



# ASCENDANCE OF A BOOKWORM

I'll do anything to  
become a librarian!

Part 4 Founder of the Royal  
Academy's So-Called  
Library Committee Vol. 9

Author: **Miya Kazuki**

Illustrator: **You Shiina**



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## Cast of Characters

## Summary of Part Three:

Rozemyne was exceedingly busy after becoming a noble, with her work as the High Bishop and the archduke's adopted daughter having left her with very little spare time. She finished the printing press, sold karuta and playing cards in the castle, and made steady progress in her aim to proliferate books. The atmosphere became a lot more tense when Georgine visited, however. Wilfried fell victim to a political trap, and Charlotte was kidnapped, during which Rozemyne almost died of poisoning. Rozemyne was soaked in a jureve to recover, but when she awoke, two whole years had passed.

### Rozemyne

The protagonist. After growing a little, she now looks like an eight-year-old, but she still hasn't changed on the inside. She will do anything she can to read books in the Royal Academy, which she is due to attend as a third-year come winter.



### Ehrenfest's Archduke Candidates



### Wilfried

Sylvester's oldest son, Rozemyne's older brother. Soon to be a third-year at the Royal Academy.

### Charlotte

Sylvester's daughter, Rozemyne's little sister. Soon to be a second-year at the Royal Academy.

### Melchior

Sylvester's son. Rozemyne's little brother.

### Rozemyne's Guardians



### Ferdinand

Sylvester's half-brother and Rozemyne's guardian.

### Sylvester

The archduke of Ehrenfest. He adopted Rozemyne, making him her adoptive father.

### Florenca

Sylvester's wife and the mother of his three children. Rozemyne's adoptive mother.

### Karstedt

The commander of Ehrenfest's knights. Rozemyne's noble father.

### Elvira

Karstedt's first wife. Rozemyne's noble mother.

### Bonifatius

Sylvester's uncle, Karstedt's father, and Rozemyne's grandfather.

**Rihyarda**

Head attendant. An archnoble who cared for Ferdinand, Sylvester, and Karstedt when they were kids.

**Lieseleta**

Angelica's little sister and a sixth-year apprentice medattendant.

**Brunhilde**

A fifth-year apprentice archattendant.

**Hartmut**

An archscholar and the new High Priest. Otilie's son.

**Roderick**

A third-year apprentice medscolar. Gave his name.

**Philine**

A third-year apprentice layscholar.

**Cornelius**

Karstedt's son and an archknight.

**Leonore**

A sixth-year apprentice archknight.

**Judithe**

A fourth-year apprentice medknight.

**Damuel**

A layknight.

**Angelica**

A medknight. Lieseleta's older sister.

**Rozemyne's Retainers****Otilie**

Hartmut's mother and an archattendant.

**Rozemyne's Personnel**

Ella.....Personal chef.

Hugo.....Personal chef.

Rosina.....Personal musician.

**Ehrenfest's Nobility**

Eckhart.....Ferdinand's guard knight. Karstedt's son.

Justus.....Ferdinand's head attendant and scholar. Rihyarda's son.

Oswald.....Wilfried's head attendant.

Aurelia.....Lamprecht's wife.

Nikolaus.....The son of Karstedt's second wife.

Matthias.....A fifth-year apprentice medknight in the former Veronica faction.

Laurenz.....A fourth-year apprentice medknight in the former Veronica faction.

Grausam.....Giebe Gerlach.

Veronica.....Sylvester's mother. Currently detained.

Gabriele.....Veronica's mother. A former member of the Ahrensbach archducal family.

Heidemarie.....Eckhart's late wife.

## Nobles Elsewhere

### Anastasius

\*\*\*\*\*The Sovereignty's second prince.

### Hildebrand

\*\*\*\*\*The Sovereignty's third prince.

### Eglantine

\*\*\*\*\*A member of the Klassenberg archducal family.

### Lestilaut

\*\*\*\*\*A sixth-year archduke candidate from Dunkelfelger.

### Clarissa

\*\*\*\*\*A sixth-year apprentice archscholar from Dunkelfelger.

### Heisshitze

\*\*\*\*\*Ferdinand's (self-proclaimed) ditter comrade.

### Adolphine

\*\*\*\*\*A member of the Drewanchel archducal family.

### Georgine

\*\*\*\*\*Ahrensbach's first wife. Sylvester's older sister.

### Detlinde

\*\*\*\*\*A sixth-year archduke candidate from Ahrensbach. Georgine's daughter.

### Letizia

\*\*\*\*\*An archduke candidate from Ahrensbach.

### Sergius

\*\*\*\*\*An archattendant from Ahrensbach. Ferdinand's retainer.

### Raimund

\*\*\*\*\*A fourth-year apprentice medscholar from Ahrensbach. Hirschur's disciple.

## Lower City Merchants

Benno\*\*\*\*\*Head of the Plantin Company.

Mark\*\*\*\*\*Benno's right-hand man.

Damian\*\*\*\*\*The guildmaster's grandson. Joined the Plantin Company.

Lutz\*\*\*\*\*A leherl of the Plantin Company.

Otto\*\*\*\*\*Head of the Gilberta Company.

Corinna\*\*\*\*\*A seamstress for the Gilberta Company.

Gustav\*\*\*\*\*Guildmaster of the Merchant's Guild.

Freida\*\*\*\*\*Gustav's granddaughter.

Leise\*\*\*\*\*A chef working for the Othmar Company.

Zack\*\*\*\*\*A smith. Comes up with ideas.

Heidi\*\*\*\*\*Ink craftswoman.

Renate\*\*\*\*\*Otto and Corinna's daughter.

Knut\*\*\*\*\*Otto and Corinna's son.

## Other

### Fran

\*\*\*\*\*In charge of the High Bishop's chambers.

### Zahm

\*\*\*\*\*In charge of the High Bishop's chambers.

### Nicola

\*\*\*\*\*A cook who helps in the High Bishop's chambers.

### Monika

\*\*\*\*\*In charge of the High Bishop's chambers.

### Gil

\*\*\*\*\*In charge of the workshop.

### Fritz

\*\*\*\*\*In charge of the workshop.

### Wilma

\*\*\*\*\*In charge of the orphanage.

### Lothar

\*\*\*\*\*Works in the High Priest's chambers.

### Ymir

\*\*\*\*\*Works in the High Priest's chambers.

### Egmont

\*\*\*\*\*A blue priest.

### Kampfer

\*\*\*\*\*A blue priest.

### Konrad

\*\*\*\*\*An orphan. Philine's little brother.

### Dirk

\*\*\*\*\*An orphan. Delia's little brother.

### Delia

\*\*\*\*\*Rozemyne's former apprentice attendant.

### Bertram

\*\*\*\*\*A child of the former Veronica faction.

### Lily

\*\*\*\*\*A gray shrine maiden who gave birth to Egmont's child.



**Gunther**

Myne's dad. Gate commander.



**Effa**

Myne's mom. Dyer.



**Tuuli**

Myne's older sister. Hairpin craftswoman.



**Kamil**

Myne's younger brother.

## Lower City Family

## Temple

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# Prologue

“I pray that you live well with the divine protection of the gods until Dregarnuhr the Goddess of Time weaves the threads of our fates together once again.”

“Indeed. I pray that her weaving is smooth and swift.”

Georgine climbed into her carriage with a smirk, then left with the rest of the Ahrensbach caravan. Traveling along their flanks were members of the Ehrenfest Knight’s Order, who would be accompanying the group until they exited the city.

Even after the carriages faded into the distance, Florencia couldn’t shake Georgine’s final smirk from her thoughts, nor could she forget the “We will meet again soon” she had chosen as her farewell. Her hands went from being clasped together politely to completely white-knuckled as a shiver ran down her spine.

*Truly, what a discomfoting smile.*

During her previous visit to Ehrenfest, Georgine had given her mother Veronica a similar smile while visiting her in the Ivory Tower. The hunting tournament had followed soon after, during which nobles had deceived Florencia’s son Wilfried into entering the Ivory Tower himself. After hearing about the nobles who had moved to save Veronica and the series of events from her son’s perspective, Florencia couldn’t help but feel that Georgine was responsible—that she had been pulling the strings in the shadows all along. Naturally, she had not a shred of proof, but she couldn’t shake the fear that something else was going to happen.

*Even Sylvester is on guard...*

Florencia looked to her husband, who had been keeping a very close eye on Georgine for the duration of her visit. He had treated the woman with what could only be described as superficial politeness—in stark contrast to how he behaved with his other older sister Constanze, who had married into Frenbeltag. It had taken Florencia by surprise during their last visit.

Knowing that the carriages were out of sight served to lower Florencia’s guard at least somewhat, but before she could so much as exhale, Rozemyne turned to Sylvester. “What was the urgent summons

they received from Ahrensbach?” she asked, drawing everyone’s attention.

“Don’t know,” Sylvester replied, waving away the question. “It came from the border gate. I even read it myself, but all it said was that they need to return at once. Something must have happened that they don’t want us to know about.”

*From the border gate...?*

Florencia gulped on instinct. Emergency messages to members of an archducal family visiting another duchy were traditionally sent via water mirrors, which only archdukes could use. In other words, it was safe to assume that Aub Ahrensbach wasn’t in good enough condition to use one.

*To think that everything would go as Lord Ferdinand predicted...*

Back when Sylvester had attempted to stop the forced marriage, Ferdinand had apparently informed him that Aub Ahrensbach would most likely collapse during the engagement period. He had noted that his source wasn’t particularly reliable, but even then, Sylvester had put his faith in Ferdinand without question.

Florencia had assumed that the warning was simply to convince her husband to agree with the forced marriage and stop him from asking questions. Aub Ahrensbach had seemed in good health when she last saw him at the end of spring during the Archduke Conference, and the fact that Georgine and Detlinde had come to Ehrenfest meant that he couldn’t have seemed sickly before they left.

“We’re moving to the meeting room,” Sylvester instructed, prompting the Ehrenfest higher-ups who had come to see off Georgine’s group to move to the archduke’s office. There, they would begin sharing the intelligence they had gathered during Ahrensbach’s stay.

Florencia shot Sylvester a sideward glance as he started escorting her. *Is he feeling well...?* Upon hearing about the royal decree, he had raged against the king for giving his order without hearing the thoughts of all those involved, his half-brother for accepting without asking his opinion as the aub, and the nobles of other duchies who had been manipulated into doing Ahrensbach’s bidding.

*I can only hope that Lord Ferdinand’s engagement proceeds without issue.*

Ehrenfest was a low-ranking duchy without any means to defy a royal decree. Florencia wanted things to go peacefully, but at the same time, her heart was a storm of unease.

“So, what have we learned?” Sylvester asked, beginning the meeting.

Those attending began exchanging intelligence acquired from tea parties and meals that Georgine and her retinue had attended. The bulk of participants in meetings like this were usually men, but today, there were a great number of women as well. The two visitors were women of the archducal family; they had gone to many girls-only tea parties, where Florencia and Elvira had taken the lead with intelligence gathering.

*If possible, I would have liked to speak with Rozemyne and Charlotte before this meeting to organize everything we know...*

Georgine had left the task of accompanying Detlinde entirely to Ferdinand, instead focusing on her own socializing. As a result, Florencia had needed to delegate one job after another to the noblewomen she could trust—leaving her with almost no time to speak with her children. Most notably, she had yet to receive a detailed report on their gathering in Ferdinand’s estate. Given that the meeting had been about purchasing a hairpin, it seemed wiser to ask Rozemyne or Charlotte about the matter than Wilfried. Florencia listened to Elvira’s report while forming a schedule in her mind.

“We can infer much from Lady Georgine’s departing smile, but I believe the tea parties and meals she attended during her stay will prove more important,” Elvira said, having fully devoted herself to gathering information at Ferdinand’s request. “During tea parties attended mostly by those of the former Veronica faction, she would explain how Lord Sylvester is seen as a cruel and terrible archduke by other duchies, and she regularly asked for everyone’s thoughts on Lord Ferdinand becoming her daughter’s husband. She also seems to have learned about books and printing. Most nobles of the former Veronica faction believe that Lord Ferdinand is behind Lady Rozemyne’s trends, so I imagine that Lady Georgine thinks the same.”

Investigation had revealed that many of the former Veronica faction believed that Ferdinand was creating Rozemyne’s new trends from the shadows. Only now that Veronica was gone was he able to see the light of day, they had said; he had clearly taught his secrets to a former blue shrine maiden to secure her adoption by the archduke. They believed that Rozemyne was being exploited so that Ferdinand could secure power in Ehrenfest.

*If only they were closer to her, they would immediately see the truth—that Lord Ferdinand is desperately containing Rozemyne’s rampages.*

Ferdinand already seemed to know what the nobles thought about him.

He nodded at Elvira and said, “Indeed. Detlinde even asked me how many of my personal craftspeople I intend to bring when I move to Ahrensbach as her groom.”

“How did you answer?”

His response here was crucial. It was hard to imagine that Ferdinand would do anything to harm the duchy, but it wasn't rare to bring one's personnel along when leaving one's duchy through marriage. The number of craftspeople he decided to take with him would have a considerable impact on trends moving forward.

Ferdinand acknowledged the countless eyes on him, then scoffed. “I said that I would act with Ahrensbach, the greater duchy, in mind.”

There were two very distinct ways in which this answer could be interpreted: “I shall bring as many as is appropriate for a sizable greater duchy” or “I shall follow Aurelia's example and bring only the bare minimum.” Given his sardonic smile, it was likely that he had meant the latter, but that was an issue in itself. Ahrensbach intended to take Ehrenfest's trends through this marriage, so bringing fewer retainers risked damaging his relationship with the duchy and promoting his poor treatment there.

*Lord Ferdinand was chosen specifically for his administrative skills, so this is far from being a normal marriage...*

Florenca wasn't the only one worried about Ferdinand's future; Elvira and Rozemyne were no doubt even more concerned.

“Would it not be wise to have more cards to play, if necessary?” Elvira asked. “Perhaps you could bring some craftspeople with you...”

“No,” Ferdinand replied, refusing the idea outright. “The king did not order me to bring craftspeople, so there is no need. We do not know how commoners might be treated in Ahrensbach, and they would serve only as dead weight as I would need to devote some of my focus to protecting them. Ehrenfest craftspeople need only work for Ehrenfest.”

Florenca sighed at this obstinate response; it wasn't unusual for Ferdinand to reject the good-natured suggestions of others, but as always, it was hard to keep up with him.

*Nobody knows what might happen in Ahrensbach.*

Florenca decided to report what she knew. She wanted Ferdinand to put at least some thought into protecting himself.

“Bear in mind that I acquired this information from a laynoble of the former Veronica faction, but... as Ahrensbach plans to return Lord

Ferdinand to Ehrenfest once their duchy has stabilized, it seems they are more or less stealing him for his mana and administrative talents.”

“Come again?”

“It may not be the most reliable news—it was stated during a meal attended only by the core of the former Veronica faction, so this laynoble did not hear it themselves—but I find it most curious nonetheless.”

Everyone furrowed their brows. Given the current state of Ahrensbach, it was clear that it wouldn’t stabilize anytime soon.

“But who knows how long that’ll take?” Sylvester said, crossing his arms with a confused frown. “What must Georgine be planning to have said something like that?”

Ferdinand was drumming a finger against his temple, wearing a similar frown. “The meaning of those words changes greatly depending on whether they mean stable from an outside perspective or stable from Georgine’s point of view. Not to mention...”

He fell silent.

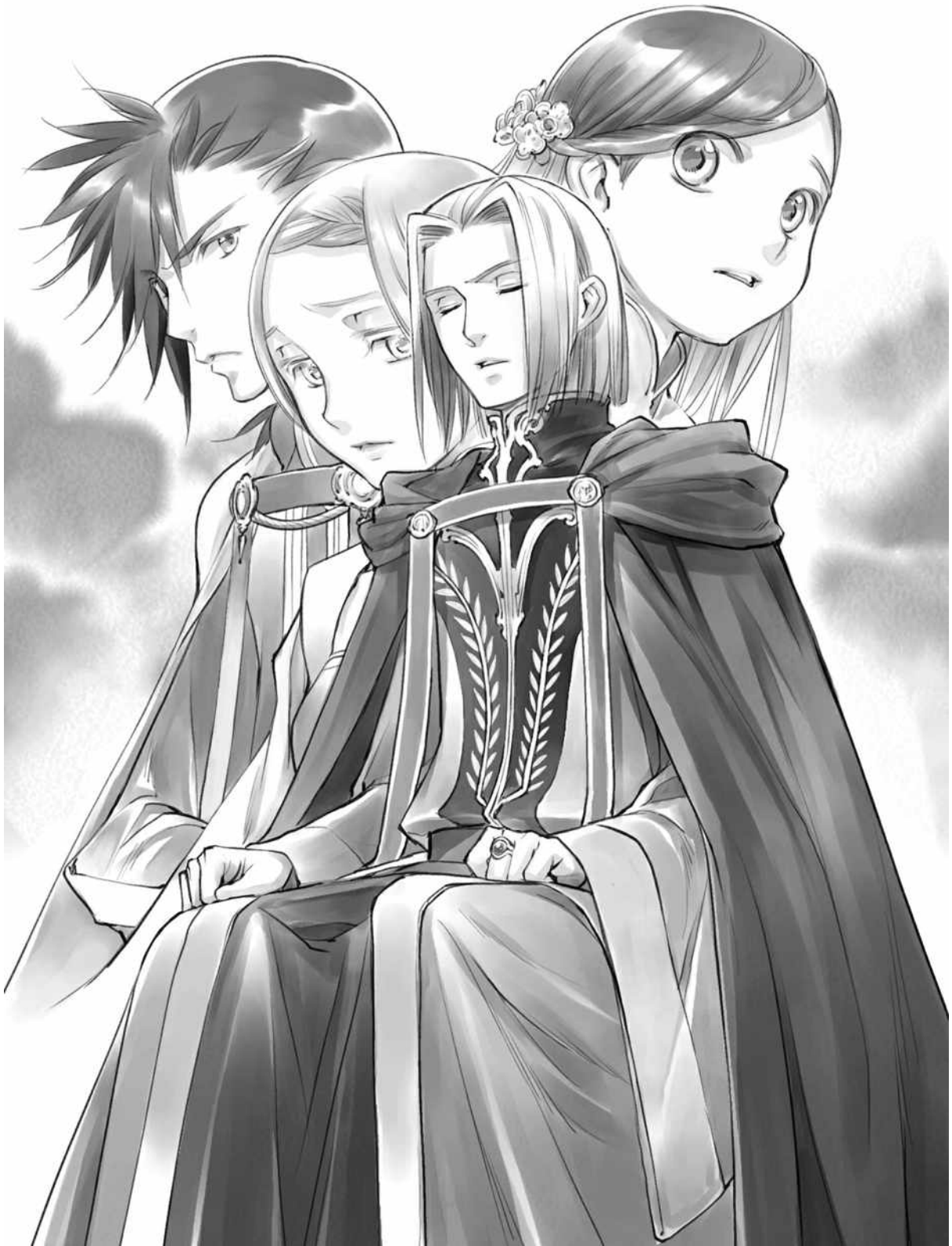
“Not to mention what?” Rozemyne asked. She was prompting him to continue, but he merely shook his head and said that it was nothing.

Florencia saw no need to question Ferdinand any further. Although he was a cautious man who said only what he was confident was the truth, if something of great importance was on his mind, he would report it anyway with a preface that he wasn’t sure about its veracity.

Rozemyne was different, however. She glared up at him, determined not to let him avoid the matter, and said, “No secrets. We need to consider every possibility here.”

It was true that Ferdinand’s insight would be of great use, and for that reason, everyone joined Rozemyne in imploring him with their eyes. He grimaced but spoke nonetheless.

“I simply thought that, in the first place, I am unlikely to be alive by the time they would send me back,” he explained, causing the air in the room to freeze over.





“D-Don’t scare us like that!” Rozemyne exclaimed.

“I wanted to stay silent. You are the one who forced me to speak, no?”

“True, but...”

Rozemyne was stiff with fear—and in this case, Florencia wanted to agree with her. It was wonderful that Ferdinand was clearheaded enough to consider the worst-case scenario, but he was so objective and dry in his delivery that one started to wonder whether he truly understood what might be in store for him.

“This is just my opinion,” Florencia began, hoping to cut through the tension in the room, “but Lady Georgine’s socializing with the former Veronica faction seemed to be shallower than the last time she was here. They socialized in many regards, but their discussions were empty, and even giebels close to Ahrensbach returned to their provinces before long. I consider this disconcerting. Was all this because they knew we were observing them?”

According to the reports from their moles in Georgine’s meetings, although the conversations held no substance, the fire in Georgine’s eyes had burned more ferociously than ever. Florencia couldn’t help but feel uncomfortable about the hastiness of the smile that Georgine had given before leaving.

*I must hear the thoughts of my children after this...*

Georgine had engaged only in surface-level socializing during her stay in Ehrenfest, but there were reports from all over stating that Detlinde had acted quite openly. Perhaps she had leaked some of Georgine’s thoughts and intentions at Ferdinand’s estate. Once their meeting in the archduke’s office had concluded, Florencia sent her children invitations to a tea party.

“Welcome, Charlotte.”

“I assumed that we would speak soon, so I was overjoyed to receive your invitation,” Florencia’s daughter said, then looked around the room quizzically. “Oh, am I the only one here? Did you not invite Wilfried or Rozemyne?” Melchior would still sometimes speak his mind rather than respect the flow of the meeting, so she had chosen not to list his name. Their conversation continued with this silent understanding.

“I did, but they both declined,” Florencia replied. “Wilfried’s training as the next archduke has begun in full now that Lord Ferdinand is due to leave for Ahrensbach, and Rozemyne must return to the temple at once to prepare Lord Ferdinand’s successors and study for the Royal Academy.”

Ferdinand regularly helped Sylvester with his administrative duties and assisted the archducal family in place of the retired Bonifatius, and the question of who would take on this workload and supply mana in his place was of grave importance. Rozemyne and her retainers could manage work in the temple, but for the castle, they would presumably need to bring Bonifatius out of retirement or have Wilfried provide some assistance—on top of getting Sylvester to take his own duties more seriously, of course.

“Wilfried is being trained to be the next archduke...?”

“Indeed. He reported that the trip to Leisegang went well and that he had successfully earned the support of their faction. Elvira likewise said that he made no errors of note, and even Rozemyne maintained that the meeting with Giebe Leisegang Emeritus went well. Did you not agree with them?”

“Yes, but the bar is set lower for Wilfried than anyone else. Our praise for him is tied not to any substantial accomplishments, but simply to the fact that he did not commit any grave errors. For most others, not causing serious problems is a given, yet we commend my brother all the same. To be frank, I did not sense a dramatic change in Giebe Leisegang Emeritus’s intentions,” Charlotte explained with a frown, tightening her grip on her teacup. From her perspective, the Leisegang nobles had demonstrated not that they would support Wilfried as the next aub, but merely that they accepted Rozemyne’s refusal to take the seat herself. “Now that Rozemyne’s intentions are clear, I cannot imagine they will oppose Wilfried becoming the next archduke, but...”

“But he did not earn their support. I see.”

Florenca had a distant look in her eyes. There was a significant difference between supporting someone and not actively opposing them, but Wilfried didn’t seem to understand this. Florenca believed that he was far too optimistic and oblivious to his surroundings, and that was her speaking as his mother; an objective third party would not be anywhere near as kind in their criticisms. It was hard to say whether he remembered the revitalized nobles tricking him after Georgine’s last visit—or whether he understood what was happening at all.

Florenca sighed. “Can you tell me what occurred while you were at Lord Ferdinand’s estate? Much like with your trip to Leisegang, I feel that your interpretation of events will differ considerably from Wilfried’s. To begin with, what manner of person was Lady Detlinde?”

“What did Wilfried say?”

Florenzia hesitated for a moment; Wilfried had praised Detlinde as being “kind, just like Grandmother.” He had apparently found it moving when she had tried to grant her attendant’s wish to meet with her older sister. “Well, he said that she... was very much like Lady Veronica.”

Charlotte smiled, having noticed the distinct pause in her mother’s response. “Oh my. I share that opinion as well. She was very much like Grandmother.”

Although they were using the same words, Charlotte’s opinion was the complete opposite of her brother’s. Wilfried was very much like their father in that he had grown up being sweetly doted on by Veronica, whereas Charlotte was more like their mother, having been neglected to the point that it was hard to believe she and Wilfried were both Veronica’s grandchildren. To nobody’s surprise, Florenzia didn’t view the woman very favorably either.

“Should I take that to mean she is exceptionally cold to those she dislikes and possesses the natural arrogance of one who expects her every selfish desire to be granted...?”

Charlotte met this question with a broad smile before taking a sip from her teacup, evading the need to directly state her thoughts. Florenzia returned to her tea in response, feeling heartened. Her daughter had grown much, perhaps due to having socialized with nobles from top-ranking duchies in the Royal Academy.

“Lady Detlinde expressed dissatisfaction with the idea of Uncle picking a hairpin for her,” Charlotte eventually said. “Furthermore, she seems to have some fixation on Lady Adolphine, who is due to marry the first prince.”

Charlotte’s report started to make Florenzia’s head ache; Sylvester wasn’t the only one worrying about Ferdinand getting married into Ahrensbach. Was it possible that Ferdinand had some kind of plan to ensure that everything would go smoothly?

*After all, he accepted the king’s decree without so much as consulting Sylvester.*

“Speaking of which,” Florenzia said, “Wilfried informed me that Rozemyne abandoned socializing with Lady Detlinde to focus on reading.”

“Yes, that was at my suggestion. It seemed a wiser move than risking any conflict developing between her and Lady Detlinde.”

Florenzia blinked in response to this explanation; the most she had been told was that Rozemyne had gleefully retreated to the book room.

“Rozemyne and Uncle are so close that they share attendants in the temple,” Charlotte continued. “They are like family, so I can only imagine Rozemyne would resent Lady Detlinde upon finding out how much she demeans Uncle and Ehrenfest. That is why I determined it would be safest to have her read instead.”

“They share attendants?” Florencia asked. She had never gone to the temple herself, so she had not realized they were *that* close.

“Indeed. Uncle did not have enough attendants to host so many visitors, so he brought some attendants from the temple. I was surprised to find that Rozemyne’s were among them, but her retainers were unfazed. It seems that this sharing of attendants was similar to when we borrow Rozemyne’s attendants for religious ceremonies.”

This was the first Florencia was hearing about Rozemyne letting her siblings borrow her attendants. Her approach to things truly was abnormal, even if she did carry herself as a proper noble now.

“Uncle personally trained Rozemyne’s attendants in the temple, according to her retainers, and he assigned his most competent attendant to her as an advisor. I found it strange that Uncle continues to serve as Rozemyne’s guardian when she’s been adopted into the archducal family, but it started to make more sense when I found out that he had raised her in the temple before her baptism.”

It was generally accepted that Ferdinand was responsible for Rozemyne. Sylvester prioritized Florencia’s opinion when it came to raising their children, but for Rozemyne, he would always prioritize what Ferdinand thought. She had always found it quite telling that not even Elvira could interfere, despite having acted as Rozemyne’s true mother since the girl was baptized, but she was still surprised to learn just how close Rozemyne was to Ferdinand.

“Uncle has been serving as a pillar of emotional support for Rozemyne all this time, so I am concerned about how she will cope moving forward.”

“Oh my. But this is a good opportunity for her to leave his nest and become independent. She just needs to start depending on Wilfried instead.”

“I am not sure he is capable of such a role...” Charlotte muttered. Her voice was tinged with concern, but the unavoidable fact was that Wilfried and Rozemyne were engaged—they would need to become pillars of support for each other no matter what. The decree for Ferdinand to marry into Ahrensbach had certainly introduced some urgency, but they would