

Chapter 2 Part 11

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I had anticipated that things would turn out this way.

From the moment I sat at the same table as Princess Valtrune, everything had been going according to her plans.

"...Very well. I'll join forces with you, Princess Valtrune."

On this day, I, Ixion Leto Reshfeld, the fourth prince of the Kingdom of Reshfeld, decided to renounce my loyalty to the Kingdom.

As a result of discussions with her, I promised to side with the Empire in the upcoming war between the Kingdom and the Empire.

The military power of the Valugan Empire is world-class.

The Kingdom also has a substantial military, but I cannot imagine it defeating the Empire.

And most importantly,

"Thank you, Prince Ixion."

I cannot bear the thought of being an enemy of Princess Valtrune, who is far more intelligent than my brothers.

"No, I simply chose the side that seemed most beneficial to me."

"Even so, I'm pleased."

If I had to add something, her words were also quite persuasive.

'I promise to recommend you as the new king of the Kingdom, should the Empire win the war between the two countries.'

Hearing that, how could I not be moved?

It was clear that the relations between the two countries would break down now that her engagement to my brother Yuri had been annulled.

Although I had not heard about the engagement being annulled, if it had been officially dissolved with my father's consent, then it was irreversible.

—Even if I were to serve this kingdom, my status as the fourth prince would surely make me a hindrance.

I would probably be sent to the front lines when war breaks out.

I want to avoid the worst possible future of being *'used until I die'*.

On the other hand, the benefits of siding with the Empire are significant.

The Imperial Princess is offering to make me the next king. I find her far more trustworthy than my brothers Sein and Yuri.

Additionally, the likelihood of being forced into a difficult battle on the front lines seems low.

She said I can do as I please, as long as I cooperate when necessary.

—There was no way I could turn down such favorable terms.

"Thank you again, Prince Ixion. I appreciate your wise decision."

Wise decision, huh...? She bowed her head as she said this.

I am the fourth prince with a dubious standing, lacking prospects for a free life or the throne. But because of this unfortunate status, she reached out to me.

She must have thought I would be easy to pull in.

I think it is a good judgment. In fact, I have decided to lend her my hand. I am well aware that I am an easy pawn to obtain.

With that, I asked her,

"Sister Valtrune, what should I do first?"

Once I had decided to lend her my hand, there was no turning back.

"Um, Prince Ixion, as I've been saying, I am no longer in a position to be called '*sister*'..."

"No, if possible, may I continue to call you that?"

"....."

Either way, we will eventually be at odds with the Kingdom. As long as I stand by her, I intend to continue respecting her as a sister, not bound by blood. So, I would like to keep calling her that.

This is also a symbol of my resolve.

"Alright. You can call me whatever you like."

"Thank you, Sister."

The topic is then shifted to what I should do.

"Prince Ixion, I have a request for you right away. Soon, the Kingdom will demand the transfer of the Dyrst region, which is part of the Empire's territory. Then they would invade the Empire. ...At that time, can you delay the invasion of the Kingdom's forces, even just a little...? Is that possible?"

To make her plan work, it is essential for me to have some influence over the military. It is uncertain how much I, being the fourth prince, can do, but it is going to be challenging.

However, without hesitation, I nodded my head.

"Understood. I'll do something about it!"

It was only natural to give my all to the side I had bet on. I vowed to exert an effort I had never applied before for her sake.

The life I was supposed to live as the fourth prince took a significant step forward.