

"Normal speech"

'Thought'

(Silent magic)

[Normal magic]

{Change of location, time or POV}

Hi there! If you are part of the P atreon you are probably coming from the last chapter. If that's the case let me express for a moment my deepest thanks for supporting this work and me as a writer! Thank you from the bottom of my heart!

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Now for the chapter, there isn't much to say other than enjoy!

Beta Reader: Don Orbit (go check out his amazing works!); SirWertsalot (Hi.)

Chapter 29: Letting the Beasts loose

It has been a week. A very silent week, as if the very world was waiting for something to happen.

The weight of that silence lied on a certain old man's shoulder. Well, not really an old man as he still was only about to reach his sixties, but the stress of the crown was beginning to have his effect, or at least that was what the normal servant thought.

In reality, the king had been fine until a month ago, when his daughter brought him the news of a revolt about to fall on them and ruin their entire royal line. The greying of his hair and the new wrinkles that popped up everyday couldn't be attributed to anything else.

He was tired. Tired of squabbling nobles, tired of endless politics, tired of paperwork, tired of the damn heavy crown on his head, tired of ruling. He just wanted to leave it all behind and sit back in his garden, where his Catherine loved gardening so much. He still lost himself in his old memories of a young girl getting mud all over herself after planting a batch of flowers and how a shy boy would look at her from behind a column.

If only those days could have lasted forever. If only he could have grown old alongside her, maybe he would not be so lost right now.

The world was a cruel and unforgiving place, and he was a coward. He acknowledged as much. Instead of facing his problems head-on, he decided to bury his head under the sand and wait for the next generation to fix it in his place.

And even when he was confronted with the biggest uprising since the foundation of the kingdom, his solution was to delegate all of it to someone else.

“Is that crown on your head too heavy father?”

His youngest asked from the side where she was analyzing various documents in his stead while he was lost in thought. His eyes widened in surprise at the accuracy of her words.

“Your head was falling; do you perhaps wish to pass it to me?”

Those words, spoken in a joking manner, were so close to the truth that Rampossa felt a fit of guilt rumble inside him.

‘You do not know how truthful your words are’ the old king thought, ashamed of his sudden idea of passing it all down to his, yet to be 10 years old, daughter.

“Are you perhaps nervous, father?”

She asked again, her sweet voice filled with concern, something he didn’t consider himself worthy of after all the troubles he placed on her shoulders.

“You are too kind Renner.”

He said as he smiled at his youngest and patted her shoulder, making her flinch a little. Now that he thought of it, when was the last time he touched her? A frown appeared on his face as he realized he could not recall such an occasion since the time he held her when she was only an infant... now he could add terrible father to the list of his failures.

“No, father, I am not... you should know it by now. If something must be done, no matter how cruel or heartless... if it is necessary for the sake of the kingdom... it must be done nonetheless.”

The princess said as she signed another paper, imitating her father’s signature to near perfection.

‘Why? Why must the child with most aptitude for ruling be born as the last in line?’ Rampossa again asked in exasperation.

If Renner was born as his first, he would have gladly left everything to her a long time ago and retired without a worry... Instead, fate seemed to be endlessly amused by tormenting him with its jokes.

“Are you worried about big sister?”

She asked, refusing to meet his gaze when he turned toward her. Indeed, he was. His daughter’s unwillingness to do what had to be done and the reveal of the magic caster’s darker side was indeed concerning.

But, alas, the kingdom must be brought under the royal line’s control. Satoru marrying Alysanne would ensure the obedience of the underground to the crown and a possible deterrent for future rebellions even if his son’s reign turned out to be less than optimal, as he expected. Renner still remained a mystery in all this. She should be afforded a primary role in the leadership of the kingdom, but, knowing his firstborn, that was unlikely.

“If you are so worried for her, I could take her place. I don’t mind. Satoru is very nice to me.”

The princess continued nonchalantly as if she wasn’t discussing her future at all. Rampossa, on his part, couldn’t say he didn’t consider it for a moment, but there were too many problems with that line of thought.

“You know I can’t do that, Renner. I already announced my decision to the court. Taking it back would be an insult to Sir Satoru. The age gap between the two of you is also concerning as it would not be proper, for when you two would be ready to marry he would be almost in his forties, and we need as many heirs as we can to cement the bonds between him and the royal line.”

He said even if he was sure the young girl in front of him already knew as much.

“Sister Alysanne will hate you forever for it, you know that father... She isn’t the right woman for Satoru either. The two of them just think in too different of a way to get along.”

The young blonde said, dismissing the papers she was previously working on.

The old man sighed.

“She is a princess of the kingdom. It is time for her to fulfill her duty to the royal line, regardless of my own selfish desires.”

He said, more to convince himself than the girl.

“And then, what is to be of me?”

She asked again, disinterest clear in her tone. The room felt silent as the king had no answer for that.

“That... is for you to decide. I am not foolish enough to try and bind you in an unwanted marriage. You would sooner run off to only the gods know where.”

The man said, still another lie to cover up his own indecision, a slap masqueraded as a caress, another self-deprecating point to add to his seemingly never-ending list.

“Yes, I guess I would indeed.”

She said, returning to her work with a sad little smile on her face. Rampossa could not help but feel guilty. A decent king he may be, but a decent father he surely had not been.

{Hours later}

{Raeven's P.O.V.}

The noble felt a cold shiver crawl up his spine as he looked down on the procession going on through the streets of the capital.

After the incident in his mansion, he was immediately recalled, alongside a good third of the court, back to the capital with the upmost urgency. He had no time to be filled in by his spies on what was going on and what he managed to gather were merely rumors from his spies in the royal palace. Still, those rumors were so outrageously insane that he could not help but doubt them all together and even rethink about who he chose as a spy.

But unfortunately, reality was a cruel mistress, and the only one turning out to be an utter fool was him as he observed the parade that started from the south gate proceeding through the city.

Usually, it was tradition to have the victorious army parade from that gate as they returned from war but this time it seemed the procession had a far more macabre meaning to it.

Men and women in black cloaks marched between curious and horrified commoners. Every last one of these black cloaked people had a three meters long pole on which end they proudly sported a severed head.

There were hundreds of them. From his elevated point of view the Marquis could not recognize to whom those heads belonged to, but if he had to follow his gut feeling, he could already imagine it.

At the head of the procession was an unmistakable face, or would it be better to say mask.

The magic caster advanced through the city, his dark robes fluttering in the wind as the trail of death followed it. Now that they were nearing the castle, Raeven could observe the macabre spectacle better.

‘Men, women and even young boys and girls...’ the cold sensation on his back intensified tenfold at that sight. Not because of the slaughter, of course. He himself would have done the same if the need came to be. It was due to the concept. The eradication of a house was no small thing. In the history of the kingdom, he could count on one hand the names of houses completely eradicated in such a manner. Never before had he heard of a massacre on this scale before, nor not one celebrated in such a manner. Even less one sporting such high-ranking figures.

As the procession reached the main square, they all stopped. By now, they had attracted a huge crowd of followers who probably wanted to know what was going on.

One of the men planted his pole into the ground before jumping on the fountain in the middle of the forest of poles. Of course, from inside the castle, Raeven couldn’t hear what the man was shouting but it didn’t take long for the curious crowd to start either cheering or shouting as well as throwing rocks at the impaled heads.

The procession started moving again. They went from square to square as they rallied a large quantity of commoners behind them. In all this, the accursed magic caster already left the forest of poles after the first square and, instead, moved toward the castle escorted by a few of his black guards.

Raeven was starting to panic inside. What was happening was obvious by now and he could swear there was no way this was an idea of the king. That decrepit fool didn’t have it in him to massacre 2/3 of the nobility of the kingdom. Someone was pulling strings, and this was just their way of making a point.

And that someone was the damned magic caster. He was the cause of all of this. All his well calculated plans! All thrown to waste! Years of preparation for nothing! Someone swiped the throne from under his nose and took it for themselves without him even noticing until it was too late!

It was utterly infuriating, but even that much frustration was dwarfed by the growing sense of fear inside him. Now that the enemy held all the cards in his hand, what will they do? Were they coming to take the king out along side the remaining nobles? Possible, but still unlikely as that would push the kingdom into chaos, but then again, they would just make puppets out of them as well.

The nobles currently standing next to him were all blabbering about uncivilized commoners or unspeakable cruelty.

‘Are they all fools!? Can’t they understand that we are all doomed!?’ Raeven thought in frustration. The only silent pair were Marquis Pespea and Marquis Blumrush who were currently sweating profusely, not that he could blame them as they seemed the only ones understanding the gravity and danger of the situation.

It didn’t take long for all of them to be allowed inside the throne room, where apparently the king was about to give a speech. It didn’t take a genius to imagine who exactly stood on those poles now. All the major nobles missing here were candidates for one pole or another.

‘And yet, I am still alive’ he could not help but find some solace in that fact. After all, he could have been killed like the others, but he was spared. That meant the damned magic caster had other plans for him.

Many of the usually arrogant nobles were quite shaken as they took position in court, quite a few seats remaining void this time around.

The king on the other hand sat on his throne alongside his children, with what seemed to be an unreadable expression on his face, but his posture said otherwise. He himself was clearly on edge.

“Welcome, all of you. I am glad you all managed to come in such haste for today’s poorly announced meeting.”

The king began. No one dared to say anything as many a noble was quivering in their seat in anticipation.

“As you probably saw, we have a particularly interesting event currently going on in our beloved capital.”

Another pause, the prepared speech having the desired effect on the nobles' nerves.

"More than one month ago, my youngest daughter came to me with urgent news after her travel to the empire. Not only did she bring proof of the noble faction's treachery and attempt on my and my heirs lives, she also brought with her documents and letters detailing a greater scheme to usurp the royal line of the kingdom... not only that, but a faction of the Baharuth Empire's noble was planning to support them and use the civil unrest to seize the kingdom for themselves."

The words from the king had the anticipated reaction of utter shock and outrage. Even some of the royal children seemed utterly dumbfounded by this revelation. Many eyes went to the youngest princess who sat comfortably on her small throne like chair.

Raeven's mind shifted in that instant. 'Is she the mastermind behind all of this?! No, that can't be... she must be the scapegoat, yes! The magic caster is using her as a scapegoat for himself! That's why he pushed so much on her since he arrived! He saw an opportunity to link himself to the royal family!' it was a genius move, he had to admit as much. Who would have ever given credit to the last princess anyway? The court still considered her little more than a bastard. There is no way anyone would have paid attention to her.

"It pained me much to see so many names I previously thought as friendly to demonstrate their viciousness and willingness to betray their own country for their own gain... as such, it was time to put an end to this madness... as you can see in the streets, I was successful."

Those words, spoken so calmly, quieted the room down once again.

"But my victory was not achieved by me alone. A powerful man offered me his hand in a time of need. Someone that, to my shame, wasn't even considered a member of any faction at the time... that man, nonetheless, rose to the defense of the kingdom when all seemed lost and managed to turn the table around in favor of justice and stability."

The doors of the throne room opened, and the Warrior Troop marched inside. At the front of the group were the Warrior Captain himself, Gazef Stronoff, and the accursed magic caster, alongside three of his cloaked guards, each of them carrying a wooden box in their hands.

"Welcome back Sir Satoru. I see that you accomplished your mission without delays or accidents."

The magic caster stopped a few meters from the throne and gave his usual, just low enough to be considered respectful, bow. Raeven was immediately reminded of two years prior when the same thing happened the first time said magic caster appeared before the court.

The memory was fuzzy. At the time, he surely dismissed him as another nobody that stumbled into court... if only he knew... he would have probably brought the caster on his side by any means necessary, but alas, it was too late now.

“Your Majesty, a pleasure meeting you again. Allow me to present to you what you asked for.”

The three cloaked men took a step forward and opened their boxes. From the higher position, the whole court could see the inside of it and what they contained.

The Marquis’ face remained expressionless as he glanced down at the severed heads of Marquis Boullope, Count Lytton and Margrave Urovana.

‘The noble faction is done for and even the royals have been cut by a third... now the ones holding all the power are the members of the royal family. In one fell swoop, the situation has been reversed’

Raeven evaluated the shift. It was the final nail in the coffin, really. His plan of using his fellow nobles to topple the royal line was a total failure. Now the remaining nobility didn’t even have the strength to oppose the king himself. A coup was just a fool’s dream by now.

“Urovana, my dear cousin. We used to play together when we were children and supported each other when I ascended my father’s throne... to think such a blindly trusted man, a man sharing my mother’s blood, would try and backstab me for his own gain... it truly pains me that it had to end like this.”

The king said, as sorrow filled his every word, a downcast expression framing his visage.

Silence descended after that. No one daring to make a sound, probably fearing to be the next in line to have their head cut off.

“But alas, traitors must be treated as such. Decapitation is the death sentence for such vermin after all, a tradition upheld from before the foundation of the kingdom itself.”

The king continued, speaking more to himself than anyone else apparently.

The magic caster gestured for his men to retreat, and they obeyed instantly, closing the boxes and retreating behind their master.

“Come forward, Sir Satoru.”

The king finally broke the silence, prompting the magic caster to take some steps forward, now standing mere meters from the throne. The old man took a deep breath and then, after a long pause, fixed his gaze on the magic caster in front of him.

“As a reward for your services and unyielding loyalty to the crown, I bestow upon you the title of Shield of Re-Estize and Protector of the Crown. Adding to this, your rank must be raised accordingly to your status.”

The old man paused.

“By the power invested upon me as king of the Re-Estize kingdom, I, Rampossa III, gift the title of Marquis to Satoru the magic caster... as a new member of nobility lands must be assigned to him according to his rank.”

The declaration didn't surprise Raeven. After the events of today, a new Marquis seemed like a news not even worthy of attention.

“Seeing as the kingdom is going through a period of shortage when it comes to capable and loyal nobles, and much land has become available recently, I have decided that Marquis Satoru will take control of the territories formerly belonging to the traitor Boullope. Adding to this, he will annex all the lands of the minor noble Southworth of his domain. That would bring him to confine with Marquis Pespea on the south-west and Mayor Rettenmaier on the south-east.”

Raeven immediately began to create a new mental map of the kingdom with this shift ‘that much territory... it is almost a sixth of the whole kingdom’ he thought as he studied any possible reason behind the choice.

The immediate thing that came to mind was the defensive position that territory would offer, to both itself and the kingdom. It would serve as a second stronghold if E-Rantel ever fell, but it also offered another, more sinister opportunity.

With the land spanning from north to south, the Marquis magic caster could invade to great effect both Pespea's and Blumrush's territories if they ever moved against the capital, offering their backs to the new Marquis in the process, not counting the optimal access the territory offered toward the capital. They could easily mobilize and offer aid to the capital in no time if asked

It was indeed a cunning move, even more for the old man. It was almost like someone was whispering in his ear all the time... but could the magic caster have such influence over the king... or did he have an invisible friend?

Questions for later. Now he had to reorganize his whole operation and plan. Luckily for him, the only good thing that came from this disaster was his growth in influence due to him being one of the now Four Great Nobles.

'Pespea on the South, Blumrush on the North, myself on the west and Satoru on the East'

It was a good formation. It surely gave a more militaristic sense to the territories as now, if anyone wished to invade, they will have to go through both Pespea, who was one of the best military leaders in the kingdom and Satoru, a powerhouse of his own with his magic and control over Seven Hands.

"This responsibility, I accept it with honor and swear to protect these lands by any means necessary."

The monotone tone of the magic caster made him seem like someone who practiced those same words hundreds of times, almost as if he was disinterested in what was currently happening, something that easily got on the already tense nerves of the blond-haired Marquis.

"As it is customary for nobles to attach their family names to their titles, I would like to ask you, Marquis Satoru, to state your full title for the whole court to recognize."

The king continued. That actually peaked Raeven's interest. He never managed to attach a family name to the elusive magic caster. This would give him much insight on where this man was from.

"Family names... mine is not something I find pride in. I would be much happier not spreading it. Mayhap I will find a family name more fitting in the future but as of now I do not wish to add anything to my name. I hope you understand your majesty."

The masked man explained in his deep tone. Normally such a thing would have prompted snickering or mockful remarks from the court but this time only silence reigned as no one wished to incur this man's wrath.

"Unorthodox, but I see no harm in it in the shorter period. I will allow it."

The old man continued. It was a subtle and clever power play, Raeven had to admit. That was even more proof that this whole thing was nothing, but a farce put up by someone.

“Now, let us not make this day darker than it already is, and let me finally announce a joyful occasion... with his new appointment and titles I can finally publicly announce the betrothal of my second daughter Alysanne and Marquis Satoru!”

The king said, far more pleased and enthusiastic than before. Without waiting, Raeven stood up and began to clap in a contained manner, followed hesitantly by the other nobles.

The magic caster seemed to be taken aback by the sudden shift but that could also be a trick of the eye. For such a monster to be so easily destabilized would be a laughable thing. It is far more probable the sudden awkward movement was caused by his gown.

The second princess stood up and elegantly advanced toward the new Marquis before giving him a ladylike bow.

“My lord.”

She greeted as she waited for the proper response of the magic caster, which never came as the man just continued to stare at her, causing her visible discomfort.

“It’s a pleasure... making your acquaintance... princess.”

The air of discomfort didn’t disappear at all as the awkward moment continued, amplified by the silence.

“Very well. Now that the main topic has been addressed, I think it might be time to start this court meeting to establish the new borders and annexation of the now freed territories.”

The king said, interrupting the silence and shifting the attention of the court to the new topic as both the princess and magic caster retreated in opposite directions.

{Satoru’s P.O.V.}

The undead was stressed out. Was it even possible to be stressed out when lacking a brain? The mere thought only brought more pain to his skull.

If, at the time this mess started, he had been living here for only a few months, he would have taken his business away and fled without ever looking back... instead he was here, among the elite of the elite, discussing country level politics, now holding a

small kingdom worthy of land, in charge of a criminal syndicate, a multi-country level business and betrothed to an underage princess.

There was just so much the former salaryman could endure before breaking, and now he was on autopilot. He decided that he would accept anything that was going to happen and not lose his mind anymore, for his own sake.

It was useless to say, he failed miserably.

Oh sure, he managed well his first task to just take everything he was given, but then his stupid mind had to blow up in panic when the king suddenly announced he was going to marry his second daughter, someone Satoru never even met before.

He expected it. He knew it would happen thanks to Hilma's information. He just didn't know that he would have no occasion to refuse, or at least, he didn't get the hint or lost the right moment to do so.

Normally, he would be more worried and panicked by this, but Hilma assured him he would have many ways of breaking the engagement, even more now that he had sway over the royal family.

Refusing it would have brought far more problems than accepting it too. His refusal would have given the remaining nobles an opening to think that they could bring him and the royal family in conflict with each other.

By seemingly accepting the proposal, he demonstrated the strength of the bond between him and the royal line. That would be a wise choice to maintain peace and order for the times to come.

He glanced at his never to be bride who seemed to be very nervous judging by how she sat on her chair, her body clearly tense. 'Why do I feel like Peroroncino would be proud of me?' that weird thought invaded his mind as he returned to reality.

The king was mostly announcing what they already decided with their previous, more private meeting.

No mention was made of Seven Hands though, or the parade still going on in the capital as they spoke. To be honest he felt disturbed by the whole thing, even more since it was the usually calm and collected Hilma to suggest it. She said that decapitation and impalement were common sentences for traitors but still, even him as an undead, felt pretty unnerved by the forest of poles.

He was boneheaded but even he could understand what a mess he found himself in and doing anything foolish might backfire grandiosely on him. That fear was what mostly stopped him from objecting anything happening right now. Noble title? Royal bride? New lands? He would take them all if the rest of the kingdom just left him alone to his own business.

After all, Hilma would help him, and he was sure even Renner would offer her aid if he asked. The young princess might have brought him into this mess, but she was also very gifted when it came to these types of things.

'She would have surely made for a far more useful betrothed than the current one' he joked to himself as he could not help a drop of fondness for the little imp to sparkle in his nonexistent heart.

Yes, that was it! He just needed to delegate things he didn't want to deal with. That is what a CEO would do!

Seven Hands could easily administer the lands, making his business go even more smoothly in the process since he would not have to deal with all those nobles' taxes anymore.

His noble title would be slightly trickier... he could not delegate his duties... oh god! What even were his duties?! Obey the king? Participate in meetings? Go to war? That last one didn't sound good at all.

He felt his panic rise once more and even if his Emotional Suppression continued to push it back, the remaining sensation of uneasiness at the sole thought of that remained.

And then his underaged betrothed. That was probably the thing unnerving him the most. Even more than the thought of a war. He never had a relationship before. As a human, he had nothing to offer as his life limited itself to work and Yggdrasil. He was never courted for his lack of social skills and status. His experience with the fairer gender were limited to colleague-like interactions or the few female members of Ainz Ooal Gown. The girl he probably spoke to most in all his life, apart from his mother, was probably Bukubukuchagama, and even those few interactions caused him much stress in the beginning.

But now that he thought about it, he had an advantage. He could simply ignore her as much as possible. He could treat this as a business relationship. Yes, that sounded right in his head. He would just ignore her and if she showed up, he would treat her as a business partner and, hopefully, in a couple of years he could call off the betrothal like Hilma suggested.

Yes, that sounded fitting. He was sure such a young girl would lose interest in him rather quickly.

“-toru, Lord Satoru, what is your insight on the matter of this?”

One of the blond nobles asked him, making him realize he was among the elitest members of the kingdom currently holding a meeting while he was spacing out.

‘Damn it! Damn it! Damn it! What were they talking about?! Oh crap, I am going to make a fool out of myself!’ the undead panicked inside as the rest awaited his answer.

“Marquis Raeven, if I may, Marquis Satoru is a man of business as the previous years attest to his ability in this field. For him to decide on this type of taxes would be like for you to expose your opinion on export and import taxes. It is quite unfair to force him to choose between his own interest and the royal family’s.”

The third princess interjected, making the man turn toward her.

“Ah, my princess, it was not my intention to cause discomfort to our new member or force him in a difficult position. I was, instead, interested in the insight such a successful merchant would have for the lot of us.”

He answered pleasantly, making Satoru almost cry out in relief. The little devil was certainly a cause of many headaches, but he couldn’t help but admit he did love her in that moment.

“If you are interested in my own thought on taxation, I am mostly of the idea that this type of taxation should be divided into two categories. A taxation for normal citizens of the kingdom who work for someone else or the kingdom itself and a taxation for those who are employing said citizens as workers. These two taxations should also take into account the area in which they are applied as different areas may need a different way of calculating taxes due to them having different forms of income in different fields.”

Satoru blurted out what he memorized during his time as a salaryman. It was a pretty basic and lacking explanation of how taxes worked in the 2138’s Japan. It was left unsaid that taxation on the employers were made to seem pretty harsh while in reality it was a system full of holes left opened for the megacorporations to exploit.

Silence descended in the room as many nobles looked at him warily or with clear discomfort on their faces. The reason for such a shift was totally lost on him as he didn’t think he said anything of great value.

“That is certainly... an interesting form of taxation, Lord Satoru... maybe you should discuss about it more with the ministers.”

Finally said the king breaking the silence. Satoru, seeing as he was no longer the focus of the nobles in the room, relaxed and returned to his own thoughts for the time being, listening from time to time to the various topics.

{Aindra Mansion}

{Lakyus' P.O.V.}

The noble heiress waited in her room. The sun already left the sky since a long time ago and the only remaining light source was the half-moon currently hidden behind some clouds.

Her parents were not here as they were called back to the capital for something. Something big if the silence she recently heard at both lunch and dinner was anything to go by.

But that was not of her concern at the moment. She had spent the last weeks planning and finally this was her great chance at escaping. If her parents wanted to deny her will then she will deny theirs just as well.

She stood from the bed and moved toward the door, mimicking the movement of someone groggy who just woke from a deep sleep, her head cast low as if to make herself seem as small as possible.

She opened her door slowly and stepped outside, her personal guard, more like jailer in her mind, immediately tensed as she came into view. Her parents were strict, but they were no fools. They knew she would not lie back and do nothing, so they made sure she was guarded all the time.

“My lady?”

He asked in a low tone, even more accentuated by his helmet.

“Uhm... bathroom...”

She said in the most believable sleepy tone she could muster. The fully armored guard hesitated for a moment and then nodded as she slowly moved toward the bathroom, dragging her long nightgown across the floor. She made sure to choose the longest she had. It was a fundamental step in her plan.

She turned the corner and purposely stepped on her long gown falling face to the ground.

“Augh!”

She growled in more pain than she actually was in. It didn't take long for her guard to approach her worriedly and help her up by crouching down. That was her chance.

As the guard helped her up, she swiftly grabbed the hilt of the man's sword and unsheathed it, bringing it immediately at the exposed neck of the kneeling knight, a clear flaw in their amour she noticed during her weeks of planning. When they knelt, a tiny path between their helmet and shoulder pads opened up to reveal their bare neck.

“Don't move. I swear to the gods, if you fucking move or make a sound, I will open that throat of yours.”

She hissed in a whisper, not that she actually planned to go through with her threat but seeing as the guard was scared shitless, judging by his trembling hands, she got her meaning across. She had to thank her blue haired teacher for that one as he seemed to have rubbed off on her as much as Gazef did.

Using the hand that wasn't holding the sword, she ripped part of her gown off and used it to tie both of the man's hands behind his back then ripped some more and, after removing the helmet, stuffed it in the man's mouth.

“Go inside.”

She hissed like Brain would do anytime she messed up badly.

The man obeyed and stepped inside the bathroom. With a swift movement, Lakyus used the blunt part of the sword to hit the man's leg, making him fall forward with a muffled cry of pain as she probably dislocated or even broke some bones.

She looked at the man with a crestfallen expression.

“I am sorry, please forgive me... but for my freedom I will do anything necessary.”

She said as she closed and locked the door.

With the first part of her plan completed, she immediately went for the vault of her family, where she was sure to find her sword as her father made a point about locking it away where she could never reach it again.

Her only deviation was to grab one of her father's traveling cloaks. She chose the lighter and less decorated one. She had to cut it a little in the process to make it fit her better. After all, she could not run away with her nightgown. She would freeze to death before the night was over. Since she was there, she grabbed a pair of boots as well. It would not do to go outside in her current outfit.

She proceeded swiftly through the many corridors until she reached the heart of her mansion, the vault, where three of their most elite soldiers stood most of the time.

"Who's there?!"

One of them called out as soon as Lakyus entered their field of view. Of course, they could not recognize her with the cloak and hood over her head.

"Not another step! Identify yourself and drop any of your weapons!"

The guard ordered as he and his companions unsheathed their swords. In response, Lakyus raised hers to face them using Gazef's stance.

"[Flow Acceleration]"

She muttered under her breath as she literally flew at them, easily disarming one of her opponents by smashing the blunt side of her sword against his hands.

The guard screamed as his bones were probably broken by the power of Lakyus' strike. She was losing her touch, probably the result of those months spent away from practicing her swordsmanship. Not like she stayed put in her room. No, she continued training for all she could even there but the lack of an actual blade in her hands made her feel naked in a sense.

But now wasn't the time to be distracted by her own thoughts. The other two guards were soon on her. Abusing her power boost thanks to her Martial Art, she could keep up with the two of them at once, but openings were almost nonexistent thanks to the good synergy of the two. That meant only one thing. She will have to put them down together.

She jumped back, creating the necessary distance between her and her opponents. She crouched in a position that could be mistaken as one of submission if they didn't know of Brain Unglaus' signature stance.

Her blade was ready. It was just a matter of getting close enough and it didn't take long for such a thing to happen as the two guards didn't waste time in charging what they believed to be a downed foe.

‘Just a few steps... there!’ she felt the power of the Martial art flow through her arm as her sword became a part of her, causing an exhilarating feeling of power to flow through her whole body.

“[Instantaneous Flash]!”

This time, she clearly called out her master’s Martial Art as the blade flashed through the air, invisible to the human eye, severing her opponents’ weapons in two and sending them crashing against the corridor walls due to its shockwave.

Combining [Flow Acceleration] with [Instantaneous Flash] might not having been the greatest idea, though, as she now felt her sword arm start numbing.

‘And that wasn’t even close to master’s level...’ she noticed as she felt her arm twitching during the execution, something that greatly diminished the Martial Art’s effectiveness. Normally the movement of her arm should be flawless, a perfect strike able to cut air itself, but she was still far away from that and, judging by the results, she will have to increase her physical endurance quite a lot before she could utilize such an ability without repercussions.

She almost screamed in surprise when she felt two arms tighten around her throat, pulling her to the ground. The only reason she remained silent was because they were trying to choke her. By sheer reflex, she headbutted whoever was behind her, scoring a good hit judging by their whine of pain as their grip loosened and with a final push, she managed to free herself.

She spun around and kicked whoever was behind her. The mysterious person turned out to be the first guard whose hands she broke before. With a tinge of guilt, she moved on and opened the vault. After all, for all her parents said, she still was the heir and one of the few who knew the combination.

Finding her blade turned out to be easier than expected as it was merely laid on one of the tables next to the entrance. She also got a bag of golden and silver coins for good measure. There is no such thing as being overprepared. That was a lesson Satoru made sure to stress to both her and Renner.

Closing the vault behind, she offered a silent apology to the guards still sprawled on the ground and left.

Her golden cage was opened and now she was ready to spread her wings and fly toward freedom.

A.N.

Man, this was a hard chapter to write. But still a funny one. Raeven is always a treat to write as the poor lad just doesn't seem to be getting a pause from the madness around him.

Poor Satoru isn't fairing much better and Renner is still the adorable, twisted thing as always. We will just have to see how she intends to reach her goal of becoming queen.

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Have a nice day and stay safe!