

Chapter 2 Part 4



After a while, a staff member from the academy came to the classroom where the students were gathered.

First, the students were congratulated on their admission and were told that the mage who would be in charge of teaching them would explain the details of their unit outline at a later date.

The staff member also explained that while enrolled in the academy, they will live in the student dormitory attached to the academy.

A detailed explanation of life at the academy was given, such as that the students are free to spend their holidays as they please. However, a separate application is required to return to their home country or any other distant destination.

The staff member then led the students to the student dormitory —

The moment they saw the room assignments, Reid and Elria froze at the same time.

“Elria.”

“...Yeah.”

“It seems like we're going to be in the same room.”

“...Yeah.”

“Usually, they separate male and female students for this kind of thing, right?”

“...Yeah.”

“I wonder what we're having for dinner tonight.”

“...Yeah.”

Elria's thoughts had come to a complete halt. She had become like an idiot who could only nod her head in a daze.

With no other choice, Reid calls out to a nearby staff member.

“Excuse me, but Elria and I are in the same room...”

“What? Yes, I was informed by the headmaster that you two are engaged...”

The staff member tilts his head in confusion, wondering what the problem is.

“There are also nobles who are engaged or married when they enter our academy, and in such cases, we usually arrange for them to share a room unless there are special circumstances...”

“I see, that makes sense...”

If their relationship is more than an engagement, rumors about their relationship will spread, and if rumors about them being unhappy together began to circulate, it could tarnish the reputation of both of their families.

In that case, it would be better to stay in the same room from the beginning.

“Thank you very much for your explanation. Now, if you'll excuse me.”

After quickly ending the conversation, Reid headed for Elria, who was waiting for him.

“W-Was it a mistake...?”

“No, it wasn't a mistake. It seems like they have a policy of putting engaged students in the same room.”

“Mm... I'd feel safer with Reid than with anyone else, so it's fine.”

With that, Elria breathes a sigh of relief. From the looks of it, she didn't seem to dislike the idea of sharing a room with Reid.

“Well, let's just go put our stuff in the room for now.”

“Y-Yeah...”

While looking at the key and the map given to them, they headed toward the assigned room.

The two found the room they were looking for and entered to check it out. It seems a little cramped since they have been living in the Caldwen family mansion until just recently, but there is more than enough space for two people to live together. The room is equipped with toilet and bath facilities and a complete set of magic tools for heating and cooling and other miscellaneous cooking-related magic tools.

However, a dining hall for meals and a large bathhouse are attached to the dormitory. In addition, the academy hired people to collect and wash clothes, so nobles who relied on servants would hardly have the opportunity to use them.

Next, they entered the bedroom and looked around. The bedroom is well furnished with a wardrobe and a dressing table.

However —— there is only one bed.

After staring at the bed for a while, Reid nodded greatly.

“I see. Well, it's spacious enough, don't you think?”

“Y-Yeah... I think it will be fine for the two of us to sleep together.”

“Just to make sure, are you okay with sleeping in the same bed?”

“I-It... it won't be an issue!”

For some reason, Elria spoke in a respectful tone.

“Reid, are you okay with sleeping with me...?”

“I don't mind. I'll sleep like a log when I go to bed anyway.”

“I... I might toss and turn while asleep.”

“You have a small build, so I don't think I'd wake up even if you bumped into me.”

“...Also, I'm not a morning person.”

“I will wake you up.”

“...And sometimes I become lethargic when I wake up.”

“You're troublesome, even when you're sleeping.”

“.....I'm sorry.”

Elria looks down to hide her embarrassed face. She has had some brooding expression since just now, probably because she thought sleeping in the same bed would cause him a lot of trouble.

“But... I don't want to be alone, so I want to sleep together with Reid...”

Looking up at Reid, Elria purses her lips.

Seeing Elria's face, Reid patted her head lightly with a wry smile.

“Don't worry about it. We're going to be living together from now on, so if you don't say anything about things that bother you or things you're not good at, you'll end up getting more tired. If it comes to that, it's better for me to know.”

“.....Really?”

“Yeah. So go ahead and tell me anything you want.”

“Okay... then let's make a promise.”

With that, Elria held out her pinky finger.

“Reid should do the same, too. Please don't hesitate to let me know if you need anything.”

“Yes. No holds barred.”

When their pinky fingers intertwined, Elria finally smiled.

“Well, we can talk about other details over dinner.”

“Mm... then, shall we go to the dining hall?”

“No, there's a chance someone might hear us, and it could affect Caldwen's reputation... so, let's just make our own dinner in the room for today.”

Reid headed for the kitchen and checked the contents of the refrigerated magic tool and the cooking utensils. Not only drinks but all kinds of ingredients were available in the refrigerated magic tool. They were probably restocked during room cleaning.

As Reid was thinking about this, Elria suddenly crouched down next to him.

“Reid, can you cook?”

“Well, if it's something simple. I sometimes cooked when I was camping out.”

“Mm... that makes me nostalgic.”

Elria nodded, perhaps remembering the old days.

“I used to hunt and eat rabbits when I found them on the battlefield.”

“Oh, you were like that, too?”

“Yeah. In the beginning, I was treated as a weak sorcerer, not a mage, and was treated not so differently from an ordinary soldier, so I ate a lot of fruits, nuts, and wildflowers.”

“Oh, yeah, that's certainly true. If we tried to boil water, the smoke would give away our position to enemy soldiers, so instead of water, I would squeeze fruits to rehydrate.”

“I know, right!! It was delicious, but if you spilled the juice, your clothes would get very dirty.”

“Oh, the military uniform in your country was white... Mine was black so the stains weren't as noticeable, but there were times when I didn't notice the stains from the juice, and you found out where I was by smelling it...”

“I remember that! I was downwind, so I could smell it!”

As they reminisced, Elria became excited and joined in on the conversation.

While talking, Reid continued with the preparations... Elria drew closer as if to snuggle up to him.

“Since we're here, why don't we have a simple meal like we used to? Like meat with just salt sprinkled on it, or vegetables boiled in water.”

“...Are we really going to eat that now?”

“It might taste better with the nostalgia factor. Besides, I can help with that, too.”

Elria deftly tied up her hair, rolled up her sleeves, and took out a knife.

“I'll cut the vegetables.”

"Okay. I'll start boiling the meat."

"Mm, I'll leave the seasoning to you."

"I remember back then we just sprinkled salt on everything."

"...After fighting and coming back exhausted, something salty tasted really good."

As they chatted casually, the two of them stood in the kitchen and continued with the cooking.

At that moment, Elria muttered,

"...This may be the first time I've cooked with someone since I was a child."

"That would be when you were living in the elf village, right?"

"Yes. I remember my mother praising me a little at the time."

Elria continued to gently chop the vegetables with a matter-of-fact face.

"But... other than that, I wasn't really praised for anything else."

While stopping her hands, Elria mumbled as if confessing her innermost thoughts.

Looking at her, Reid lightly placed his hand on Elria's head.

"But your name is still being praised even after a thousand years have passed, so you must have been really respected."

".....Yeah."

"If your mother knew that, I'm sure she would have praised you, too."

"Yeah."

As Elria replied with a short word, a small smile appeared on her lips.

Perhaps this was a common story. Those who are called geniuses are not understood by others. Because they see and think differently, it is considered heretical to others. They reject what they do not understand and try to ostracize it.

It's just like — —

"What were you like as a child, Reid?"

Elria looks straight into Reid with her deep sea-colored eyes.

After gazing into those eyes for a while, Reid lightly shakes his head.

"I don't know. It was a long time ago, and all I remember is being alone."

While staring at the cooker, Reid vaguely recalls some memories.

"My body has become too strong now, but when I was a kid, I was weak. I used to get sick and stay in bed all the time, which really irritated my parents."

He does not resent his parents for that now. Because he understands that it was simply the way things were back then.

Reid's birthplace, Altein, was a country where the gap between the rich and the poor was severe. Also, because they were constantly fighting to expand their territory, it was customary for many children born in impoverished, rural villages like Reid's to leave the village and become a soldier.

However, Reid, who was physically weak, had no chance of becoming a soldier. His mother, on the other hand, was in a situation where she felt obligated to care for him. As the situation continued... Reid eventually reached a turning point.

"I was frustrated, so I decided to somehow make my body strong. Whenever I recovered from a fever, I would exercise and train my body. Then, I would get sick again, and my parents would give me unpleasant looks... I repeated that kind of thing over and over again, and that's how I became who I am now."

"So you became physically strong like you are now?"

"That's right. I was overjoyed like crazy. Not only could I run around outside like the other kids, but I could also become stronger than anyone else in the village."

It was not just a sense of oppression of not being able to do the obvious. Being able to finally meet his mother's expectations, which had been troubling him, was also a big factor.

His mother had only expressed complaints about Reid, but for Reid, who was still young, she was still his mother regardless. Reid believed without a doubt that if he became stronger than anyone else, he would receive praise.

"But — I became too strong."

The strength he obtained was not limited to the children of his age group. Despite being only seven years old, Reid had become stronger than any adult in the village. Seeing such a young Reid, the villagers unanimously said, *'Reid is not a human child, but a monster's child.'*

Thus, Reid was disliked by the villagers, and his mother, who was accused of giving birth to a monster, became more hostile towards Reid and began to see him not as her own child but as a 'monster'. She then handed Reid over to the mercenary group that was passing through, as if driving him away.

At first, the members of the mercenary group sympathized with Reid's circumstances as a child and treated him kindly, angry at his mother and the village people for their cruel treatment.

However, it was only for a short time.

After seeing Reid, a child, overwhelming enemy soldiers with brutal violence and always returning alive from dangerous battlefields, even those in the mercenary group who had considered him a comrade began to call him a 'monster'... and eventually, no one approached him.

"After leaving the village, I continued to work as a mercenary, hoping that there might be others like me, but in the end, there was not a single one, and I became known as a 'Hero' for my war exploits. Life is truly unpredictable."

This is just one of the common stories.

To be superior to others means to be outside the framework of being human.

And so, the two of them had fallen out of the big picture.

As Elria was viewed as a genius with outstanding intelligence, Reid became an outcast due to being the strongest human. It could be said that it was an ironic story that the two of them were praised as the 'Hero' and 'Sage'.

Thinking that way, Reid smiled with self-derision, but then —

".....Hey, what are you doing?"

"Mm... It's nothing to worry about...!"

Elria, who had finished cutting the vegetables, was leaning over.

Seeing her like that, Reid recalled the time he took the examination and leaned forward slightly. Elria then put her hand on his head.

"Reid is amazing."



"...Huh?"

"You're really amazing."

"What's gotten into you all of a sudden?"

"Because you praised me earlier, I'm returning the favor by praising you."

As she said that, Elria continued to gently stroke Reid's head.

"I think it's really nice to be praised by someone. But Reid has been alone for so long that you haven't realized that yet."

Then, with a kind smile, she spoke again —

"— But now, you're not alone because I'm here."

Yes, she admonished him.

"So, I want to praise Reid a lot when you do your best from now on."

"...I see."

"Also, I'm more like an older sister to Reid because of my age, so I think I'm the right person for the job."

"No, you're younger than me, aren't you?"

"That's after I was reincarnated. If you include my previous life, I'm definitely the older sister."

Elria puffed out her chest proudly. But despite her chest, her facial features and behavior were clearly far from the atmosphere of an 'older sister'.

However —

"Thanks for praising me, big sis."

"Yeah, I'll praise you a lot."

As they exchanged such a conversation, the two of them stroked each other's heads.