

“Ah, there you are.”

Just like the last time, we found Perugius leaning in his tall chair with a haughty expression and his loyal spirits at his side.

We were mainly stopping by today to pay our respects. Ariel took a graceful step forward, ready to deliver some formal spiel. But before she could get a word out, Eris broke from the group and strode right up to the master of the castle.

“And who are *you* supposed to be?” Perugius asked, sizing her up with a glance.

I had a vision of Eris leaping forward to take a swing at him, and a chill ran down my spine. The man was more indulgent than you’d expect, but that didn’t mean he would tolerate that kind of disrespect.

As I stepped forward to intervene, however, Eris abruptly dropped to one knee. “It’s an honor to meet you, sir. I’m Eris Greyrat, who recently became Rudeus’ wife. Thank you for your hospitality.”

I stopped in my tracks and blinked in surprise.

“Ah. I am Perugius Dola, known as the Armored Dragon King. I know of you, Eris Greyrat. You’re the so-called Berserker Sword King who challenged Orsted himself, yes?”

“It’s nothing worth boasting of, sir, but I am.”

“Hm...”

Eris was speaking in an unusually humble tone, but the words were coming out a little flat and forced. I was beginning to suspect she’d actually memorized all of these lines beforehand.

“Well, Eris Greyrat, I find your modesty most endearing,” continued Perugius, looking genuinely pleased. “Allow me to apologize for that unfortunate incident eight years ago, when my subordinate assaulted you.”

Eris looked up with a dubious expression. Clearly the girl didn’t even remember what he was talking about. “Uh, it’s all water under the bridge!”

“Is it? My thanks, then. You’re most understanding.”

Chuckling softly, Perugius waved his hand in a lordly gesture of welcome. Eris rose to her feet and walked back to us with a satisfied smirk. I