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Arc 5 - Chapter 16, "Uninvited Guests"

by Gracedharperd - Furuta - Thursday, November 29, 2018

<http://127.0.0.1/2018/11/29/arc-5-chapter-16-uninvited-guests/>

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<http://ncode.syosetu.com/N2267BE/>

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- Credit to Discount Anon or u/Nanashi-tan.

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That touching moment was spoiled in the worst way.

The red-haired man’s behavior and attitude all betrayed an ugly nature. A rather repulsive smile spread across his unshaven face. He looked to be in his forties and carried the unpleasant scent of alcohol about him.

Although his actions and appearance all evoked a sense of disgust which seemed to reflect his character, the man underneath the poor grooming was quite handsome.

The beautiful characteristics — their desired form, are contaminated by completely different things. Something about the slender man’s posture exuded an aura of repulsiveness.

Subaru: “...who are you?”

???: “Ahh?”

The first to break the shocked silence that had fallen across the room was none other than Subaru, who reached behind him and gripped the handle of the weapon at his waist.

Having lost his cool, Subaru’s spinning head drove him to act impulsively.

There was nothing that could have angered him more than the interruption of the reconciliation between the clumsy, awkward duo of grandfather and grandson.

Only Subaru knew why he was in such a frenzied rage.

It wasn't just a reconciliation between a friend and someone he respected that had been interrupted.

It was reconciliation between family. The beginning of a family looking for a connection. To dare to treat it like that,

Subaru: "Answer me. Who the hell are you?"

???: "...you're really casting a hostile look at me, kid. As a knight, you do know who you're trying to provoke, right?"

Subaru: "Don't make me laugh, mister. The one being provocative is you. I'm just asking you exactly what you're doing here."

His patience reaching a breaking point, Subaru stood from the banquet.

Beatrice, who was sitting next to him, saw the feelings fueling his reaction and shifted her position so that she could take his hand at any time. His reliable partner had accurately sensed flames of anger residing in Subaru's heart.

Glancing at Subaru with an unpleasant expression, the man scratched his head with a rude gesture.

???: "You're so annoying, kid. Hey, Sword Saint. Or Juukulius too, or even Argyle. Cut down this rude kid for me."

Subaru: "—hk!"

With the hand he'd been scratching his head with pointing at Subaru, the insolent man casually gave an order to three people in the hall, Reinhard among them.

Seeing that humiliation to his comrades, Subaru wanted to strike at that grin with his whip. Julius: "Please watch your words."

But he was interrupted by Julius's words before he could move.

Julius, who had stood up at some point, gently placed a hand on Subaru's shoulder from behind. Julius nodded slightly at the frozen Subaru, then turned to face the man.

Julius. "Ferris is present, and Reinhard as well. We three are on temporary leave from our normal duties due to serving our specific masters. Therefore, even the deputy head should not hold the right to command us."

Ferris: “Yep. Ferri-chan is now an obedient servant to the the venerable Crusch-sama~. Therefore, I have no obligation to comply with the order.”

Keeping his sitting posture, Ferris held Crusch’s arm as he offered an immediate follow-up to Julius’s words. Although Crusch, whose arm had just been taken, appeared a little surprised, she still filled her eyes with her strong will as she turned toward the red-haired man.

The expression on everyone else’s faces were similar; no one hid their hostility toward the man. That was natural; they had just shared a pleasant atmosphere, which had been torn apart by the man.

However,

???: “Oh~ oh~, how scary. Is it not obvious that I was just kidding around? It’s not like I don’t know the gravity of my orders as the deputy commander.”

Subaru: “The... deputy commander?”

The alcoholic man seemed to find something funny, slapping his legs in laughter at Julius and Ferris’s reactions. During their exchange, a word slipped past to Subaru.

After hearing his testimony, the man once again leveled his gaze in Subaru’s direction.

???: “Just so. That’s my delectable adornment. Deputy Commander of the Knights of the Kingdom of Lugunica, Heinkel, that’s me.

Subaru: “Don’t give me such a righteous look.”

Heinkel: “Hahaha, this kid’s voice is really harsh. It hurts, hurts, hurts me... so shut your worthless mouth, you dog.”

Subaru: “—hk!”

The darkness twinkling in the man’s narrowed eyes sent a shuddering chill down Subaru’s back. It was different from the overwhelming presence of something like the White Whale or a Witch. It was something more unspeakable.

That something was familiar to Subaru, and yet it was impossible to recall exactly what it was. There was nowhere to escape that sense, and Subaru felt a ringing in his ears.

Julius: “Calm down, Subaru. Don’t let the deputy commander’s atmosphere swallow you.”

Julius, who stood by his side, spoke to the dizzy Subaru.

Hearing him, that man — Heinkel, faced Julius with a dark smile.

Heinkel: “Ha! A worthy reply. An exemplary, polite answer. To show that respect as a knight, you truly

are the Knight of Knights.”

Julius: “Allow me to accept the compliment, Deputy Commander Heinkel... If I may ask, what is the reason for your visit? If my memory serves correctly, your duty as deputy commander should be guarding the capital.”

Heinkel: “Drop those sarcastic words. Just how great of an influence on the vigilant defense of the capital can the absence of one man make? Marcus-sama can handle it perfectly alone, far better than I could... ah, although, a royal family who could suffer disaster is missing.”

Wilhelm: “Heinkel!”

Considering his position, Heinkel's speech was incredibly disrespectful. Upon hearing it, Wilhelm roared his name in fury.

The Sword Demon, shaking with anger directed a sharp glare at Heinkel, who merely shrugged his shoulders.

Wilhelm: “Heinkel...”

Heinkel: “Just calling me once is fine. I’ve yet to lose my hearing from old age. Well, treat that as nonsense and ignore it. More importantly—”

Heinkel responded to Wilhelm’s bitter voice by sticking a finger into his ear as he closed his blue eyes. Then, he opened them to look at Wilhelm.

Heinkel: “This isn’t a very nice feeling. Obviously, I want to offer my congratulations to you for your defeat of the White Whale, but you’ve been avoiding me. This is a feat that took fourteen long years to accomplish, after all. I’d think that I also have the right to join the joyful celebrations. Isn’t that the case, father?”

Wilhelm: “Heinkel, I...”

Heinkel: “Reinhard, what about you?”

Reinhard: “—”

Heinkel viciously stabbed his words into Wilhelm’s chest.

Although the old man's face showed the pain of being cut by a blade, Heinkel showed no sign of caring. Instead, he directed his malice at a new target.

Reinhard, who had silently observed the situation until just now, slowly looked toward Heinkel when he heard his name.

Heinkel: “Shouldn’t you also be congratulating father on the burden that’s been lifted off of his

shoulders? Since he's carried out a wife, a mother, a grandmother's vengeance. At least offer him some nice words. That said..."

Reinhard: "—"

Heinkel: "—With this, father has finally avenged the previous Sword Saint who you'd murdered, isn't that right?"

— Subaru withdrew his original assertion.

Saying that Heinkel wore a malicious look on his face was a mistake.

Rather, he was the face of malice itself.

Heinkel's words, expression, attitude, tone, behavior, and gaze; all of these were manifestations of his intent, one that could only be described by the term malice.

Indeed, every bit of Heinkel's demeanor contained nothing but pure malice.

Subaru: "...previous Sword Saint, murdered...?"

Subaru quietly blurted out those impressionable words.

In his consciousness, there were other questions swimming about, but Subaru could not reasonably sort through them.

However, malice would always spring on such an opportunity.

Heinkel. "Yeah, the murdered previous Sword Saint. Although I don't know exactly how ignorant you are, you have to be familiar with the title of Sword Saint, right? Our current Sword Saint is the most powerful hero of our day... but that was something he got from murdering his predecessor, his own grandmother. Although that fact was immediately hidden from public knowledge."

Wilhelm: "Silence, Heinkel! You... just how far are you intending to go?"

Heinkel: "If you want to say something that sounds nice, then please stop, father. The reason is nothing other than that you simply don't have the right to disagree with me. After all, when the last Sword Saint died, the first to condemn Reinhard was none other than you."

Wilhelm: "—hk"

Heinkel's words contained a dense, noxious poison of abhorrence. And the contents of his speech were no more than vulgar curses. Reinhard had murdered his predecessor? Inconceivable.

Wilhelm had bitterly condemned that Reinhard? Inconceivable. After all, to Reinhard, his predecessor had been...

And to Wilhelm, Reinhard was...

So obviously, that couldn't have been possible. Reinhard & Wilhelm: "—"

Neither Reinhard nor Wilhelm would deny it.

Why? If either of them would deny it, would even say a simple "no", then Subaru would instantly believe it.

A comrade and a beloved mentor. A malicious man covered with the scent of alcohol. There was absolutely no question as to who Subaru would believe.

Therefore, he wanted one of them to deny those words.

Heinkel: "Is it hard to communicate now? Of course it is. It's been this way for fourteen years. Neither you nor my father have changed at all. Without change, it's impossible for you to reconcile. Would Thearesia van Astrea forgive such a selfish affair?"

In silence, only Heinkel's profane words echoed.

The previous Sword Saint. She had been Wilhelm's wife, as well as Reinhard's grandmother. And, to Heinkel,

Heinkel: "My dead mother is cursing us. Three generations, and none of us have been forgiven." Reinhard's father. Wilhelm's son.

Considering Heinkel's words and deeds, Subaru correctly deduced his origin.

Subaru: "Heinkel van Astrea..."

Testing the name out, he found that it echoed with an air of rightness.

The man in front of him was undoubtedly attached to the Astrea family. Even if his nature as a human was completely different from the upstanding Astreas that Subaru knew.

Heinkel: "Don't attach the 'van' to my name, kid. I haven't been given that honor. It's just Heinkel Astrea."

Subaru: "...?"

Hearing Subaru's questioning breath, Heinkel clicked his tongue and looked away.

For the first time since arriving here, bitterness flashed over his half-visible face. His eyes, which had contained only sadistic glee as he'd insulted his family, seemed to carry a look of pain.

—As soon as he'd begun to ponder what had happened, Subaru was interrupted.

Emilia: "So... what did you come here for?"

Subaru: "Emilia?"

Everyone had been shuddering at Heinkel's unforgivable attitude. However, it was Emilia who first stood up and questioned him.

Her silver hair floating behind her, she stood next to Subaru, who could feel a wave of anger emanating from her.

To Emilia, not feeling anger over the ruined atmosphere of or such an impolite manner was impossible.

She only ever became seriously angry when the situation concerned the feelings of others. And even she was aware of how Reinhard and Wilhelm had been hurt.

Emilia: "We were originally dining happily. To deliberately spoil such a peaceful moment, what exactly did you intend?"

Heinkel: "...oh, this is unexpected. Are you not Emilia-sama? I've heard the rumors. A poor half-witch girl who stands no fighting chance but struggles along anyway."

Emilia: "Although I'd like to one day talk to you and ask how you think of me, right now I only want to hear one answer from you. Why did you come here?"

Heinkel: "—"

Was he attempting to throw Emilia off with insults? Subaru saw through him, and the surprised Heinkel felt disappointed. The members of the other factions also seemed surprised at Emilia's calm demeanor.

It was a surprising difference from the innocence Emilia had shown yesterday. To say that she was pretending to be innocent would be a lie, however. This was Emilia being true to herself.

Emilia: "The reason why we all gathered here, was because we were invited by Anastasia-san. It's very rare that we are all gathered in the same place, so I don't think you would have randomly targeted such an opportunity, even if you are someone important to the knights. Please tell me exactly what you want."

Heinkel: "Tch. Not the same as the rumors..."

Emilia: "Answer me."

Heinkel, who had been again scratching his head, was shaken by Emilia's momentum.

Although Emilia was angry, she was by no means preparing an attack. The pressure emanating from her had nothing to do with magic. It was merely the strength of her feelings.

Felt: "You marched in with confidence, just to back down when a girl glares at you. Mister, that's pretty

embarrassing.”

Anastasia: “That’s right. Just when I was looking forward to sharing a fun story, too. Songstress-san is apparently quite the whimsical character, isn’t that interesting?”

Crusch: “Well, is that so? Then, I’d appreciate it if this puzzling man would leave, since I’d love to discuss these rumors about Songstress-san with everyone here.”

Heinkel: “—hk”

Following Emilia, Felt, Anastasia, and Crusch spoke up as well.

Like Emilia, the three joined their domineering forces in opposition to Heinkel. Facing the pressure of all four of them, Heinkel’s face couldn’t help but twitch.

They were on completely different levels. Considering his title, his position was rather lacking.

Julius: “I’m sorry, deputy head. If there’s nothing else for time being then I think, for the benefit of all parties involved, that you should take your leave.”

Heinkel’s reaction, and the attitude of the royal candidates.

Julius calculated that this would be the right time to bail Heinkel out. Subaru would have preferred to crush Heinkel on the spot, but changed his mind after seeing Reinhard and Wilhelm.

He didn’t fully grasp the situation, and so he couldn’t make hasty judgements.

Heinkel: “Grr...”

Julius: “Deputy commander. Please make a decision. Once you do, please...”

???: “—There’s no need for that, commoner.”

That voice shined with self-assurance.

The owner of that confident voice, which could shake the will of its listeners, seemed able to impose their own superiority wherever they went.

Capable of dismissing common sense and establishing a new set of rules, ones which allowed no protest or objection.

All of the members of the tea room looked at the sliding door near Heinkel.

Everyone was fully aware that someone was about to stride in from the corridor. Heinkel had long since ceased to exist in anyone's mind.

The sun's burning scowl lit the corridor.

???: "So, all of the trivial people have arrived? You've prepared a stage for mine debut. You deserve praise for your behavior."

A boldly exposed chest hugged by a blood-red dress, a mouth coquettishly covered by a fan. Her arms were crossed under her ample chest, pushing it up in the glamorous act of showing off her white skin without reservation.

Her bright red eyes resembling the licks of a flame, an enchantment capable of mesmerizing all the men in the world.

Even seeing her once would scorch her violent beauty into one's memory forever. Excessive beauty will become violent. Her existence proved this.

A teenaged girl named Priscilla Barielle.

The uninvited fifth candidate of the Royal Election.

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Priscilla: "So is this it? Frozen faces in a lifeless environment. Do you like this stale air so much? Or is it that every time we meet, such an atmosphere forms? If so, that's incredibly pitiful."

Priscilla frowned as she looked throughout the room and spoke in a provocative tone while fanning her face.

Due to her abrupt debut, no one was able to rebut her insults.

Priscilla: "What a poor reception. I deliberately graced this place with mine presence. Placing your forehead on the floor and treating me with admiration and praise is what the correct reaction would be."

Subaru: "...that's how people would treat a deity. It wouldn't happen unless you actually become the king."

Priscilla: "Hmm?"

Subaru couldn't help but comment on Priscilla's arrogance. Hearing his mutter, Priscilla turned to look at him, trapping Subaru with her bright gaze.

Subaru: "What?"

Priscilla: "...who are you? I had heard that this would be a gathering of fools who know not their place and would compete for the throne. Of course, they would also bring fools who support them. But why is a vulgar commoner like yourself present?"

Subaru: "Are you for real?"

Subaru was halted by the hostility facing him.

Priscilla's words were neither joking nor mocking. That is to say, she was being genuine. Priscilla had honestly completely forgotten about Subaru's existence.

Although they'd gone for a year without seeing each other, Subaru's idiocy in the capitol shouldn't have been so easily forgotten.

Although it would be correct to say that this was a very Priscilla-like attitude, it wasn't an attitude that was particularly appreciated.

???: "Princess, that's a bit much, isn't it? Although I don't know how much he's worth to you, to me he's almost like a brother. He's a very interesting opponent, yeah?"

A thin voice cut across the heavy atmosphere.

That voice was a little hesitant, and was accompanied by the sound of metal. A man with a single arm spoke soothing words as he entered from the corridor to join Priscilla's side.

His face was entirely covered by a helmet, and his solid, broad physique gave the impression that he was a strong man. He was both a servant to Priscilla and, like Subaru, a summoned man from another world.

And, of course, he had accompanied his master here. He inserted himself between Priscilla and Subaru.

Al: "Hey, you remember, right? It'd be hard to forget when a guy appears in the castle and does something dumb to embarrass himself in front of so many people. This is that guy. Princess even clutched her stomach when she had a good laugh about it."

Priscilla: "I've no impression whatsoever. By the way, Al. I would never laugh so hard that I'd need to clutch mine stomach. Do not belittle such an honorable presence as a casual commoner. Even though it's you, I won't be tolerant next time. I'll cut off your head."

Al: "You see, brother? Sorry I couldn't do anything. Maybe if you work hard to become better."

Subaru: "Give me a little more credit for the things I've done in the past year!"

Al soon gave up trying to jog his master's memory and instead turned to apologize to Subaru, his head bowed in apology. Subaru sighed, feeling like Al hadn't changed at all this past year.

Although, for the middle aged Al, undergoing a noticeable change would be fairly impossible.

Heinkel: "You're a little late, Priscilla-sama. How long were you going to make me act alone? I'd heard that you were supposed to be coming earlier..."

Priscilla: "Silence, commoner. You will dance as ordered to. Until I give the order to stop, you are expected to dance until you die. Those who misunderstand their duties or attempt to correct a mistake they believe I made are condemned to death."

Heinkel: "Urp..."

On the other hand, Heinkel, realizing that the atmosphere in the room had changed, immediately turned to Priscilla, who was standing behind him. However, any type of argumentative attitude taken toward Priscilla would be entirely futile.

Although Hankel was embarrassed by the uncompromising Priscilla, Subaru raised his gaze after listening to their conversation.

Subaru: "Priscilla. Did you bring that guy?"

Priscilla: "Listen, commoner. Just who allowed you to dare to speak to me without the proper honorific? Even the compassionate and generous I, when faced with such a helpless person, have a limit to my patience.

Al: "Princess."

Al called briefly to her as he saw the brutal look lodged in her eyes as she glared at Subaru. Then, Priscilla closed one eye and gave a slight breath.

Priscilla: "I don't know why, but my servant seems to have taken a liking to you. Al, who spared your life... no, there is no need to thank Al. Worship mine forgiveness. If you do so, I'll spare you."

Subaru: "...thanks for your generosity and consideration. Then, the answer to my question is..."

Priscilla: "If you're thinking that I brought this commoner here, then you would be correct. He is present at mine calling."

Subaru: "For what!"

Subaru raised his voice at the assertive Priscilla and questioned her purpose.

Uninvited guests upon uninvited guests had arrived. What kind of a plot was brewing here, Subaru needed to know.

However, in the face of Subaru's question, Priscilla merely tilted her head, and,

Priscilla: "Perhaps because I thought that it would make an interesting sight."

Subaru: "...an interesting sight?"

Priscilla: "That's right. Distorted family disputes, or the joy and sadness that comes from relationships.

Such ugly performances are so very exciting. In fact, do you see? The Sword Saint and the Sword Demon acted rather human. Such a sight is very rare.”

Subaru: “PRISCILLAA!”

That twisted, crooked perspective enraged Subaru.

As Priscilla said, Reinhard’s family dispute was hardly seen. And that sea of bitterness was hardly something that needed to be known.

If Heinkel hadn’t appeared, such a dark history would never have come to light. Even so, the grandfather and grandson had been trying to restore their relationship.

To have torn that—

Al: “Stop, brother. There’s no meaning to a fight happening here. Princess’s poor character isn’t a thing that’s been here for a day or two. Think of it as bad luck... the stars made a mistake.”

Subaru: “If you know your master has a poor character then you should be trying to lead her onto the right path. Just indulging her is irresponsible.”

Al reached for Subaru with his single arm, slowly shaking his head.

Since his hand was grabbing Subaru’s wrist, if anything happened, he wouldn’t be able to draw his sword on such short notice.

In other words, he was indicating that he had no wish whatsoever to fight.

Noticing this, Subaru took a long breath. He looked around and found that he was the only one who had acted on his impulsive anger.

Outsiders aside, even Julius and Ferris didn’t want to start anything.

Of course. This was a gathering for the throne candidates. No one wanted to entertain the possibility of anyone getting hurt here.

Subaru: “But, even in this case, no matter how much their hearts suffer...!”

Emilia: “Subaru...”

Emilia’s wavering eyes called to Subaru, who had been submerged in his fury. Feeling a tug on his sleeve, Subaru also knew that Beatrice was granting him her support.

Feeling the support of the two, Subaru was unable to bow his head.

Anastasia: “The vicious hound’s fury seems to have subsided. I’m wondering something... even though I

didn't send you an invite, how did you come to learn of this meeting?"

Priscilla seemed ready to take her leave and carry on her agenda. However, Anastasia took an opportunity to halt her.

Although Anastasia's tone was soft, she was quite alert.

Anastasia: "After all, a child running their mouth shouldn't be allowed to run free."

Priscilla: "Don't talk to me with that affectation, mine ears are decaying. I am more than capable of keeping up with a quick-thinking fox."

Anastasia: "Oh my. Could it be that you're neglecting to mock me as a 'commoner'?"

Priscilla: "If you haven't seen what you should have, then that level of ignorance places you in the same category as all of those other fools. Could it be that you are foolish enough as to want me to overlook you?"

The two were engaged in a battle of words — however, Priscilla may or may not have been deliberately provoking Anastasia's natural business focused rhetoric.

Anastasia leisurely caressed the scarf on her neck.

Anastasia: "Leaked information is quite worrying, you know."

Priscilla: "Anything that reaches someone else's ear has been leaked from a mouth lacking caution. And the more that's learned, the more holes that can be found. You're not the only one who observes and listens to others. It's just that kind of thing."

Anastasia: "Ah, but you see, I'd thought of you as someone who wouldn't engage in espionage to deal with the likes of us."

Priscilla: "A flying insect buzzes near mine ear. But what can I do without knowing its location? I would have to catch the insect using my eyes and ears which is precisely what I have done. Of course, the same holds true for you."

Priscilla's implication was that, similarly to dealing with flying insects, there was no need to miss any little piece of information.

Subaru held the same opinion with Anastasia. It was inconceivable that Priscilla had actually adopted the appropriate tactics and put them into practice against her enemy factions.

And the result of that negligence brought about the awful conditions today.

Felt: "That mister is Reinhard's father, yeah?"

Ignoring the conversation so far, a frivolous voice shifted the topic.

Her gaze sweeping across the room, the still eating Felt, her mouth soiled with sauces, she found Priscilla's gaze.

Felt: "After all, I've had some experiences at the capitol, so I caught what was going on from the conversation. I'm not really interested in this guy's family relations. Only, if Reinhard and the mister are together, that's different."

Priscilla: "...hhoo. If it isn't the little girl from the ghetto."

Felt: "Although I don't really care about him, I'm not unrelated to him. House Astrea's lands are in fact a lifeline for us. Except this guy hasn't actually given Reinhard the lands. The power of the family is still in the hands of that mister."

Next to Felt, Reinhard's cheeks stiffened slightly. Subaru caught on to Felt's concern.

As an orphan, Felt had nothing to her name, and was currently using Reinhard's lands as her base, where, bit by bit, she accumulated support.

However, those lands were not Felt's own. They were the assets of the Astrea family, and were on loan to her.

However, those weren't Reinhard's own territories. Even he had borrowed them.

Heinkel: "Heh. Looks like you've finally realized the seriousness of the situation, idiot."

Interjecting in their conversation was Heinkel, who wore an expression of pride and laughed with an, "as I expected". He looked as if he had been waiting for the topic to return to Reinhard and Felt.

Heinkel: "That's it. The Head of the Astrea family is still me. I haven't passed the position on to Reinhard, nor do I intend to pass it to him. After all, the cumbersome affairs of politics shouldn't burden our busy Sword Saint."

Felt: "As family head, you should be ashamed. When we went to the Astrea territories, only a handful of civil servants and maids with bloodshot eyes were maintaining it. Now that we've been restoring it, you actually dare to return to rule it?"

Heinkel: "Even if only in name, even if I'm irresponsible, the crown of family head is still mine. What's more, haven't my lands begun to improve? The people should be crying out in support of their lord now. I'm so loved by my people, I'm moved to the point of tears."

Heinkel relentlessly mocked Felt, who tried to swallow her rage.

At those vile and poisonous words, Subaru's vision turned white with rage. The room was filled with anger at the disgusting sight.

It was clear now. This man was completely abnormal.

Heinkel: “Your sense of crisis is right, Reinhard’s master. The Astrea territories are mine. However, I’ll never support you. You can clearly see who I’m supporting!”

Heinkel stood as if on a stage, expecting applause. He gestured toward Priscilla, a clear declaration that he would support a different candidate than his son and father.

Heinkel: “I’ve heard about your achievements in the past year, in the place of me, the lord. In addition to agreeing that is a great achievement, I will also say — it is time for you to take your leave of them now. If you understand it, hurry and hand it to me...”

Priscilla: “Hey, commoner.”

Heinkel: “—Ahh? What is it, Priscilla-sama? I’m doing something very important right now.”

Priscilla: “Shut up.”

The ensuing violence had to be seen to be believed.

Shortly after she’d finished speaking, Priscilla trust her fan at Heinkel, who had widened his eyes. Following the unfolding fan was a terrifying gust that slammed Heinkel’s slender body toward the ground with powerful momentum.

Heinkel’s eyes rolled back in his head, having lost his consciousness after the impact. But, Priscilla’s attack went one step further.

She kicked him into the air with a swipe of her foot, and swiftly reached her hand up to meet his body.

Al: “Princess, end your anger here. Otherwise, he’s going to die.”

Priscilla: “——”

Priscilla was stopped before she could deliver the final blow with her arm by Al, who had predicted her outrage. Priscilla then turned to her helmeted servant.

A crimson sword had appeared in her grabbed wrist. It had a Western style curve and narrow blade, but it was engraved with wave-like flames. Even at a glance, it was an unusual sword, having instantly materialized in, and disappearing from, Priscilla’s hand.

Witnessing that, Al slowly released Priscilla's wrist.

Al: “Really, spare me. You even drew your Yang Sword, that’s really not good for my hear—tgah!”

Priscilla: “That was very rude, Al. From whom did you receive permission to dare to touch mine flawless skin? You won my favor on a whim, so to defile mine body is a mere dream which lies at the end of a

dream.”

Priscilla forcefully slapped her freed hand on Al’s stomach. She exhaled loudly from her nose, then looked down at the pitiful Heinkel who was writhing on the ground.

After witnessing the brutal look in his eyes, he certainly deserved this. However, what Al said was also true.

Priscilla: “However, there is some truth to what you said. It would be excessive to kill him.”

Al: “If you think so... then I hope you’ll be more gentle with me in the future, gah.”

Priscilla: “Quiet. I am not a demon. I will allow you to lick mine feet later as a reward.”

Al: “Don’t put it like I get turned on by that!? It’ll lead to misunderstandings!”

Al, who had fallen to his knees after receiving a blow, desperately defended himself, but did not receive Priscilla’s attention. She gazed at Heinkel with her blood-red eyes, having calmed down for the time being, and snapped her fingers.

Priscilla: “Schultz. Move the commoner out of here. Although dull, he is seemingly a worthwhile recruit. Considering what that took, giving him up would be a shame.”

Schultz: “Yes, Priscilla-sama.”

In response to her call, another figure emerged from the hall.

It appeared that a child who was many years from being fully grown had been waiting in the corridor.

He had pink fluffy curls, a slim, feminine figure, a fair face, and a high voice which indicated that he had yet to reach puberty. Seeing an undeveloped child dressed in a butler’s uniform felt unethical.

A young boy who, if going solely by appearances, looked to be around Beatrice’s age.

Schultz: “I apologize, Heinkel-sama.”

To the unconscious Heinkel, Schultz took Heinkel’s feet and began to struggle to pull him outside. Of course, it was very unreasonable to expect a child to carry Heinkel out. However, Schultz made no complaint about Priscilla’s order, and at the same time he treated Heinkel with an attitude of respect.

Al: “Schultz-kun always tries to be brave and strong, no matter what kind of an order he receives. Princess needs to remember to praise him later.”

Priscilla: “That’s only natural. He is under mine employ and serves me wholeheartedly. That undefined status isn’t simply a foolish and reckless loyalty. Later, I’ll allow him to lick mine feet.”

Al: "Schultz-kun wouldn't realize that you're joking and would tearfully do exactly as you request. Please give him a more normal reward."

Priscilla: "Hmm. Then perhaps I'll give him the honor of being held by mine body as I sleep."

Al: "...well, that shouldn't be a problem. But now I want to take his place."

That was the listless dialogue between Priscilla and Al as they watched Schultz and Heinkel leave.

Finally, all of the outsiders had been removed. Now, only the members of the Royal Election's factions remained.

Felt: "So, what's going to happen with that guy? You seriously want to drive us away from the Astrea territory to weaken us?"

Priscilla: "You do not have to treat that commoner's words with such gravity. Weren't you responsible for the revitalization of that territory? If the lord returns to his house intending to drive you away then who will follow him? Although the people are foolish and ignorant, they are not heartless fools who forget their grace. If you make a large wave, a correspondingly large wave will return to you. He won't be able to summon any waves."

Felt: "...then, why was that guy invited?"

Priscilla: "It's already been said, hasn't it? I found the situation interesting. Sooner or later, all I want will be in mine hands. That is an established fact. In that case, only mine route will vary. And that route is precisely decided by me. To the end, I brought him in as a toy to kill time."

No matter what happens the outcome can not be changed.

The absolute confidence Priscilla held transcended common sense and unreasonably imposed her will upon the world. The only way to deal with it would be to give up and bow down, or to fight it with a similar attitude. And so,

Candidates: "_____"

Here, four candidates met her gaze without hesitation in an expression of confrontation. Accept those glares, Priscilla gave a hearty, delighted laugh.

Priscilla: "Excellent. The outcome has been decided but mine journey will naturally have its share of happy excitement. Mine self has decided that you are all a cut above the commoners. And, once you have become worthy of being mine opponent... then, mine self will of course welcome you with my full capabilities."

You are not yet worthy of being my enemies, was the judgement Priscilla had just made.

No, she had said so long ago. She still treated Emilia as an insect. She didn't think of them as enemies at

all.

Then,

Felt: “I’ll be sure to make you cry and regret that arrogance.”

Felt's declaration was exactly the will of all the occupants of the room.

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