**Chapter 116: Second Princess Celsia**

Armored Knight.

She saved my life after a life-and-death battle in a goblin nest shortly after I was transported on the first floor of the Labyrinth.

With the help of the healing potions, antidotes, and maps she handed me, I was able to survive the treacherous Labyrinth as a commoner.

It was a powerful memory that I'll never forget, and I still remember it vividly to this day.

‘No wonder I even did a naked dogeza to express my gratitude.’

Well, it was more of an accident.

Technically, the armored knight had seen me naked before Diana did.

Anyway,

The memory of the armored knight was still vivid, and I could still remember her voice clearly.

“⋯Armored Knight?”

The sickly-looking girl in front of me had the same voice as the armored knight.

However, the mood was slightly different.

-Hmph.

The girl's body twitched at the sound of my voice, and her eyes turned to me once more.

In a wall of green that blended harmoniously with her luxurious blonde hair.

Rattling⋯

The girl's eyes began to tremble like an earthquake as she looked at me.

She immediately bowed her head deeply.

As I went down the exposed crown of her head, her reddened earlobes were revealed.

“Ah, ah, ah, no, ugh, ah, no, that’s not it⋯?”

A very different tone of voice from the armored knight who had been so proud, smirking, confident, and yet strangely coy.

It wasn't just that she spoke slowly, it was that she kept stuttering and chewing her tongue.

Even if you brought a nerd who couldn't talk to anyone at school, he would speak more fluently than this girl.

'It's not just the way she speaks, it's the height difference.’

The armored knight wore heavy, full-plate armor that covered her face as well as her joints.

She was about my height. At least two meters tall.

If it weren't for her bizarrely large chest armor, and her voice, which was ecstatically beautiful to listen to, I could have easily mistaken her for a man.

I stared down at the girl, her head bowed, unable to make eye contact with me.

‘⋯Eh?’

I can't be sure because I'm sitting down, but I'm guessing she's no taller than 150cm even with her feet up.

Her meager breasts barely accentuated her femininity, which only looked like a snort compared to the huge chest armor.

On the other hand, her thighs and buttocks, which were slightly pressed by sitting in a wheelchair, were full.

Overall, it was a female body optimized for the field, so it definitely had a girlish charm, but⋯

The impression was very different from the armored knight I thought of.

‘Is it someone else?’

She can't even wear that kind of armor with her body.

“I, I don't know, I'm not an armored knight or anything⋯ I don't know⋯”

The girl stammered awkwardly, denying my question.

Was it just my imagination that their voices sounded the same?

But I didn't give up easily.

“Then, are you the White Royal Knight?”

“⋯⋯!”

The White Royal Knight, that's what the armored knight who didn't want to reveal her name called herself.

It was a pseudonym with the sensibility of a second grader, but the girl's eyes widened ever so slightly when she heard it.

She immediately avoided my gaze.

“⋯⋯Such a thing. Mo, I don't know⋯”

I wondered if she hadn't heard of it, or if she knew but was pretending not to.

I couldn't tell because she was too introspective.

Besides, it didn't seem like a good idea to push her further when she was already saying no.

Much to my dismay, I took a step back from the girl.

“I'm sorry I kept asking. You sound exactly like someone I know.”

“⋯⋯”

“I owe her my life, I'm very grateful to her, but I must be mistaken. Oh, thank you for the helmet.”

I was about to take the helmet from the girl's hand when she spoke up.

“⋯That, that⋯”

“What?”

“⋯That, that's what I did in hopes of ⋯something⋯ I don't think so⋯”

“⋯⋯”

“I, uh, don't, uh, need to, uh, go, go, go, go looking for, uh, repay the favor.”

I frowned at the girl's rambling.

What was she talking about all of a sudden?

Puzzled, I tried to interpret the meaning of her words.

“The 2nd Princess has made her appearance on the 1st floor!!!”

“I, really?! Princess Celsia?”

“Isn't this the first time the 2nd Princess has made an appearance here?”

“She hasn't been out in public for a few years now, and she's very secretive.”

“I've heard she’s very tall.”

“It's not just her height, it's also her, uh, woman's symbol⋯ Hmmmm. Let's go!”

There was a great commotion around me as everyone rushed downstairs with great excitement.

They were so eager to meet the princess that they didn't care about their surroundings.

-bang!

In the age of barbarism, it was more important to take care of one's own interests than to consider a girl in a wheelchair.

“Kaak?!”

The girl's wheelchair crashed into the crowd of people coming and going, but very few people cared.

The girl stiffened, unable to do anything about it, and gripped the wheelchair tightly.

At that rate, she was going to hit her face on the floor and hurt herself badly.

I ran straight to the girl.

I grabbed the handle of the tilting wheelchair to steady myself, and then caught her with one hand as her hips separated and she fell.

Her scanty breasts and light weight pressed against my arm.

“Are you okay?”

I picked her up safely. Luckily, she wasn't too badly hurt.

“⋯a⋯”

The girl in my arms slumped to the ground.

Her body seemed to relax as the situation calmed down.

She hugged her legs and looked at me with a dazed face.

I looked at her, too.

As I felt myself being sucked into the green glowing wall, the status window popped up.

[Celsia de ■■■■■ LV.5■]

[Celsia's current Blessings and Curses: 3]

[◆ ■■ ■■ He■ Magic■■ Blessing]

- You gain immense magical talent in proportion to your existing physical abilities.

– Magic control power is permanently increased. You acquire chantless casting.

A censored status window pops up with brief information.

She has a blessing that is quite high level and looks quite deceptive.

She rolled well in the Labyrinth.

'A blessing that sounds a lot like Jeremy's.'

Jeremy lost two centimeters of something that looked more like a clitoris than a dick and gained the experience bonus blessing of becoming a woman.

The girl in front of me had gained magical talent in exchange for physical abilities.

My gaze went straight to her name.

‘Celsia?’

Didn't someone say the second princess was named Celsia, or was it a simple homonym?

“Can you get up?”

“⋯Ah. Uh, umm.”

Recovering her senses at my question, Celsia tried to stand up on her own, but she fell back down again and again.

It was as if her strength had been knocked out of her.

“Do you mind if I help you?”

After a moment's hesitation, Celsia nodded, hanging her head in embarrassment.

Swoosh!

“HEEEEEE!”

As I slipped my arm between her legs⋯between her thighs and calves⋯to lift her up, she choked out a cute little squeal.

I carefully lifted her up.

She's light. Maybe 50 kilograms?

I could easily lift her with one hand.

Settled into the wheelchair, Celsia gingerly lowered her head.

“I did what I had to do.”

No matter how used to the cold, ruthless world I’ve become, I wasn't so depraved as to turn on a frail girl in a wheelchair.

“⋯Natural, work⋯”

Celsia heard me and nodded, her face blank. I then asked her.

“By the way, what was that thing you said earlier-?”

“Oh, that, that, that, that⋯? Just forget about it⋯! That, that, and this!”

Celsia stammered and held the helm out to me.

She held on to it even as she fell.

I smiled bitterly and took the helm.

-Clunk.

When I placed the helmet on my head and looked around.

Celsia had vanished without a trace.

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Inside a carriage with the royal mark.

“Huhhhhh⋯”

A super-high-level magic that can be used only once every six months, transcending dimensions.

After using the teleportation, Celsia immediately laid down on the plush cushions.

The sensations were strangely dull.

Fatigue overtook her, and she wrapped several blankets around herself.

Getting some rest was more important than fixing her wrinkled dress.

With her face buried in the blankets, Celsia muttered quietly.

“It was dangerous⋯”

The voice that emerged did not tremble or bow with anxiety.

On the contrary, it was filled with a strange dignity.

The enemy of the hikikomori in the corner of the room is fancy banquets and crowded people. Since there is no one around, even his voice does not tremble.

*TLN: A form of severe social withdrawal, called* ***hikikomori****, has been frequently described in Japan and is characterized by adolescents and young adults who become recluses in their parents' homes, unable to work or go to school for months or years.*

“I never thought I'd see him at a banquet.”

The young man she had saved from the labyrinth.

It had been half a year ago, but the memory of that day was still clear.

She didn't know his name or his age.

His voice, his face, the way he bowed naked to her, and the monstrous thing wiggling frighteningly in his pants, were all burned into Celsia's mind.

'Still, it's good to see that you've grown up well⋯'

She was worried that he would get into trouble because of his face, and she even advised him, but if he can get into the Academy's banquet hall, he must be doing well.

She was forced to go to a banquet she didn't want to go to, but she was glad she met him.

“⋯I wish we could have met in the Labyrinth.”

Celsia felt melancholy.

She had looked forward to meeting him, but she hadn't wanted to meet him in her true form outside the Labyrinth.

The real her was so meager and shabby so she shook her head desperately at his searching words.

She wasn't ready for it yet but a rush of regret washed over her.

If only she had admitted it⋯ if only things had been different.

Just as she was thinking about it, there was a commotion outside the carriage.

“It was an honor to see you! Your Highness, Second Princess!”

“Next time, we will organize a more perfect graduation ceremony!”

The academy dignitaries and the Dean's flattery were like scabs nearly settled in her ears.

Celia cleared her throat and muttered in a small voice.

“Haha. Okay. I was expecting that.”

Her voice echoed softly inside the carriage and loudly and proudly outside.

After the chorus of admiring voices died down, the door opened outside the carriage.

- clang.

A two-meter white armored figure slid through the door with ease and sat down in front of Celsia.

““You may rest.””

Celsia's voice overlapped with the voice that protruded from the armor's throat.

-snap.

The armor sagged as if a thread had snapped at Celsia's command.

Celsia pulled off the armor's helm and where a face should have been, there was nothing.

It wasn't just the face. The inside of the armor, where human flesh should have been, was literally an empty tin can.

This armor was remotely controlled by Celsia.

Or, more accurately, the armor she once wore.

Sighing, Celsia opened a subspace and pulled out a piece of paper.

It was written by Serif, a holy priestess of the temple who had once been a member of the same party, and contained the details of a blessing.

[◆ The blessing of the sloppy wizard]

- Lose your existing physical abilities and gain immense magical talent.

- J cup to A cup, 198cm to 143cm, increased magical control and the acquisition of chantless casting.

P.S. How does it feel to go from looking down to looking up every day? Phew.

-Sigh.

It was a blessing that made her sigh no matter how many times she saw it, but its effect was so good that she couldn't easily get rid of it.

She's in a wheelchair because it's awkward to walk because of the mismatch with her old body, but that's not a big deal.

The biggest problem is that this blessing has also affected her personality.

She became extremely timid around people and couldn't speak properly.

She literally became a sham.

However, once the barrier was lowered through the armor, she was able to communicate as before.

It's been five years since she’s been holed up in a corner of the royal palace, controlling the armor.

Fortunately, few people know the tiny creature she is now, but one day she would have to make a choice.

‘Do I stay this tiny, insignificant creature for the rest of my life or regain my original body?’

“⋯Haahhhh.”

Celsia turned her gaze away from the window, worried about her future.

Soon, the banquet was over.