

A Ghost 121

Chapter 121

“What do you mean by closer... in which... way?” I asked. A charming smile emerged in my lips, as I gently touched Partner’s chin. I felt the sudden instinct of doing it. I began to finally realize there was something going on. Her feelings for me might be developing, but she seems to be the same as Lucifer.

But of course it’s different than him, she’s my Partner after all, so she has special privilege that nobody else has. I don’t want her to be heartbroken thinking that I will one day replace her or something, or that I will end up with Lucifer and throw her away.

I am still developing my own feelings too, in my previous life I was more inclined into boys than anything else, but Partner is really just way too adorable to act oblivious against. If she really wants to build up such a bond, I am willing to... Uwah, this is embarrassing. And what’s wrong with me?! Why am I holding her chin like this?! Have I suddenly transformed into a super confident woman?

“I-In our hearts... Like... love.” She said.

“Love...? I see... Are you sure?” I asked nervously. Although I acted charmingly, I was internally screaming and trembling. I couldn’t believe I was doing this.

Partner seemed to grow nervous now that I suddenly took the lead, she was getting increasingly more adorable and cuter by the second, and I couldn’t believe how amazing this was. I felt like I wanted to hug her tightly and never let her go from my side.

I might had carelessly raised her as a skeleton back then out of necessity for a new part member, but now, it seems she had grown way more into my heart than I thought, and now that she looked like a cute and charming girl, I couldn’t resist this growing urge which intensified by her previous flirting with me.

“I-I... Uwaahwah...”

She suddenly got all red, looking nervously at the floor, and covering her face completely, resting it in my chest.

"I-I am not sure... I-I thought I could do this, but it feels way too embarrassing!" she proclaimed.

I suddenly felt my spiritual heart beating fast, I couldn't help but hug her and tell her that it was fine, that she could take all the time she wanted, and that if she wanted and I was ready, we could slowly build up something more than our current relationship.

Agh! But I couldn't! I was too embarrassed... I wish I could tell this to Lucifer and Emeraldine too! But I can't do it to anyone, no way! It is way too embarrassing!

"Master...

"I-I think we can do this slowly, right? N-No need to rush. I promise you that I won't forgive you, even if Lucifer tries to make advances on me... I really didn't thought you would get such feelings for me, but I am willing to embrace them in my heart and wait for the right moment... Don't worry, I am not letting Lucifer do whatever he wants with me either." I said.

"R-Really?" she asked.

"Of course! Uwah, you're so cute, Partner-chan!" I said, hugging her and kissing her forehead.

She blushed a bit as she rested in my chest, I was actually taller than her now that I thought about it, although I could freely shapeshift my own body to my liking, so maybe it wasn't just that.

"I-I am glad Master will have a place in her heart for me..." she said with a cute smile.

"Of course.... Why wouldn't I?" I sighed.

"Heheh... Master, am I important to you?" she asked.

"Huh? Yes... you are." I said.

I had not realized it earlier, but Partner is way more important than I had originally thought. She was my emotional pillar since the beginning of my journey as a ghost, and she had been at my side, keeping me from not being alone all this time... so of course she's incredibly important to me, in fact, she's the most important to me from the beginning!

She's like my family, like... a sister and then a little daughter... but now this is evolving into something else... I-like a romance of sorts.

I thought it would be hard for me to actually like a girl, but this wasn't hard at all with her like this. she was just the cutest...

"You're my little treasure." I said, as I looked at Partner and gave her a warm smile.

"T-Treasure... Really? Am I your treasure, Master?" she asked.

"Obviously! You're my precious little treasure... We'll go and make a big village there, and we'll build our own house too, and we'll live there together." I said.

"R-Really?" she asked.

"Yeah! We'll take a break while we manage everything and we can spend some more time together without having to constantly wage war and fight against threats all the time... Maybe this way we can develop our bond more and... W-Well, we will see about that." I said.

"O-Okay! I am so happy... I can live with Master forever too because I am also an Undead... And we'll live together and make breakfast together, lunch together, dinner together, bathe together, sleep together, and-" she said.

"Okay I think you're exceeding yourself a little bit there..." I said.

“O-Oh! S-Sorry, I didn’t wanted to scare you... I-I won’t be as forceful as Lucifer... I am not a big mean dragon idiot like him! I-I take into consideration master’s thoughts and emotions!” she said, as steam began to come out of her nose as if she was decided.

“Fufu, you really do!” I said.

Although I feel a bit bad for Lucifer, we are badmouthing him a bit too much, I still consider him a dear companion and I care about him! And I have also begun to consider him something else too! B-But Partner is badmouthing him a bit too much...

Well, I will just shrug it off for now.

After this whole incident, Partner hugged me and then let me evolve on my own.

Time for a quick powerup.

Chapter 122

Now that Partner had given me a time to slack, I could relax and see what I could pickup! Although I was rather worried about my future evolution options as I’ve already acquired a strong evolution such as Pandora itself, which had given me power over death, poison, and more, and I even got a Skill that literally summons a fragment of what Pandora’s Box is all about.

Now, what else could top it off? It should certainly be an amazing evolution, indeed...

So let’s see!

...

[A v a i l a b l e Evolution Options]

[Death Legion]

[Achlys]

[Wheel of the Death]

[Gorgon]

...

Four new Evolution Options showed up, and they were more than intriguing, they were completely weird! Is a Ghost supposed to evolve into a Gorgon?! Wasn't that like a half-snake woman? I am sure to not be a snake...

I might as well check them all out first, I am quite concerned though. Now that my System evolved, I can even check each new evolution in detail to an extent.

...

[Death Legion]

[R a n k: B-]

A legion of Death that advances relentlessly. It is an amalgamation of many vengeful souls that had become a massive entity known as Death Legion. It is no longer a simply ghost but it develops many bodies and can even take several other Undead forms, which are all part of the Legion.

It is catalogued as B-, but it can easily reach higher Ranks of Danger as it grows bigger and gathers more Souls and Assimilates more Undead into its Legion. Death Legions were once summoned by the Evil God to fight against the Gods, completely whipping out entire Kingdoms in their step...

It emanates a foul and deathly aura that can instantly kill those that are weak-hearted and instantly rise them into undead to be added into the Legion.

...

This is insane! I can... I will become a massive Legion? That's dangerous... What if I accidentally add everyone here? Wait, it was an aura that instantly kills too?! Ugh, that's not good. Well, I mean, it sounds amazing, but I don't want to instantly kill my friends... There are many here that might be considered weak hearted too... I wouldn't want that to happen.

It sounds amazing in paper, but it has a lot of things I don't want to, so it's a hard pass.

...

[Achlys]

[Rank: B+]

Also known as the [Maiden of Sorrow and Death] they're powerful Ghost-type Monsters that had developed incredibly potent Death, Darkness, and Poison Magic, capable of bringing down entire Kingdoms at their will. They're dangerous entities known to be capable of playing around with mortals as they use their poison to make them do as they say.

They are the personification of sorrow and only souls who have grieved for thousands of years can have a chance to evolve into such a being. Their entire bodies are like a mass of mist which shapes itself accordingly to its desires. It is capable of turning into a mass of poisonous mist infused with curses.

...

This one seems interesting... Maiden of Sorrow and Death? I think this is some Greek Goddess, though I am not sure, this might be completely different here anyways, but it does sounds amazing and powerful... And my body would become a mass of mist? That sounds interesting, I guess... Let's see what's next.

...

[Wheel of the Death]

[Rank: B-]

Also known as, the Wheel of Nightmares. It is a Ghost that pulls along the forces of Evil. Numerous vengeful spirits gather around the body of such a being and bring forth chaos and destruction anywhere it moves. It has the shape of a gigantic black wheel infused with countless vengeful and dead spirits, it possesses great speed and enormous strength. Capable of crushing entire Kingdoms. It gains a physical metallic body where the ghost soul is infused into. Its mere presence can bring disaster.

...

This is an interesting one, a ghost similar to Death Legion, but my body becomes a massive wheel?! Hey, that's rather... erm, how to put it... huh, quite interesting.

I don't know if would enjoy having such a body, I don't know if I can even shape it around, it doesn't specify anything at all, which is frustrating.

...

[Gorgon]

[Rank: B+]

A powerful cursed spirit with a deadly set of eyes, each eye has the power of inflicting a deadly curse, each has the power of Hypnosis, Confusion, Paralysis, Lethal Poison, and Petrification respectively. Overlapping these powers will ensure your opponents can't escape your phantasmal and deadly embrace. Moreover, this entity can shape into a mass of snakes, forming a massive legion of monstrous beings of its own...

...

I see. I can see that this later one is the killer. I can already see myself becoming one of these. The other seem pretty good as well- Well, not the Death Legion, and the Wheel... I don't want it either.

It is pretty much a tie between Achlys and Gorgon, the two of them look promising, but I am inclining into Gorgon more than Achlys, it sounds more deadly and honestly, I would like to see if I can just become a snake, it would be pretty cool and maybe a good way to sneak around... sneakily.

Anyways, time to evolve.

B o o p.

D i n g!

[You've selected the [Gorgon] Evolution Option!]

F L A S S S H H H H H H H H!

My entire body was quickly encompassed by a mass of darkness, and then, a lot of purple mist began to rotate around me constantly. I felt like my own Soul was mutating once more, absorbing all of this energy, and transforming myself into something completely new, something very apart of my own self, something I would barely be able to recognize...

But this power... I had to admit it.

This power... it felt good.

Chapter 123

I had chosen the Gorgon evolution and it was filling me with power. A cocoon of purple mist suddenly encompassed my entire body, filling it with this mysterious energy.

The very core of my soul started to absorb this energy and assimilate it, turning it into my own power, I began to evolve rather quickly.

As a Ghost, I don't have a physical body that can evolve, therefore what evolves is my own soul, each time I evolve my very soul grow stronger through mutations. Although there is also what I call the Phantom, an outer layer that progressively grows thicker and stronger the more a Ghost grows stronger by leveling up.

This Phantom also evolves, but the Soul is also impacted by the evolution, making the core of my phantom, the soul, which one would call "the creamy filling" of a ghost, began to mutate and transform with my new evolution.

My "body" started to grow larger and stretch very long, I suddenly felt as if my body began to divide itself into many long pieces, which all began to crawl around one another, entangling one another and melting with each other into a complete fusion.

I had been torn into tiny pieces in the form of snakes. Indeed, I had just become countless of phantasmal snake which later on merged together once more, forming a new self out of it, as if I had become thousands of tiny cells once more only to merge them together and become a fetus.

This "fetus" form resembled a small, large snake. I had become a snake?! Why! Ah, right, Gorgon... a species of Ghost that is very close to snakes and even have cursed eyes like the Gorgon myth, and the description also said something about being able to turn my body into snakes or a big snake... so this is it?

But I've become a giant snake! Will I remain like this forever? Of course not.

The entirety of the cocoon started to compress around my snake phantom body, as my body absorbed the phantasmal cocoon and became whole again, shaping once more into my usual humanoid form, but I was obviously way different than before.

As the transformation and evolution slowly began to come to an end, I saw that my materialized phantasmal hands, which were still incredible pale-white and transparent, had grown sharp and long nails, where venom was secreted.

Alongside that, my long and silvery-white hair had gained a new look as the tips suddenly turned into the phantasmal heads of snakes! They were actually purple-colored, and had sharp yellow-gold eyes... they looked creepy but at the same time I felt like they each one was me... Actually, I suddenly felt as if I could share my sight with them and even thoughts... did each one had a phantasmal brain or something? Wow, this actually multiplied by thought process!

I had also gained a tiny purple horn growing in the middle of my forehead, and there was something more, scale-like growths around my neck, arms, and hands, and perhaps my legs too... I didn't had a snake tail though, I still had my "legs", even though I can just shape myself however I want to thanks to being a ghost made of formless phantom. But it seems that this evolution shaped myself different and gave me a fixated base form.

In the back of my body there was, however, a tail, a snake tail was there, waving around, I could easily hide it beneath my dress, but it was still there. I think I could even completely merge my legs and create a long snake tail to move around like a snake, maybe this could be more efficient? Well, not like I can't just fly around like ghosts do, so there's no real necessity to do all that hassle over it. For now, I tried to relax as I sighed in relief.

I suddenly noticed my lips had become a purple, as if I had been given a very sexy lipstick, and my eyes glowed with a sharp snake-like appearance, with crimson-red color like before, however.

My evolution was complete, and I had never felt this good before! I began to move around as I inspected my new body in utmost detail and as much as I possibly could.

My balance was fine, and I could still forfeit my legs and make them dissipate, turning into a flying ghost and floating around without problems, however, I was also able to turn my legs into a long snake tail that could be used rather dexterously to grab objects and even fight, maybe slapping someone with my tail as if it were a whip was now a great possibility. I do remember practicing shapes before the evolution and I could create tails, but they were hard to maintain, and I needed a lot of concentration.

Ghosts are weird, they can shape themselves however they want, but the rarer and more alien the shape they want to take from their original selves, or well, how they “see” themselves as, the harder it becomes and the more concentration it needs. This is why I couldn’t simply shape myself into animals or monsters or whatever to fight, I was still limited to my appearance of how I saw myself.

Of course I had showed myself rather differently when I confronted the Duchy and proclaimed to be an evil witch brought back from the dead, but that wasn’t so hard to maintain as other shapes, perhaps because I already saw myself as a monster based in all the atrocities I had committed.

Nonetheless, taking this shape and forming and materializing such a useful giant snake tail before evolving would have been an arduous task and a big challenge, even more to maintain constantly to use it to fight, it would probably go back to phantom midway through and ruin my fighting techniques, so it wasn’t reliable.

But now? The Gorgon evolution had very much “imprinted” this form into my very mind, so this is how I now “perceive” myself as, which makes it easy to maintain and materialize. In fact, without any effort at all!

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Chapter 124

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After having inspected my body when I evolved, it was time to check the gains, and I had received a certain good amount of them, as System Windows popped up constantly, showing the changes that the evolution had brought to me...

Ding!

[You've evolved into a [Gorgon]!]

[All your stats have increased!]

[You learned the [Poison Body: Lv1] Characteristic Skill!]

[You learned the [Gorgon's Five Cursed Eyes: Lv1] Skill!]

[You learned the [Gorgon's Transformation: Lv1] Skill!]

[You learned the [Split Thinking: Level 1] Skill!]

[You learned the [Poison/Toxin/Venom Absorption: Lv-] Resistance Skill!]

[You learned the [Poison Queen: Lv1] Title Skill!]

I had gained six... yes, six new skills out of absolutely nowhere! And to boot, they all sounded pretty amazing! Although the majority had to do with poison, I was totally alright with that! It even allowed me to be capable of absorbing it? I should check all these Skills in detail... But first, time to check my own Status... I want to see some big numbers now, so don't disappoint me...

...

[Name: [Maria Fuentes Belles]

[Race: [Gorgon]

[Job: [Dark Shadow Spectral Death Spirit Queen]

[Level: [01/60]

[EXP: 0/120000]

[Rank: [B+]

[Status: [Strengthened, Cursed]

[HP: [5700/5700] – [8500/8500]

[MP: [13500/13500] – [18500/18500]{+2720}

[Attack: [2100] – [3200]{+100}

[Defense: [2330] – [3500]

[Magic: [14500] – [20000]{+2617}

[Agility: [6500] – [8500]{+575}

Characteristic Skills:

[Unique Skill: Supreme Magic]

[Unique Skill: Mana Siphon]

[Unique Skill: System]

[Unique Skill: Goddess] (Sealed)

[Undead: Lv-]

[Dark Element: Lv-]

[Death Element: Lv-]

[Poison Element: Lv-]

[Elemental Spirit: Lv-]

[Fiend Language: Lv8]

[Shadow Sneak: Lv9]

[Abyssal Body: Lv6]

[Supernatural Senses: Lv3]

[Poison Body: Lv1]

Resistance Skills:

[Status Effect Immunity: Lv-]

[Magic Damage Resistance: Lv9]

[Darkness Resistance: Lv8]

[Fear Resistance: Lv7]

[Elemental Resistance: Lv6]

[Poison/Toxin/Venom Absorption: Lv-]

Normal Skills:

[Ghost Touch: Lv9]

[Lesser Curse: Lv9]

[Life Drain: Lv9]

[Possession: Lv8]

[Dark Sphere: Lv10]

[Dark Gale: Lv9]

[Shadow Spear Arrow: Lv7]

[Materialized Shadow Barrier: Lv4]

[Shadow Manipulation: Lv8]

[Shadow Storage: Lv7]

[Undead Healing: Lv6]

[Fake Life: Lv8]

[Erase Presence: Lv5]

[Soul Eater: Lv5]

[Undead Detonation: Lv3]

[Stealth: Lv9]

[Summon: Lv5]

[Aura of Famine: Lv4]

[Disease and Poison Creation: Lv4]

[Pandora's Box: Lv4]

[Materialization: Lv6]

[Cooking: Lv3]

[Hunting: Lv3]

[Blade Slash: Lv3]

[Spirit Summon: Lv3]

[Shadow and Death Domain: Lv3]

[Gorgon's Five Cursed Eyes: Lv1]

[Gorgon's Transformation: Lv1]

[Split Thinking: Level 1]

Title Skills:

[The Dark Witch: Lv-]

[Dungeon Conqueror: Lv-]

[Big Game Slayer: Lv-]

[Taboo Mark: Lv-]

[Bringer of Misfortune: Lv7]

[Undead Queen: Lv6]

[Evil of the World: Lv4]

[Pickpocket: Lv4]

[Apprentice Swordsman: Lv4]

[Spirit Queen: Lv3]

[Spirit Mediator: Lv3]

[Poison Queen: Lv1]

Divine Protections:

[Hel's Divine Protection]

...

And they did! They increased by a whopping thousands! My Mana is already at 18k and my Magic... 20k?! What! I could quite literally blast anyone I want to death with that deadly attack! And oh? All my Skills leveled up once through the evolution, this must be the evolution Skill Level Bonus. Now, what else should I do?

Hm? Darkness Sphere has become Level 10 out of nowhere, I still remember it as my first ever offensive Skill... Now its at level 10! I think level 10 is the max, but there's no other Skill? It won't awaken or something? What about a derivative skill? I guess having Shadow Spear Arrow was already good, and Dark Gale... I suppose it won't become stronger than that.

Every Skill seems to have a cap I suppose, I might as well try it out now...

Dark Sphere!

FLASH!

A gigantic sphere of darkness materialized from within the darkness surrounding me, as it utilized a bit of Mana for its creation... Wow! I can see that's how Skill works in this world. The higher the level, the stronger they become but the more costly they get, the "bit" of mana was around 300 Mana... I remember that it used to cost way less...

Oh well, I recover almost a thousand Mana per second, so that's nothing, I could literally spam this overpowered Dark Spell, which seems to be the lowest tiered Darkness Attribute one, and make my way through. I wonder if my progress is fast or if someone else in this little time I've been a ghost has already reached a Level 10 in a Skill?

The System answered me rather swiftly. It appears that Level 10 Skills are super rare. Even if we count this low-level magic spell, it appears people wouldn't concentrate as much as me... Oh well, I also got the cheat of Mana Siphon which allows me to absorb Mana from a target, so maybe I can spam skills way more than normal people or monsters can do. Additionally, my affinity with this element is superb due to being a Ghost with the Darkness attribute after all.

Nonetheless, my progress was faster than normal people because I can evolve as a monster, also my own System appears to give me evolution options and bonus stats and so on, things that other normies cannot get... So of course I am special, I am amazing, in fact...

...Okay, let's stop being cocky.

Looking at my new Skills I found out I had suddenly gained the Poison Attribute Characteristic Skill which wasn't announced... The System actually answered me the reason.

I see...

Chapter 125

Now that I had checked my own Status and was satisfied with what I learned, it was time to check out my new Skills and their descriptions and effects! Knowing what each one does is important to achieve victory in this harsh world where the strong devours the weak... I do sound cliché with that statement but there is no other clearer truth than that.

...

[Poison Body: Lv1]

Grants the characteristic of making up your body into deadly poisonous gas. The intensity and deadliness of this poisonous gas can be changed at will, and the power it possess and its functions can be enhanced with each Skill Level. Your own body can become a deadly compound of poisonous chemicals, however, great practice and understanding of each chemical and more is required to utilize this power at its fullest potential, with higher levels, this understanding become clearer.

...

I see! This one skill really makes me a toxic woman. I love being toxic!

And to boot, I can even become a poisonous cloud?! Are you kidding me? This is not just stupid game poison that is purple or whatever, it lets me edit CHEMICALS, meaning that I could actually change myself into helium and then detonate myself and become a fire ghost or something? What if I become an even deadlier chemical such as uranium?

Will I create radioactive waves? How about other chemicals? Anything in the chemistry table is at my disposal now! The bad thing is that I sucked at chemistry and barely know any of them in detail, I would need intense practice and training, and probably leveling up the Skill, to learn what to do with that.

...

[Gorgon's Five Cursed Eyes: Lv1]

A deadly set of eyes, each eye has the power of inflicting a deadly curse, each has the power of Hypnosis, Confusion, Paralysis, Lethal Poison, and Petrification respectively. Overlapping these powers will ensure your opponents can't escape your phantasmal and deadly embrace.

The intensity of each Eye power is enhanced with each Level, and Resistance Skills against status effects can be slightly overpowered the higher the level of the Skill. Certain entities can resist this greater than others.

Hypnosis: Causes a target to feel hypnotized by your powers and beauty temporarily, being able to obey simple commands the more Mana and power you infuse into this eye.

Confusion: Can confuse a target's thoughts temporarily and throw their mind into complete chaos, disrupting their thought process and fighting capabilities.

Paralysis: Can Paralyze a target's body parts temporarily. Limbs of a target can be paralyzed separately from one another and so on.

Lethal Poison: Inflicts a deadly lethal poison that eats away the foe's HP temporarily.

Petrification: Unleashes a deadly light that forces the skin of a foe to petrify, slowing down their movements, at higher levels more than just skin can be petrified...

...

I see! I am really quite a toxic woman now, like there had never been before. These powerful new Eyes I possess can really do some nasty work for me. At Level 1 they're not that big of a deal though, I have to train them well to utilize them properly, however, it is possible to use them all together over a target or maybe multiple targets, as I have many eyes across my snake hair... perhaps I could use this and overlap these status effects in my targets.

Of course, all of this consumes Mana to utilize, and a lot, even more if I use all of them together, so I have to be cautious to not end up using more than I can drain in time.

...

[Gorgon's Transformation: Lv1]

Grants the user the ability to transform its body into snakes or a giant half-snake woman, the snakes can be used separately, and each one can share the user's mind, increasing the range of possibilities. Each little snake is capable of converting into a small humanoid form of the user, which also shares the same mind and is technically the same soul of the user. The giant half-snake woman form is strong physically,

receiving some strength bonuses, the long snake tail can be used as a deadly whip and as a limb to grab things. The power and versatility of this Skill increases with each level.

...

I see, so this is how it is. This one Skill allows me to have the snake tail and all of that, and even more, I seem to be able to divide myself into phantasmal snakes! And these snakes can separate from my main body even though I am also them, I could explore other places far away from where I currently am with no problem by employing these little snakes, and they can even turn into baby versions of myself! ...Ah, I don't know if that's good or not though.

I have to explore this Ability some more later, but for now, there are other Skills waiting for me to check them out.

...

[Split Thinking: Lv 1]

Through the usage of several heads and "brains" you're capable of splitting your thoughts and minds into several parts, each one being "you" but also separate from "you". The proficiency over such a technique is increased with each Skill Level.

...

A simple Skill that showcases the power of my new snake heads! With this, I can split my mind into each head, and it also works with the small snakes I can detach from my body as well.

...

[Poison/Toxin/Venom Absorption: Lv-]

Grants the user the power to absorb poison, venom, and all kinds of toxic materials into their body to absorb their compounds and also recover Mana. By using Mana, such compounds might be able to be replicated, although proficiency in other Skills would be required.

...

This one is more unique than I had expected! It allows me to absorb poisonous compounds into my body... now that's new! And it kind of reminds me of certain animals, such as bugs, that eat poisonous bugs, plants, or fungi to replicate their toxin... maybe it works similar.

Chapter 126

And lastly, the last Skill in the new Skills list is a Title Skill. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, prepare yourselves to see the might of the Poisonous Queen! I am literally the most toxic woman there can be now, and nobody is stopping me from spreading my toxicity around the world, bwahahaha!

...

[Poison Queen: Lv1]

You're the Poison Queen, and your power over poisonous, toxic, and venomous compounds is superb. Your knowledge of such chemical compounds is increased greatly, alongside your ability to learn more about them and to replicate and generate new ones. The power of your Poison Attribute Skills and Abilities is enhanced by +10% with each Skill Level. You naturally produce an aura of poison that can be toggled on and off, which spreads deadly poison around you.

....

This is a bit dangerous! I wouldn't really want my friends to just drop dead because I got a bit stinky... right? So, I am glad this thing comes turned off from the beginning... phew.

Now, now, it seems that this one Skill will allow me to learn how to replicate and create new compounds with ease! Perhaps with this, I will finally be able to showcase the true power of such venomous, poisonous, and toxic substances.

Also, the power of my poison increases with it, which is also pretty nice... Now that I am done looking at this stuff, I feel like napping a bit, it's the middle of the night, and I am honestly tired after evolving.

However, I decided to half-sleep, divided myself, and formed a few Ghost Snake Clones. They're like mini-me's in some sort of bizarre way. Looking at them while they look back at me makes a weird loop inside of my head where both of me are constantly looking at one another, and Ugh.

These three Snakes were thrown away from the caravan. As I used them to move back to the duchy, I had left behind, I decided to place them there to constantly spy on the people and on anything that might be happening.

They're sneaky, slim, and ghostly, so they can easily get past physical objects and hide. They do need mana of their own to sustain themselves, but they share Mana Siphon and can also hunt and eat little critters or monsters to maintain their energy and power stably in order to not simply POOF out of existence.

With these great friends at my side, I felt more confident about the prospects of gathering info from afar. I planned to spread them around way more, too, leaving them in every big duchy and village I find, so this way I can easily gather info and recon while doing nothing there... hehe, this way I can spread my eyes without anyone noticing!

I had tested them beforehand, realizing they have a limit of up to 8 Skills they can be assigned, so I had given them the very basics and also the Gorgon Eyes. They could even attack enemies from afar and act as assassins for me! Well, they're technically me...

But well, their mana reserves are low, and their magic stat is also low. All of it is low, so I don't think they can do EVERYTHING as easily. I haven't become instantly invincible.

However, I've learned a great deal of stuff from them as they traveled. Also, I found out they can indeed become baby versions of myself... seeing them transform into Mini Marias sent shivers down my phantasmal spine. Thinking about my friends seeing them and then trying to get one for themselves as a

pet frightens me. So I've decided to keep the fact they can become small versions of me a secret and simply limit them to being small ghost snakes. That's for the better, to be honest.

After that was done, I felt a bit weak. Taking out chunks of my phantom or soul is not painful, but it does indeed make you feel weakened, so I decided to finally nap over the caravan, snuggling over the hay and leather clothes while the horses carried us to our destination. If anything happens I'll know right away anyways thanks to my special senses, but a nap is much required as of now to calm down my tired mind from all these evolutions, testing, skill checking, and internal monologues.

Now, goodnight...

...

And I am awake! While I slept, I felt my soul and phantom regenerate back to normal. It took some time and some Mana, but they regenerated back to normal easily and without issues.

It appears everything is going according to keikaku, we had traveled a great deal of distance through last night, and we were only a few kilometers short from reaching the goblin village. The horses moved surprisingly fast, most likely because they were Undead. I had risen from dead horses.

"Maria-sama, good morning!"

"Master... Good morning."

"So you're finally awake, huh?"

Emeraldine, Partner, and Lucifer greeted me this morning, alongside the cute Kuro, who was actually sleeping at my side at one point in the night. The other three had been mostly protecting the caravan while I slept.

"Good morning! How was the night? Did everything go well?" I asked.

“Yes, there were some wild beasts, but we slew them swiftly, so nothing big happened aside from that little mishap.” Said Lucifer.

“Yeah! Though I feel like I want to sleep now... I am sleepy, master.” Sighed Partner.

“I am also quite sleepy...” said Emeraldine.

As it was the morning, around 6 AM, Emeraldine and Partner decided to take a nap, for now, cuddling at each side of my body.

“Eh? I thought we were going to have breakfast....”

“Zzzzz...”

“Zzzzz...”

“I guess the two fell asleep already... What about you?” I asked.

“I will also take a nap, don’t mind me.” Said Lucifer, resting at the other side of the caravan where we were.

Huh, after everything that happened yesterday, having them all here does feel a bit weird... But I am also happy to have them in my life- I mean, death.

Chapter 127

In the morning, we were already halfway through the road back to the Goblin Village. I had woken up with the intention of having breakfast, but after their night shift, everyone came back to me to sleep at my side. However, Lucifer wasn’t as bold as these two girls, as he slept rather separated from me. At this

point, I wouldn't have minded if he tried to get closer, sheesh! No need to be so rude to the girl you love so much! Fufu...

Anyways, I ended up sleeping with them for a few more hours until we all woke up around 10 AM, the twins were getting hungry, and they rushed into this caravan to ask me for breakfast.

"Maria!"

"Nee-sama!"

Takeshi and Laura, our two adorable children- I mean, our new companions came rushing towards me, and the two adorable little kids jumped over my torso. I felt like I would have been crushed if I wasn't a ghost... but as a ghost, it wasn't so bad.

"Ugh... Kids, you don't have to jump on me every morning, you know?" I sighed

"Hehe, but you're a ghost, so it doesn't matter, right?" Said Takeshi.

"Sorry, but we like to hug you." Said Laura while nodding.

"Y-You do? Why so much?" I asked.

"I don't know exactly why, but it feels good to hug you, nee-sama," Said Takeshi.

"You're fluffy and comfortable to hug," Said Laura.

The two kids hugged my torso, and I realized they were also rubbing their faces over my chest. Ah, I see, that's why I am so fluffy and comfortable? It's because of these two massive things.

"I think you kids are a bit perverted... But okay, let's have breakfast already. I am also starving!" I said.

“Really? Ah, you got horns!” Shouted Takeshi.

“Yeah, you got horns... what is that about?” Asked Laura.

“Well, well, well, did you finally realize? I had evolved, of course! Monsters like me evolve frequently! After reaching level 40, I evolved and became a glorious Gorgon!” I said.

“G-Gorgon?!” Asked Laura.

“What’s that?” Wondered Takeshi.

Laura and Takeshi are from another world like me, but Takeshi was a kid, so maybe he didn’t know what a Gorgon was. However, Laura kind of knew.

“That name is like that one Greek creature... or character... like a snake or something? Snake woman?” She asked.

“Pin pon! Indeed, it is like that one woman... Erm, like Medusa’s sister or whatever. Anyways, look, snakes!” I said as I waved my hand and a dozen ghost snakes came out of my hand while my hair suddenly awakened, and the tips also had snakeheads.

“Hiissss...!”

“Gyshaaa!”

“Grrysshhh...”

They all were very adorably hissing at them! Do you like my act of snake? They obviously don’t have a mind of their own. Each snake is just me acting like one because it would be boring if that wasn’t the case, right? When you find a snake-haired woman, you want to see the snakes in action.

“UWAAAHH?!” Cried Takeshi, falling over his butt as the snakes began to entangle his body.

“W-What is this?! GYAH!” Cried Laura, just as scared.

She pretends to be a mature girl, but she is scared of these snakes anyway hehehe.

“Scary, right? Hehe, this is the power of the Gorgon Ghost! I am the master of snakes now!” I laughed.

Fufu, I’ve always wondered if I could be scary, even for those that know me very well. With this, everyone will be surprised. The kids are very scared indeed! There’s something deep inside of me as a ghost telling me to scare people a lot, so I inherently feel good by doing this! But I should stop doing it, or I would just come out as an asshole, more than I am- Ah?

“So cute!”

“T-They’re actually cute....”

However, Takeshi and Laura showed to be more formidable and fearless than I ever thought! Were they actually petting my snakes? Laura even kissed one in the palm of her hand! It’s not that I like it or something... I mean... It kind of feels nice to be petted as a snake... Is living as a pet that relaxing? I wonder...

“W-Wait! Aren’t you scared?” I asked.

“Well, maybe at first! But they’re cute and harmless, that little tongue they stick outside sometimes, and the snout they got and those cute eyes....” Said Laura.

“W-Wait, hold on! Are you actually liking snakes?” I asked.

“T-They’re cute! Can you make as many as you want, nee-sama? Can we keep some as pets?” Asked Takeshi.

“Erm... Well...”

If I tell them these snakes are just me, it will come out as weird because I’ve already made them act as snakes... And being a pet doesn’t sound so bad. I also could protect them if I give them a “familiar,” which is just a clone of me... so fine.

“Sure, you can keep only one though,” I said.

“Yay! I will call mine Grape!” Exclaimed Takeshi.

“I’ll call mine Medusa....” Muttered Laura.

“I-I guess you can do that, go on... name them if you want....” I sighed.

I don’t know how, but I ended up being a part-time pet for these kids, but I can’t say I dislike it. In fact, it sounds like fun! ...Wait, I think something is affecting my mind. There’s no way I would ever think like that.

Is having multiple minds affecting my thoughts and diverging them constantly? It feels as if there were multiple me’s within me, but they’re all just me.

Wow, so complicated. Let’s just move on.

I guess I should obey that other me there. No point going around it. Not like anything bad will happen.

Yeah, in fact, it might be useful to multitask and do a lot of stuff at the same time in multiple places and areas. I have not thought about that yet...

Oh, I am right... I could just do that! I can’t wait to get back to the Goblin Village then~

I will spread my snakes when we get there, although I can't abuse this, or I'll end up weakening.

Chapter 128

I had discovered something while dividing myself. If I do it too much at the same time, I risk damaging my own soul. You see, to divide me, I take a chunk of my phantom and a tiny bit of my soul with each little snake clone. This doesn't seem like a big problem because I got a bunch of soul and phantom to spare, but if I continuously do this, I might risk weakening myself by taking too much soul... Phantom doesn't matter, but Soul does, so I have to keep it balanced.

If I make too many clones, I need to heal for the moment using Undead Healing and rest a bit to calm down the soul and mental exhaustion.

Anyways, I just need to be careful, and that's it.

I had given the kids a clone each, so the clone could be used to keep them safe, while they also named it as if it were a tamed ghost snake monster... I don't know if they will grow by themselves, but they do feel like me and share the same mind and consciousness with me, so... it feels as if I were living multiple identities. They don't know I am Grape and Medusa after all!

Heh...

Suddenly, the two snakes smiled a bit rather maliciously. This was my smile, actually, which got shared with them...

Oops.

The kids didn't notice it, though, and thought the snakes were just being cute or something. This made it possible for me to keep my farse, hehe.

Maybe I should gift a pet snake ghost to everyone so I can keep an eye on everyone's daily lives as a total creep.

But that would be not good, so I better not do that... I called back my snakes and fused them into my body except for Grape and Medusa, which are my new two identities as "tamed" pets.

After the kids played with the snakes, they got hungry again. I had forgotten to feed them.

My bad, my bad, I actually just don't have a stomach, so I don't feel any hunger, but I am just gluttonous and like to eat because it's tasty and fun.

"Now, let's go eat something because you two are starving. Let's stop the caravan for now and have a break! The people we are carrying also need to be fed," I said.

"Alright!" Shouted Laura.

"Sure!" Said Takeshi.

"You three are sleeping way too much. Wake up already!" I said as I woke up Lucifer, Emeraldine, and Partner.

All three of them were very tired and woke up sleepy, even Lucifer and Partner, who are supposedly tireless Undead. I guess when you get tired mentally, you really just want to take a nap for a few hours.

"Uwah! W-What happened? Huh? Did I oversleep?" Asked Emeraldine.

"You sure did! Now let's go prepare something to eat," I said.

"Eat! Food!" Shouted Partner.

"I want to sleep some more... that wasn't near as enough!" Exclaimed Lucifer.

“You’re sleeping later. Now come eat with us, grandpa,” I said.

“I am not a grandfather!” Shouted Lucifer.

“You’re being a bit too much now. Let’s just go eat. Don’t be like that~” I said, waving my hand and walking away with the twins and the girls.

Lucifer followed us from behind while mumbling words angrily. He had woken up grumpy like always.

We made the Undead Horses stop moving, which we had gotten from the dead horses I had accidentally killed, which belonged to the first wave of soldiers that attacked me back inside the duchy. I had picked up their corpses and made them into Zombie Horses, which are tireless and don’t need food too. Perfect.

However, we still feed them some fruits and let them eat grass, which they could somehow. After that, we gathered the people around us and began to cook something.

We still had a few dozen sandwiches, cakes, pastries, bread, and more that we got from the cafeteria, alongside all the food and provisions I had stolen from the rich guy houses, which I had gathered inside my cheat Inventory.

I began to distribute the food around to the people so they could eat something quickly. Then we began cooking something more filling: boar meat and bone soup, which was rich and had a lot of flavors. It had potatoes, onions, and carrots, alongside some salt and spices.

The people enjoyed the sandwiches and other food, and then we distributed the soup, which was the main dish and would fill their bellies the most.

It was nice that the trio had to hunt down beasts at night, so we had a lot of boar, bear, and other beasts’ meat to cook and make a lot of soup. The big chunks of meat were very generous, and everyone got their fill with them too.

Due to my own irresponsibility, I had only given the people some bread and water last night, and I went to sleep like nothing, completely forgetting I should have given them some more food.

So this morning, I apologized to everyone deeply, but everyone stopped me and said it wasn't necessary.

"Please don't worry, you've done so much for us already...."

"That's right. The food is already good, and we already got our bellies filled!"

"Yes, it was very tasty... Can I have seconds?!"

"Sure! There's more soup where that came from... I'll make sure to give you extra meat and potatoes to fill up that belly," I said.

"T-Thank you!"

The people all asked for seconds, and we ended cooking all the meat they had hunted overnight. After all, there were over 40 people, that's not easy to satisfy.

The soup was also tasty for me too! I ate various bowls myself. The boar and bear meat was surprisingly tasty, and the potatoes, onions, and carrots boiled with them really filled up my belly. Well, I don't need to fill my belly...

After everything was over and everyone got their bellies filled, we packed things up and continued our journey across the road. I sat down at the entrance of the leading caravan, and as I glanced at the grassland in front of me, the calming breeze soothed my heart, and I just closed my eyes and relaxed.

It's a nice day today.

—

“When are we getting back?” Asked Laura.

“Erm, I don’t know, in a couple of hours, maybe in a day or two,” I said.

“What are goblins like?” Asked Takeshi.

“Right... You’ve never seen them before, have you?” I sighed.

After the meal, it had been almost half a day since we had continued our journey back to the goblin village. The place is mostly peaceful, the road is mostly unscathed and filled with nature, and the breeze is nice and relaxing, coupled with the lovely and warm sun. You can’t ask for anything better.

But that’s not all! There is also the relaxing feeling of simply sitting over the caravan and being carried by the horses while you see the beautiful scenery...

But of course, children are hyperactive and probably are bored by now, so in order to quench their thirst for attention, I talked with them about stuff in order to entertain them. But quite honestly, I don’t wanna... I wanna chill!

But they don’t let me, and they’re so cute! *Sigh*... okay, I will talk to them.

“Erm... Lucifer knows more about them; he has a title about goblins,” I said.

“Eh?! Me?” He asked.

He was also mostly relaxing and chilling while looking at the scenery.

Meanwhile, Emeraldine was taking another nap, and Partner was practicing blood magic in silence while playing around with tiny blood familiar she created in the shape of a bat.

"You do?" Asked Laura.

"Uncle Lucifer, tell us about goblins!" Shouted Takeshi.

Lucifer sighed as he looked at the two kids with a grumpy face. He really didn't want to talk about anything, he just wanted to chill out or something, but I wasn't letting him, hehehehehe...

"Ugh... Fine. Goblins are green-skinned little people. They're hard workers but usually weak, almost as weak as humans. But they make up for it with numbers, flexibility, and a better understanding of nature. They're innate survivors... it shows in how they had been surviving in the wild for so long," Said Lucifer.

"They're green and have big noses, well, some of them," Added Partner.

"And their ears are pointy," I said.

"Like Elves?" Asked Laura.

"Yeah, they're not ugly, but not the prettiest race either," I said.

"Ooh... they're interesting! Are they of our size?" Wondered Takeshi.

"I would say so, maybe a bit smaller depending on how tall you guys really are... you will naturally outgrow them if you keep growing like normal people... but you're clearly not normal people, so I don't know how your growth will go about," I said.

"I see! Well, I can't wait to meet them! I am happy that we can finally go to a place where we can finally belong... maybe they can welcome us?" Asked Takeshi.

"For sure, Goblins are very welcoming of other races. They're one of the most open-minded races. It is not a cultural thing. It seems to be in their very natures... And this is why many villages had also perished to the humans. They get tricked easily...." Sighed Lucifer.

“But our village is doing super fine! Nothing too bad had happened, although some adventurers had tried to come looking for them, but my Undead hunted them down and converted them into Undead by biting them, like a zombie disease from movies!” I laughed.

“W-Wow, that’s an actual thing?” Asked Laura.

“Of course! Hehehe,” I laughed maliciously.

“That’s a bit scary... Grape...” Sighed Takeshi as he hugged his snake pet, which was secretly me.

“Gryyyssshh...” I pretended to be a snake as I licked Takeshi’s cheek.

He became happy and petted me.

Being a pet is not easy. It comes with many difficulties, and one of them is having to act like an animal.

“Don’t worry about it, these zombies are pretty friendly and good people, you just have to greet them and say “hello!” and they’ll even say hello back! ...Well, sometimes, not all the time, though,” I said.

“O-Oh... Getting used to Undead will be hard...” Muttered Laura.

“Well, I am an Undead... Partner too. And Lucifer!” I said.

“But even then, it will be hard to do it with... Erm, other Undead,” Said Takeshi.

“Yeah, but that will be the fun part, you’ll have to try hard to become their friends, but it will bring you a lot of joy in the long run, because they’re so nice and amicable! You gotta just meet them, and you’ll see!” I said.

“Well, even if you end up disliking them, you can always just ignore them. The Goblin people are nice and gentle, there are many kids with them too, and they’re all unique and entertaining. So you can have a lot of fun playing them... They’re also hunters, crafters, and more. From a young age, the goblin is taught many things to survive. Ah, there are also a lot of former slaves with them too, so there’s a variety of humans, elves, dwarves, and more,” Said Lucifer.

“W-Wow! It sounds like a lot of fun....” Said Takeshi.

“Can’t wait to get there...” Muttered Laura.

“You’re making them even more impatient... Ah, how about some ice cream? It’s rather hot,” I said.

“Ice cream!”

The two kids rushed at me as if they were waiting for it all this time.

I took out some pots with ice cream and shared it with them, but Lucifer, Partner, and Emeraldine, who just woke up, also asked for it.

“Surprising coming from you. I thought you disliked sweets!” I said, looking at Lucifer.

“I dislike the majority, but... this thing is good. The flavor... creaminess... I-It’s all good,” He muttered.

“Hehe, I see, so you’ve grown weak against ice cream, haven’t you?” I asked with a cheeky smile.

“I am not weak against ice cream! I just like it,” He said while blushing.

He seemed to be as tsundere as ever. He never changes.

“I am not weak against ice cream! I just like it,” He repeated while blushing again.

Suddenly, I came out with a malefic plan to tease this old dragon even more than before. Hehe...

"If you like it so much, you can eat some here," I said, as I pointed him my spoon.

"H-Huh? W-What are you doing? T-That's..."

Chapter 130

"I am not weak against ice cream! I just like it," He repeated while blushing again.

Suddenly, I came out with a malefic plan to tease this old dragon even more than before. Hehe...

"If you like it so much, you can eat some here," I said, as I pointed him my spoon.

"H-Huh? W-What are you doing? T-That's..."

"What's wrong? Didn't you want to kiss me before? How about an indirect one?" I asked.

"Eh?! Sh-Shut up! I won't let myself be teased by... your... smile...." He muttered as I smiled coquettishly at him.

He swallowed saliva as he slowly approached the spoon with ice cream.

However, Partner caught it like a furious and adorable shark and ate the ice cream on it.

"Ah! Partner?!" Exclaimed Lucifer angrily.

"You were taking too long, idiot dragon," Muttered Partner.

"Who are you calling idiot dragon?!" He roared.

"W-What happened here? I feel like there's some hidden sexual tension in between you three...."
Muttered Emeraldine.

"Funnily enough, that's exactly it...." I sighed.

"Well, you were incentivizing it!" Shouted Lucifer.

"Why don't you act like a civilized person and just be more open?" Suggested Emeraldine.

"Eh? Ah... It's hard...." Sighed Lucifer.

"I guess he has a hard time being a civilized person, so it's hard for him to open his emotions and all of that," I said.

"He was never civilized," Said Partner.

"I was! S-Stop teasing me..." Muttered Lucifer.

"I am sorry, but it's very hard not to tease you... you become very funny when you're teased," I said.

"Tch..." Lucifer clicked his tongue as he continued eating his ice cream.

We continued eating ice cream while enjoying the cold breeze of the night. It was getting a bit late after we enjoyed the ice cream, though, so I made the caravan stop moving for the moment, and we decided to cook up some more food for the people.

While cooking, there were some new things that I wanted to experiment with. There was some oil around, some spices, meat, eggs, and above all, stale and hard as rock bread.

“What are you doing?” Asked Lucifer, as he saw me pouring oil over a large pan I got from one of the rich dude’s kitchens.

“We are doing tempura!” I shouted.

“Tempura? What’s that? Looks fun!” Said Partner.

“Uwah! Tempura? Really?” Asked Takeshi.

As a Japanese, this boy knew what it was.

“Tempura is just fried and crunchy food. Usually meat, shrimp, and all sorts of other things. It can even be veggies too. You cover them in batter and then deep fry them in boiling oil. The result is crunchy meals filled with the flavors we all crave, greasy ones,” I said.

“Sounds strange...” Muttered Lucifer.

“But I am intrigued,” He continued.

“Sounds interesting. I had never eaten fried food before. How is it even made? Just the oil?” Asked Emeraldine.

“I already told you how it’s made! But I will show you how it’s made in real life!” I shouted.

“Oooh, sounds like fun! Make something yummy, master!” Said Partner.

“Alright dear, our first candidates for today’s tempura are... Bear meat, boar meat, strange bird meat, and snake meat we just hunted!” I said.

Just now, we came across a nest of strange gigantic snakes. I had tried to tame them because I thought Gorgons could do that, but they ended up trying to gang on me. The snakes were around 10 meters big and were named Giant Boas. They were D-Rank threats.

They were big and filled with tasty and tender meat, so we butchered a bunch of them. A few dozen of them are being grilled in the fire with some simple spices and salt for the people to eat, but we’ll try them out in other ways.

I had already washed them out, and Partner helped me clean the blood out of the meat we had, and I had cut them into different cuts and stored them inside my inventory. Now, I slowly took them all out, putting them over a table I had also stolen.

I am not a pickpocket for nothing. Stealing is my life, after all.

The meat of the snakes was white and silky, rather beautiful, and also tender, like chicken. There was also the meat of the bear, which was very red. I had cut the softer areas and had some grease on them, and when grilled, they had tons of tasty juices. There was also the boar meat, which I cut off into cutlets.

And lastly, the strange bird meat. There was this weird colorful bird we found on our way here, and it looked like a two-meter-tall chicken with colorful feathers named Dancing Kokaroo. I had intended to make it a tamed pet because it was honestly very pretty, but Lucifer crushed it before I could say anything... but from these chickens, we got the breast meat, which seemed tender and tasty.

Having everything ready, I began my cooking session. I started to make the batter and mix the eggs together. After that, I ground the super hard stale bread into crumbs, and when that was done, I took out the meat from the marination I was doing, which was being covered in all sorts of aromatic and medicinal herbs alongside lemon and orange juice.

When that was over with, I put some salt on them and passed them through the egg, and then the bread crumbs until completely covered...

“The oil is ready,” Said Lucifer, who had been looking at the oil boil.

“Alright...!”

I took the pieces of varied meat with chopsticks I made myself and began to deep fry them.

The smell of fried bread-covered meat filled the entire camp, and quickly after that, we ended up having a whole army of people looking at us cook... they were all drooling.

“Here, the first batch is ready!” I shouted, picking up the fried meat.

It was perfect! Golden brown and perfectly cooked inside!

I put some salt on it and then sprinkled some extra lemon. And it was ready! It looked tasty as fuck! I wish there was soy sauce... Sniff.

Crunch.

The delicious crunchiness and strong flavor of fried meat, accompanied with the spices we added, the lemon and orange juice, and all of that made for the amazing and perfect combination of flavors. We were losing our minds.

“W-What is this?! It’s actually amazing?!” Exclaimed Lucifer in shock.

“W-Wooow!” Shouted Emeraldine.

“More... I want more!” Chanted Partner.

“Amazing, this is just like the Tempura I remember! I wish there was tempuras sauce to go with it... or soy sauce! But the salt and the lemon are good enough!” Said Takeshi.

“Good!” Shouted Laura, stuffing her mouth.

“Mrao!” Kuro even ate a bunch himself.

In the end, I had to make most of the meat into Tempura, and we ended up using all the stale bread nobody wanted to eat into these. I also made some mayonnaise using eggs and oil, which was nice with the tempura.

We also enjoyed it with some nice booze and wine, and we got almost drunk, but sadly, I can’t get drunk, so I just enjoyed the spiciness of it.

The night had already fallen, and I enjoyed it with my friends while looking at the moonlight.

It was a nice night.
