

# A GLOSSARY OF THE HOUSE

*The terms of the library, defined once and used everywhere  
With their forms in the Japanese, Chinese, and Korean editions — for adults 18 and over*

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A framework whose founding claim is that vagueness kills a marriage owes its readers exact words. Every term below is used in its defined sense throughout the library, in all four editions. Where the Eastern editions render a term, the renderings are given in brackets — Japanese first, then Chinese, then Korean — so that a couple reading across languages is always reading the same house.

## THE DOCUMENTS

**The Covenant** — The whole arrangement: the consensual exchange of authority on which this marriage is built, and, by extension, the signed pages that describe it. Not a legal instrument; it binds two consciences and nothing else. [誓約 · 盟約 · 서약]

**The Covenant Set** — The bound library itself — the Articles, the Schedule, the Rites, the Protocols, and their companions — read in full by both parties before anything is signed. [誓約 全書 · 盟約全書 · 서약 전서]

**The Articles (of Submission and Ownership)** — The vow at the centre of the Set: his surrender, her authority, the standard that binds her, and the permanence of the whole. The document that hangs on the wall; every other page serves it. [服従と所有の誓約書 · 《服从与所有之盟约》 · 「복종과 소유의 서약서」]

**The Schedule of Limits** — The working document: signals and halt word, health declarations, welcomed and forbidden instruments, ceilings of intensity, the safety law of restraint, and aftercare. Where the Articles speak in absolutes and the Schedule speaks in limits, the Schedule wins. The load-bearing wall of the house. [限度の定め · 《界限章程》 · 「한계의 규정」]

**The Annex on Breach** — The document that names the offences against the Covenant itself — as distinct from ordinary infractions — and sets out the Reckoning that answers them. [背反の付則 · 《背约附则》 · 「배약 부칙」]

**The Ledger** — The daily record of the standard: kept honestly, read at the ordinary hour, and served as it provides. The Covenant's memory. [帳 · 家冊 · 장부]

**The Protocols of the Public Theatre** — The rules of the outside world: how the arrangement works invisibly in company — her observation, his bearing, the record and the report. [表の舞台の掟 · 《场面之规》 · 「바깥 무대의 규례」]

## THE OFFICES

**The Regulator** — Her office. The one who governs: sets the standard, keeps the watch, administers the Schedule, and commands the estate. In the Eastern editions she is rendered as the mistress of the house. [主人・主母・안주인]

**The Asset** — His office, in the language of the Protocols: the man she develops, deploys, and defends. He earns in the market; she compounds what he earns into a formidable man and a formidable marriage.

**King and Queen** — The Renewal's names for the deeper truth beneath the offices: she governs him, and she is his — her authority was his to give, and once a decade he holds it in his hands so that both remember why the crown sits where it sits.

## INSTRUMENTS, SIGNALS, AND MARKS

**The Halt Word** — The word that stops everything, agreed before the first correction, belonging to both of them equally, and outranking every page, every rite, every timer, and every clause in the library. A ceremony that cannot be stopped is not a ceremony this Covenant recognises. [停止の言葉・止令・정지어]

**The Cage, the Steel** — The chastity device and its lock: the vow made in metal. Fitted by her hands, opened by her key, and worn by his choice — renewed, at the Rites, by his own step forward. [貞操具・鎖具・정조구]

**The Key and the Chain** — Her key, worn at her neck: jewellery to the world, the whole architecture of his devotion to the two of them. In the entrance rite, its kiss may serve as the seal of the evening. [鍵と鎖・钥与链・열쇠와 사슬]

**The Colour** — The rosy signature her hand raises: read by her judgement, never by a count. In discipline it is a sentence; in the Rites it is a signature. [色・顔色・빛깔]

**The Nettle** — The gravest instrument, reserved for breach of trust and nothing lesser: severity carried in duration, not in the moment. Doing its proper work in the years it sits untouched — the fence at the edge of the field, not the plough. [蓐麻・荨麻・췌기풀]

**The Stance** — The posture of the Queen's Offering: feet a double shoulder-width, bent forward, arms braced, nothing shielded — her body given as his has been given.

## THE CEREMONIES

**The Rite of Beginning** — The threshold ceremony of the first signing: performed once in a lifetime, remembered always. Nine stages, from the Signing to the First Night. [始まりの儀・初署之礼・시작의 의례]

**The Rite of Passage** — The entrance rite: light, brisk, and bodily — flogger, paddle, and the Short Test — for a couple newly under the Covenant or restarting after drift. Performed at any time, as often as the house has need; there is no limit, and no shame in the count. [入りの儀・入門之礼・입문의 의례]

**The Rite of Grand Renewal** — The great decade ceremony, performed every tenth year or when a great year demands it: mutual, sensual, each submitting to the other in turn, and the wife taking the reins at its end. The only rite in which the third answer — no — is formally provided for. [大いなる更新の儀・大续盟之礼・대갱신의 의례]

**The Taking Down** — The Renewal's first stage: her authority set down beside the pages she takes off the wall, so that what follows is chosen by equals. A renewal that cannot be refused is a re-reading.

**The Queen's Offering** — The Renewal's hinge: her ten minutes under his hands, given as completely as he has been given, while the steel holds. The reminder that he rules her in the end — and that she is in it with him.

**The Taking of the Reins** — The stage in which authority returns to her hands after the Offering: the correction of the years, the steel drawn to her opening, and his release commanded, granted, or refused at her word alone.

**The Test** — The cold-water trial: his scrotum and the cage soaked in refrigerator-cold water — ten minutes at the Renewal, five at the Passage — her stirrings renewing the ache, her body against his while it works, and nothing lifted from the water until her voice says so. The timer only reports; she alone releases. [試し・试炼・시련]

**The Deepening** — The Renewal Test's final movement: the reserve of fresh ice, held back and poured at the eighth minute, with continuous stirring through the last two — the coldest water of the stage arriving at its end, carried home by her count at his ear.

**The Salting** — The Passage Test's final minute: half a teaspoon of Celtic salt, dissolved beforehand, poured from her own hand into the near-iceless water — a whisper of sting, the sea-salt blessing on what she owns. Governed absolutely by the salt law below.

**The Seal** — The closing of a rite or a Reckoning: with her pleasure, taken at her leisure, while the steel holds and he serves — or, at the entrance rite, the simple kiss of the key. His denial and her satisfaction are the same event. [封印・封緘・봉인]

## JUDGEMENTS AND ANSWERS

**Infraction** — A failure of standard — the lazy afternoon, the fumbled introduction — priced by the Schedule and settled by the Covenant's ordinary instruments. A failure within the system.

**Breach** — An attack on the system itself: on the vow, the ownership, or the transparency by which she governs. Answered not by punishment but by the Reckoning. [背反・背約・배약]

**The Reckoning** — The four-part answer to breach, in order: full disclosure, a consequence that outlasts the afternoon, the seal, and the vow read aloud again. A way for a wrong to be paid rather than merely regretted. [清算・清算・청산]

**The Third Answer** — At the Renewal's Question, the answer no — real, honourable, and provided for. The reason the other two answers mean anything.

**The First Conversation** — The evening of questions before anything is signed: eighteen questions, three rules, and the interval. Nothing is signed on the night it is discussed. [初めの語らい・初談・첫 대화]

## THE LAWS

**The Law of the Halt** — The halt word governs everything, everywhere, always — both of theirs equally, and senior to every other law on this page.

**The Salt Law** — Salt never meets ice; salt only ever meets water. The only salt the library admits is the Salting's dissolved half-measure, in near-iceless water, as written — because grains on ice make the cold that burns, and this house does not confuse damage with devotion.

**The Law of the Watch** — Ache and sting are instruments; numbness, whiteness, or skin losing its colour ends any stage at once, before any timer, without appeal. Her eyes do not leave what her instruments touch.

**The Law of Aftercare** — Care closes everything it opens — water, warmth, her hands over the marks, patient rewarming after the cold — and at the Renewal it is spoken in both directions, because two people gave themselves. [後の労わり・事后之抚慰・사후의 보살핌]

**The Floor** — From On the Purse and the Estate, and untradeable under any clause: his documents, independent money sufficient to leave, credit in his own name, and true knowledge of the estate. A man who could not afford to leave has not chosen to stay; the Floor is not a hedge against her — it is the proof of her.

**The Children's Law** — From The House With Children: children override every other page. They should never know what this is; they should absolutely see what it produces.

**Reveal Everything, Begin Small** — The Introduction's one commandment: the whole Set shown before anything begins, and growth only at the governor's pace, on paper, together. A partner persuaded by half a document has agreed to nothing.

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*Exact words are the courtesy a serious house pays itself.*

*A guide only. For consenting adults, 18 and over. Every term above is subject, in all things, to the Schedule of Limits and the halt word.*