclaimed Japanese person.

Leon being someone who reincarnated was suspicious, but Luxon repeatedly tried to verify it, seeing how he claimed to have roots from a country of the former humans.

Luxon checked if Leon really was a Japanese person, but Leon was calm throughout the whole process, and Luxon came to the conclusion that it was true.

He also said things that made it seem as if he felt out of place, such as when he was handed a sword-like weapon and he voiced out "What's with this fantasy katana?"

So with that, Luxon came to understand that Leon was Japanese, or at least, a boy who knew Japanese people very well.

To Luxon, Leon was eligible for being its master.

...If it turned out that he was a fake, it would immediately turn against him. It thought that such a thing was improbable, but it had wanted to test Leon, who kept insisting that he was someone who reincarnated.

[This world is that of an otome game, was it?]

Leon asserted that they were in the world of otome game.

The Holfault Kingdom, with its tendency to place women over men, did indeed give females some favorable treatment. No, it gave them a lot of favorable treatment.

[There's certainly a ruling class. Furthermore, a portion of that class has a strangely large amount of power over men. It's also odd that there aren't a particularly large amount of males.]

Since magic was incorporated into their culture, they couldn't really be compared with the former humans, but even so, it wasn't surprising for social systems of the latter to give preferential treatment towards males.

Wars and even monsters emerged in this world.

The death rate for men going into battle was high, so there tended to be few men.

Although it wasn't pointed out within the academy, the female-to-male ratio increases drastically a few years after graduation.

The reason was that the number of men decreased.

It wouldn't have been strange if this society had given men a better position and allowed them to choose their fate.

In reality, the main providers in noble families were men, both doing work and being on the battlefield.

[...Even when assuming that the poor treatment of males is something that couldn't be helped, why do the women have such strong authority?]

Luxon was unable to understand.

The same went for Leon's current situation.

He had been in an environment where he was likely to be sold as a leftover-husband to a woman in her fifties.

When people went to find a marriage partner despite their disadvantages, they would have to accept that their partner already had additional lovers. The world didn't have the technology for things like genetic identification, so there was the question of how exactly one would confirm who a child belonged to.

It was unbelievable that such conditions were treated as if they were normal.

[Was this push to favor females intentional? Or perhaps, is this really the world of an otome game? No, that's not possible.]

The one who believed that the world of a game had turned into reality, Leon, tossed and turned in his sleep.

He was sleeping in joy.

[...This really is an interesting world. I'll observe the situation with my master for now.]

Luxon wasn't interested in a world where the former humans had perished.

Its interest was in Leon.

[All things considered, my master really is... a 'fool,' isn't he?]

Luxon called Leon a fool, but it had its reasons.

First of all, he caused trouble while thinking half-heartedly about what it would cause.

[If he wasn't in danger of being sold as a leftover-husband, he likely wouldn't have come alone to where I resided. Why didn't he use that courage sooner?]

It wasn't incompetence.

Actually, he was able to beat the seventy point mark that was sought after in the academy, and so he had somewhat superior grades.

Luxon thought that if he was more serious about it, he could further his grades and reach the top rankings.

However, he basically had no motivation.

[Is his motivation only in tea?]

Luxon was amazed at the somewhat expensive tea and the high-class tea leaves in the room. It thought about how he might be a Japanese person following the Way of Tea, but didn't voice it out loud.

In summary, he was a person who was capable, but lacked motivation in things other than hobbies.

However—

[He's not evil either. His alignment... is hard to describe.]

—He wasn't a bad person.

That was evident by the fact that despite having a policy to not get involved with Olivia and Anjelica, he helped them when he saw them being bullied.

[I do think there was a better way to go about doing it, though.]

Luxon was owned by Leon. There were many ways of accomplishing things, and if he gathered information on a daily basis, he probably would have noticed the matter of Marie too.

It probably would have sufficed if Leon intervened without starting a fight.

Leon, who got involved with them at a late moment, made various excuses about why he did it, but... it simply boiled down to him having a good-natured side.

He wanted to help Olivia and Anjelica.

[Perhaps he's hiding his embarrassment?]

Luxon then thought about Marie.

[According to my master, Marie is also someone who reincarnated, but... well, I wonder what will happen from now on.]

Luxon shifted its sight from the reckless Leon to the floating moon outside the window.

Marie being someone who reincarnated was fine, but that didn't change the fact that she snatched away the position of the protagonist from Olivia.

If things progressed according to the story, as Leon said they would, then the Holfault Kingdom was going to get involved in a war.

If that were true, then what would happen from now on?

Olivia didn't have any partners, like the capture target boys, to protect her anymore.

To make matters worse, Marie captivated the five boys, and they gave up their positions as the heirs of their household for her sake.

In addition, Anjelica was on Olivia and Leon's side.

It was obvious that the situation was different from what Leon assumed it would be.

However, it didn't seem to Luxon that its sleeping master was thinking deeply about it.

[Well, whatever. Even if something happens, it's easy for my master to transport people somewhere to take refuge. I was prepared for such an event to begin with. No matter what happens, I will protect my master.]

Luxon muttered as such while gazing at the moon.



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