



RUCHE

OVERLORD OF PRIDE

SHORT STORIES ON THE OVERLORDS
OF THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS



“Now then, a duel of swords...” my father Astaroth drew his sword from its scabbard as he spoke. Under normal circumstances, no one is allowed to draw their weapon out inside the castle court. But my uncle, Zeabolos, simply nodded in response, and drew his own sword out as well.

Everyone was shocked, but because it was so sudden, no one was able to intervene. I myself was witnessing it from afar with Baphomet.

(So pretty...)

That is the first thought that crossed my mind.

Even in my youth, I could tell by each of their attacks that they were both serious.

(Amazing...)

My uncle, who defeated an archangel, swung his sword with

heavy blows, the forces of which reverberated throughout the entire court. My father swung with cold, smooth strikes, which injected a sense of beauty into the air around him.

Neither of them held back. At first, it all looked like a beautiful dance, but slowly the dance started to crumble. Uncle’s sword gained momentum with each blow and soon enough, the power dwelling within his sword was forcing my father back.

What I saw before me was truly fit for a king.

I think everyone thought the same thing. They all held their breaths, frozen where they stood. It was then that my father’s sword was struck out of his hand. With that, everyone present immediately kneeled before my uncle.

Baphomet kept yelling at the top of his voice, “Long live the Great Overlord Zeabolos!” It wasn’t long before everyone in the chamber was chanting the same words.

(That’s where I want to be. I’ll take that spot one day!)



Now that I think about it, I was a boring kid.

Most of the adults around me praised me as being smart, but I think what they really wanted to say is that I was overly cunning and cocky. I was always irritated being around adults who wouldn't take me seriously.

I recall the day before that battle in court like yesterday.

No one wanted to play with me, so I was pouting alone out in the garden.

(This is so boring...)

Every time I asked, they would all smile and tell me, "Maybe later," and scurry away from me.

Not like I was going to be fooled by that. I knew that's what adults would say to shoo kids away. Pretty rude if you ask me, especially when I'm already an adult!

"Hey, Ruche."

"Yikes!"

I was suddenly lifted onto someone's shoulders.

"What are you doing here all by yourself?"

"Uncle Zeabolos!"

"It's been a while since we've seen each other."

He smiles childishly for me. Uncle is always like this. He would wander to the garden every so often on a whim.

"Is your father in the manor?"

"Probably."

"Probably?" He looks up, and tilts his head. Despite being an adult, he would sometimes exhibit the most childish

expressions ever.

(He's not a single bit like Father.)

He's supposed to be Father's younger brother, but they're totally different.

"You know, I have to ask you something. How long are you planning on holding onto this defiant attitude of yours?"

"I'm not defiant. That's something a kid would be."

"Says a kid." Uncle smiles again and rubs my head firmly until my hair is messed up.

"H-Hey! Stop it! Well, Father has been very busy recently. That's why I'm not sure where he is today. He could be in his den, or he could be outside. Who knows?"

It's pathetic to admit, but it was true. I didn't know where

he was. With Father's talents, he was always all over the place, wanted by everyone around him.

"I see." Uncle says. He begins to walk towards the manor with me on his shoulders.

"Uncle, aren't you busy too?"

"What makes you say that?"

"Well, you haven't come around recently."

Why didn't he come more often? It's boring without him here. I was about to tell him that, but I curled my lips determinedly to stop the words from coming out. I bet he would have just teased me like I was a child if I had said it out loud.

"I'm sorry about that."

That wasn't expected. Uncle actually looks sorry and peeks

over at me with a weak smile.

(That smile... It looks like Father's smile...)

Now that I can look carefully, I guess his mouth is similar to Father's mouth.

(And to think he always say they aren't similar at all.)

Thinking about it makes me mad.

(I'm the one who wants to look like Father.)

It's really not fair. Father spends more time with Uncle than with me.

A short while ago, Father and Uncle went to wage war against the angels up in the Heavens. They returned victorious. Apparently, they had even defeated a very prominent angel.

(They always have fun together. It's not fair.)

If they had brought me with them, I'm sure I would've accomplished a lot too. But they left me out. The reason was simple—I'm just a kid. Even during the victory party, they sat together while I was forced to sit far away from them, and I wasn't even allowed to get close.

(I want to sit next to Father.)

But, they really are amazing together. They are respected and praised as the heroes of the Underworld.

(But when they're alone with me, they don't seem hero-like at all...)

There are so many things I don't know about them. So many secrets. They just keep leaving me in the dark.

"So, how were things while I wasn't here, Ruche? Were you lonely?"

“Not at all! I’m tired of playing sword fight with you anyways, Uncle.”

I try to hold my front while saying something that I don’t actually want to say. But it’s way better than if I were to tell the truth—that I was lonely. I have to keep secrets too, you know?

“I’ve been reading some of Father’s magic tomes that he keeps in his library. I’m an adult, too, you know?”

“That’s quite amazing. I haven’t read any of those tomes before.”

“Heh heh! I am very talented, you know? I mean, I am Father’s daughter. If anything, I’m only going to become even stronger!”

“You’re probably right.”

“Hey! Stop laughing! I’m serious here!”

“Ouch! Hey, Ruche! Don’t pull my hair!”

“Hmph! It’s not like your hair is going to be here forever. In the drawings of Grandfather Azel, and of Great Grandfather Satan, they don’t have much on their heads.”

“Wh-What?! Don’t say such rude things! Hey—ouch!”

“This is punishment for making fun of me!”

“Zeabolos.”

Out of the blue, a soft and gentle voice calls for Uncle. He stops in his tracks.

I look up and see Father standing at the entrance to the manor.

“It’s nice to see you here,” says Father, with his usual kind smile.

But Uncle doesn't answer. He purses his lips and continues staring at Father. The smiling, laughing Uncle that was here a moment ago is gone.

(Huh? What's going on?)

Before I can ask, Uncle lowers me down from his shoulders, with the casual treatment of unloading luggage without any care.

"I heard Ruche's voice sounding a little brighter than usual. I figured you might be here."

"Brother, may I speak with you for a moment?" Uncle finally opens his mouth with a grave tone, and Father quietly nods in agreement.

"Yes. In fact, I was hoping to speak with you, as well."

Father beckons Uncle to follow him into the manor, and they slowly disappear into the hall.



It seems like they holed themselves up inside Father's den.

(This is so boring!)

I throw the gold-rimmed magic tome onto the sofa. I just can't bring myself to study right now.

By the time Uncle did come out of the den, it was already late into the night. I heard the sound of him walking through the halls, so I had stepped out, only to be told that he'd come again—and just like that, he left.

Father stayed in the den and didn't come out. I ended up eating dinner by myself, again.

(I wonder what they were talking about.)

I went to the door of the den to try and listen in on what Father was doing, but one of the maids found me, and

scolded me for eavesdropping. In the end, I couldn't find out what happened.

"Sis Ru!"

"Hey! Perpell!"

I raise my head to the high-pitched voice and see my younger sister biting onto a book. I quickly snatch the book away from her, but it's too late. It's all slimy and sticky with her saliva, and the ink is already running from some of its wet pages.

"You can't be serious! How many times do I have to tell you! Don't put things into your mouth like that!"

"Sis Ru!"

Scolding her is like scolding a brick. She doesn't listen at all, and she probably doesn't understand.

Perpell recently learned to walk. Take my eyes off of her for one moment, and the next thing you know, she's wandering all over the place causing trouble wherever she goes. I could tell by the nanny's exhausted face that she had become impatient with her. Seeing that irked me, so I've decided to personally keep watch over Perpell instead.

I can do this. I'm her older sister. I'm an adult. I told that to Father. I can't let the difficulty of monitoring Perpell's unpredictable, sporadic antics discourage me from fulfilling what I had resolved to do.

"You listen here. You're going to go to bed, okay? You're my younger sister, so you need to listen to me."

She nods, so I take her into my arms, but then she starts to wave her limbs.

"So high! High!"

"I'm not playing with you! I'm taking you to bed!"

“Sis Ru! Higher!”

It’s not like I’m even lifting her high into the air. The best I can do is barely pick her off of the ground. As small as she is, she’s amazingly heavy. Still, I do my best to carry her, and shove her into her crib.

(If only I could carry her the way that Uncle carries me.)

Uncle can lift me easily, even though I’m larger than Perpell.

(Will I be able to do that one day?)

I think about Uncle for a bit, and tilt my head as I ponder the matter.

I guess I have to grow as tall and large as he is first. But, how do you grow that tall and large? It wasn’t written anywhere in any of the magic tomes. Or, maybe it’s in a tome that I haven’t read yet.

“Sis Ru...”

I was ready to scold her about still being awake, so I look towards her, only to find her peacefully wrapped up in her blanket.

“I guess she’s just talking in her sleep.”

I hear the hourly toll of the clock. That means I need to go to bed soon, too.

Taking my negligee out of my drawer, I change into my sleepwear. I’m able to do everything I need to in preparation for bedtime now, all by myself. I haven’t told Father this yet. I’ve never really had a chance to, since he doesn’t come by to say goodnight very much anymore.

“He doesn’t need to come...”

Suddenly I feel exhausted, and fall onto my bed without even buttoning my gown up completely. It’s not like

anyone's here to see. Yeah, this is boring all right.

(I know Father's busy...)

At this rate, I bet when Father isn't busy anymore, and he finds the time to come and see me, he'll be really surprised with how much I've changed.

"Ruche, you've really matured."

Yup... I bet he'd say that to me.

"You're really an adult now."

After saying that, he'd gently pat me on my head, and...

"Looks like I forced you to become self-reliant..."

"Father...?"

I try to force my eyes open, but I can't seem to make them budge.

"It's fine. Get some rest."

I can hear his gentle voice. His cold, large hand touches my cheek. This is my father all right. He came today.

"Good night, Ruche."

His voice was like magic. I fell asleep immediately.



The next morning, before saying “Good morning,” Father says to me...

“I’m going to the castle today.”

“I want to go, too!” I muster the courage to say it—and Father slowly nods his head.

“Very well. Then I’ll have Baphomet look after you. Since you’re coming, why don’t you have Baphomet show you around the castle?”

“What about you, Father?”

“I have a very important matter to attend to. Do you not like Baphomet?”

I pause for a moment, then shake my head left and right,
“No, that’s okay! So please, I want to go!”

I really wanted Father to be with me, but I didn’t want to sound like a kid. I am an adult, after all.

If I go to the castle, I can probably meet with Uncle too. I’m sure Baphomet would know where he is.

“Now then, finish up your breakfast and get ready.”

“Okay!”

I’m so happy that I shove my breakfast into my mouth without savoring it. Afterward, I rush back into my room to change into my favorite dress.





(Now that I look back on it, I was still very much a kid then.)

I stop reminiscing for a moment, and take a deep breath.

It was at that time, when I dressed up in my favorite dress to go to the Great Overlord's castle, that I saw the duel between the Great Overlord's first-born heir, Astaroth, fighting his younger brother, Zeabolos.

(At the time, I wasn't aware that they were in the midst of determining who was going to become the next Great Overlord.)

That was a day when they relinquished their bonds as brothers, wielded their swords against each other as rivals, and in the end, one became the master and the other a subject.

It was then that I learned what true power is like, and

learned that I really didn't know anything at all.

"Come, Ruche."

A low voice calls for me as the heavy doors to the court open.

The voice comes from my Uncle—my objective, and the source of my admiration. The greatest in the Underworld. The most powerful of all, reigning absolute as the current Great Overlord—Zeabolos.

I'm not going to be intimidated by him.

"Be glad that I'm here! What is it?!" I announce my arrival with pride and elegance.

(It's only obvious that I'm going to fulfill my dream, and surpass the source of my admiration.)

One day, I'm going to be the one sitting on that throne.

I'm only letting him warm it up for me.

I couldn't tell whether or not he knew what I was thinking, but he grinned upon seeing me. That mouth of his that looks like Father's takes on a shape that Father's never would.

"I welcome you as one of the Overlords, chosen by the Crest of Pride. I suspect you take no issue with this."

"I do take issue, actually. Being an Overlord isn't enough for me." I point my trusty weapon, Beholder, towards him. "What I want is that throne you're sitting on!"

"Ruche," Father interrupts.

The crowd around us becomes unsettled, but I'm not holding back. As long as we're in the court, Father and I are both Overlords, no different from one another in rank or status.

"You have no right to keep me from saying anything I want to say. Isn't that right, Astaroth?"

To be able to speak my mind boldly and openly to Uncle and Father brings immense satisfaction to me in that moment.

I used to only be able to watch these two from afar, but with the prominent position I've gained now, I can close that distance, and meet with them on equal grounds.

(I can make my dream come true. I have the power to make it happen!)

I can feel my pride swelling within me.

But in response to my flashy entrance, Uncle starts to laugh.

"What?! Why are you laughing?!"

“Don’t mind me. It’s great, Ruche. I need you to be upfront as usual. I’m happy you’re here.”

“Hmph! Just keep blabbing. You’re soon going to regret it!”

“I can’t wait. Let’s see what you can do.”

“You don’t have to tell me that! On the other hand, you better not lose to anyone! You need to be the greatest in the Underworld until the time comes for me to usurp you from the throne!”

“Same to you. You don’t need to tell me that.”

Uncle stands from the throne and waves his mantle ceremoniously.

“All gathered here, listen! The new Overlord of Pride has been born! Ruche! All who have heard Ruche’s words, keep it to heart.”

He’s grinning again...

“I am the greatest in the Underworld! I will always be here to accept any challenge!”

He seems amazingly happy. The king adorned in gold turns to me, and offers that childish smile he has always shown me since long before.

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