

A Ghost 421

Chapter 421 A Room Filled With Important People!

After the old hag named Aquamarine calmed down, things finally began their pace once more. The guild master introduced themselves to us, and also the Viscountess. They seemed rather polite- well, the old hag was not that polite, but she quickly changed her personality completely after she was done with the two old men.

“Sorry for what happened earlier, I swear I don’t let my emotions get the best of me like that. I was just... very angered. And to boot those two idiots laughed at my concern, seriously...” Sighed Aquamarine. “My name is Aquamarine, I am the Guild Master of the Hammer Stone Guild, I am also the cousin of these two idiots and I am sincerely grateful for what you’ve done to our family. These two clowns, despite their idiocy, are incredibly craftsmen of our country who had done many great things. Their lost was very hurtful to all of us, we had practically given them for dead. Seeing them alive is truly a good thing. And to think that you rescued them from slavery also fills me with a feeling of gratitude.”

“And I am Adamas, the Guild Master of the Iron Steel Guild.” Said the cyclops. “I am a new Guild Master that has been given the title after the late one retired. I have been a Guild Master for only five years now, but I am doing my best for my guild. Seeing these two teachers fills me with happiness. I was taught many valuable things in my life by them, such as smithing, hunting monsters, and even skills. It was a very sad day when they were registered as dead after many years since they disappeared, I am glad to see them back.”

“A-And I am the Viscountess, Ruby...” Said the red-haired dwarf woman. “You also have my thanks for bringing them here.”

“I see... Erm, it is nice to meet you all.” I said. I could clearly feel the enormous pressure of these three important figures of this country and their stares. They were analyzing my entire appearance and that of my party rather meticulously.

After a long conversation of the twin dwarves explaining everyone what had happened, alongside their decision of staying in my town to become my citizens all while saying that we came here looking for raw materials, the trio of figures quickly understood the situation.

“I see, so you’re now throwing away your homes and going to live elsewhere, huh?” Sighed Aquamarine. “You’re really hopeless, but at least, come home to meet all your grandkids, you two clowns.”

"We'll do, we'll do! Don't get angry now, Aquamarine." Sighed Baldur.

"Yeah, yeah." Ballardur said.

"So your intentions in this country are purchasing ores and materials, selling potions you've made yourselves, and also visiting the dungeons and perhaps mining your own ores, is that it?" Wondered the Viscountess. "I suppose we could grant all of you Citizenship IDs and also Licenses from both guilds."

"Eh? What?!" I couldn't help but scream in surprise over the sudden offer.

"It would merely be a reward for what you've done for us, a small one at that, you can ask the Guild Masters for any other favor as well." Said the Viscountess.

The two guild masters nodded.

"Then I've got a request." Said Baldur. "Can we give them some tax discounts? And also freedom to explore and mine as much as they want?"

"Yeah, pretty much that's what we wanted." Said Ballardur.

"T-That's a bit of a stretch..." Said Adamas. "At most, we can reduce the tax to twenty percent, if we do no tax at all, we won't earn a dime... Also, about freedom of mining and exploring, I guess that's what every guild member has, but giving them complete freedom to come and take anything they want would be also too much, after all our entire economy is maintained by this mountain's mines."

"...Nonetheless, I see that you've gotten attached to them, so you get my approval." Said Aquamarine.

"What? But Senior...!" Adamas said.

"Calm down, Adamas. This mountain is gigantic, a thousand years and we had yet to mine half of it, there's also several dangerous areas we had yet to explore due to the dangerous monsters in there,

think about all the ores we could get if we could request these tremendously strong people to take care of these areas..." Aquamarine said.

"Strong?!" Adamas asked, looking back at us. "But I don't see much strength from them..."

"Of course, you lack [Appraisal]" Sighed the old lady.

"WAIT, APPRAISAL?!" I asked.

Did she saw I was a ghost, and that Lucifer is a dragon and Partner a Vampire?!

"Hmm, I do have it." The old hags gaze grew sharp. "You're all very strong. Especially if you were able to defeat many slavers and criminals as you proclaim to have done... Fear not, my Appraisal Skill is only Level 3 after all this time, I can't really see much of what you have, but I can see the stats, and they're... tremendously high."

"I feel a bit gross by being peeked at like this..." Lucifer said.

"Isn't it illegal to have my status be seen just like that?!" Partner angrily barked.

"Uugh, this feels a bit... Uncomfortable." Sighed Takeshi.

"I hope she doesn't see anything dangerous..." Laura said.

"Haha, I am sorry. It is a bad custom I have to peek at other people's status. Now that we are done here, why don't you come to my home? I can invite you to some tea so we can discuss things more personally." Said the lady. "If you agree to the things we want to give to you, I have a few requests I could give to you, of course, with great rewards as well."

Aquamarine seemed rather mysterious, but she had a higher authority here, even the Viscountess was bossed around by her. Perhaps aside from position, age and wisdom also paid a big role in the dwarven society.

And like that, we were invited into the Guild Master's home.

Chapter 422 The History Of Ancient Dragons

We were served not only delicious looking and expansive looking cake, but also cookies, expensive tea, and other snacks served over the plate. Helga was left shocked by seeing the products here. Apparently cake was something even more expensive for dwarves, who lacked wheat because it couldn't grow properly in here and therefore all wheat had to be imported from the outside, often done by the Goldsand Confederation. Only nobles had the privilege of enjoying such meals, I guess.

"Come on, eat to your heart's content. People as strong as you I'm sure you're able to make ten times the money this cake costs in just a minute of hunting a high ranked monster." Laughed the lady.

"T-Then... Thank you for the meal!" I said, everybody with me quickly began eating everything. The twins had come with us as well, so they were having fun eating the sweets, which they had in very little quantities back home.

I ended losing myself in the food until I found myself being interrogated by the old lady.

"So you're a ghost, huh?" She wondered. "Well... more like something called Beelzebub, I've never heard of such a thing before. Also the skills you have... oh dear." She sighed. "You're all monsters beyond what I had ever thought possible. I am a pretty good actor at keeping cool about it, eh?"

She knew everything!

"Eh? Ghost?" Asked Helga, looking at me.

"Ahaha... Yeah, I am kind of a ghost." I sighed.

"O-Oh, but it doesn't look like it." Said Helga.

"I... err, well, it is part of my magic." I said.

"I-I see... Well, you seem very civilized, also you can eat?!" She asked again.

"Yep." I said.

"...Well, I will just let it go. It is not as if this will affect me somehow." Helga quickly let it go.

"Also the one there is an Ancient Death Dragon and you... a Vampire." Said the old hag. "Oh right, and you two children, Homunculus? What are humans even doing anymore?" She sighed.

"It is a long story..." I sighed.

"Master, should we get rid of her so she doesn't talk?" Wondered Partner.

"What? No! Calm down a bit, Partner. Take it easy." I calmed down my Partner as I looked back at the old lady. "If I wanted, it wouldn't be hard to just brainwash her for all I know."

"I am well aware I am left rather hopeless against you all, in fact I am sure you could even wipe out the entire country if you just pleased to do so. The only beings that can compare to you are S Rank Adventurers, or high ranked monsters or Vampires, I would guess that's what you hunt, right? The later?" She wondered.

"Yep, we are hunting them down, we already killed one in Affnaria." I said. I didn't had anything to hide anymore I guess.

"...Amazing. You're also civilized and talk just like people- Well, you're people, our country is so open over other tribes that it is not hard for me to accept you all. An Ancient Dragon though... this is the first time I see one in the flesh." Aquamarine said.

"I am aware that my tribe in this continent was small... After the war against the Demon King we... we were hunted down by the Summoned Heroes." Sighed Lucifer.

"The summoned heroes..." Said the lady.

"The humans used nasty tactics, they stole our younglings and our eggs and blackmailed us into surrendering so they wouldn't harm our young..." Sighed Lucifer. "My entire family... everything I had was lost. I died before I could see the end of it all, but now that I've arrived here, I can already sense that there might not be anybody else that is an Ancient Dragon anymore."

"Ancient Dragon Lucifer, are you not? I mildly remember your name." Said the old lady. "We came into these mountains after the Ancient Dragon tribe was defeated, but according to the annals of our history, our founder had spoken with Ancient Dragons." Said Aquamarine.

"He did?!" Lucifer asked in surprise.

"Yes. Judging by your reaction, I am pretty sure you also came here to investigate about the remnants of your family, is it not?" Wondered the lady.

"Yeah... I... I've been holding into this hope that I might see them, someone, anybody..." Sighed Lucifer.

"I see, these mountains once belonged to the prideful Ancient Dragon Tribe, you were beings of great power and magic capable of bringing life and judgement. Some even said you were the children of the gods... Are all such things true?" Wondered Aquamarine.

"Not us, but our ancestors were able to do such things." Lucifer spoke. "We descended from the Ancient Divine Dragons, who are also the children of the Dragon Goddesses, the Progenitors of the many dragons of this world, and the guardians of the world itself. We didn't possess the incredible divine powers of our ancestors, but we were strong and still capable of shaping the landscape and making life flourish with our Ancient Dragon Magic. Alas, I've lost it now. I died long ago but was revived by Maria as an Undead, I evolved after gaining the power of Hel, the Goddess of Death shared from Maria, and I became a Death Dragon, I am neither alive, nor dead, I am something in between now."

"Incredible..." Aquamarine said. "The Herald of Hel herself, you're someone that might bring death to all." Aquamarine pointed her glance at me as I was wolfing down a shortcake.

"Huh? Ah... I don't really want that..." I said while quickly trying to swallow the cake I had in my mouth, quickly putting it down with some tea. "Phew..."

"Hahaha, I guess you're way too goofy for that." Laughed the dwarf old lady.

"Goofy?! I can get serious too!" I roared back. "Nonetheless, what do you even want, Aquamarine? You're just talking, revealing secrets, and seem just interested in us overall. But what's your endgame?" I asked her directly.

"Hm, I guess I can just talk now, huh? Well... what I want to do are various things. I've been waiting for someone strong like you. Several years ago, you see, we found a dungeon in the depths of the mountain. Back then, we foolishly charged inside, only to be greeted with deathly miasma that melted away the flesh of my friends and monstrous aberrations beyond what our strongest weapons could properly handle." Said Aquamarine.

"Miasma?!" I asked.

"Yes... amidst the miasma, I remember seeing a gigantic skeleton wandering across an endless abyss of darkness... This nightmarish dungeon had been sealed by magic, but the last ten years, its miasma has been leaking, enhancing the strength of local monsters, and the seals are weakening as well... We even speculate that inside this ancient dungeon we should had never stepped into, there might be a Fragment of the Evil God."

Chapter 423 Shocking News And A Dangerous Dungeon

423 Shocking News And A Dangerous Dungeon

Out of nowhere, the lady guild master told us some rather shocking news! Apparently, there was a certain dungeon in this mountain which was discovered and promptly sealed by the best mages around the country. This was because it didn't just had some nasty monsters inside, but had a sea of pure Miasma inside, alongside what many speculate to be one of the Fragments of the Evil God which had been sealed in this mountain long ago.

"So there's Miasma down there..." Partner said. "Ugh, this is bad, the last time we fought with someone that used Miasma, we almost all died!"

"Yeah... But we had grown stronger from back then, right?" Emeraldine sighed. "I've developed new magic that could be of help as well...!"

"You two are optimistic, I see." I sighed.

"Wait, what's with this enemy with Miasma?" Wondered Aquamarine. "Come on, talk a bit!"

"Well, you already know I am an Ancient Dragon and that we have a Vampire and a Ghost, I guess we can trust her a bit more information, right, Maria?" Lucifer asked. "I also want... to explore that dungeon, I think there's something down there... My memories are coming back a bit, maybe I might be able to remember something about that place."

"Huh... Well, I guess we can tell her... But how can we really trust you, Aquamarine?" I asked.

"Hmph, you're really untrusty of people, huh, Beelzebub?" Sighed Aquamarine.

"Name's Maria, thank you very much." I said angrily.

The old lady waved her hands as if saying "yeah, yeah" and then took out a strange paper imbued with a lot of magical runes.

"This is a special item we produce named Magic Contracts. There are three variety, Mortal Contracts, Magic Contracts, and Soul Contracts. This is the Soul Contract, the strongest of them all. With this item we can make a promise tied to our souls. Because of such a power, the one that tries to disobey the promise will receive a strong attack into their souls that might kill them on the spot. It is too lethal, so it is not used that much unless it is a special promise... if you don't trust me, how about using this?" She asked.

"Uuuuuh, yeah, no. I won't..." I said. "I doubt I am at good keeping promises and I don't want you dead, old hag..." I sighed. "I'll just trust you for now. If you dare betray me I'll come haunt you and your next generations."

"A fitting response for a ghost, I suppose." She sighed.

"Well, we can tell you a bit about it. We are in kind of a Vampire Hunt." I said. "We lastly fought a powerful Vampire that was given something named Demon's Heart Core... It transformed into an absolute aberration."

"A-Aberration? And Vampires? So those bastards that had been tormenting the humans are still going strong, huh? And you defeated one that used a fragment of the Evil God? So the Albraun Kingdom is really holding into this item and using it, huh..."

"I don't know the details..." I said, half-lying. "But I know the Vampires are controlling that Kingdom... As a ghost, I was a witch burned in there, due to my resentment and amazing magic power, I ended turning into a ghost, tormented the place, escaped, and I've been freeing slaves ever since then. I made a small town near here where those bastards can't easily get to us... and that's about it. I've been slaying any Vampire behind this since then. You could say they're my nemesis."

"I see... So those children who have different features... I thought they were halflings, but what are they?" Wondered Aquamarine, looking at my two twins who were wolfing down sweets without a care of the world.

"They're my precious children! Don't go questioning what they are so rudely, old hag!" I roared angrily.

"A-Ah... Sorry, I am just... too surprised about everything, the more I talk to you the more I learn about many things I had no idea of..." Said Aquamarine.

"But... Well, they were once humans, but their souls were used for an experiment and put into bodies created through alchemy and dark magic using fragments of the Evil God... They're something known as Homunculus. I think the plan of the Vampires was to create living beings fueled by the Evil Miasma that the Fragments possess." I sighed.

"Impressive... So that's how it is." Aquamarine said. "I'm sorry for offending your kids."

"Ah well, they were not even listening?" I sighed.

"Huh?" Takeshi suddenly looked at us as if he had heard something.

"Nothing honey, just enjoy the sweets." I said, petting his head.

After that, I continued talking with the old hag about various things, I kept giving her small clues about who we were, but never being too direct about it either. And in exchange, she also continued explaining to us about the dungeons, the mountain, the guilds, and everything else.

As of now, we were given ID Cards as temporary citizens, which need to be paid for every few months, but due to special "VIP privilege" due to bringing the three dwarves back, we are absent of paying this tax for the next hundred years... Yeah. Anyways, aside from that, we were given special treatment without the requirement of joining any guild.

I would have probably joined one of the guilds, or even the two of them, but remembering Helga and her family and friends, it would feel bad for me to just abandon them to go to the premium guilds...

"It is fine, Maria, you should join these guilds if they're giving you so many benefits, don't be foolish now!" Said Helga.

"I can't." I said.

"Eh? But..." She said, feeling confused.

"Helga, you've been too nice with us, and I am already fond of you even if it has been just a day. Due to that, I kind of want to join your guild instead. I would feel bad if I betrayed a friend I just made, right? Amongst the things I hate the most, is betraying other people's trust and expectations."

"M-Maria..."

Chapter 424 A Great Reward

424 A Great Reward

Helga seemed shocked.

"You're really an idiot! What are you doing?!" She asked angrily.

"I just want to stay with my new dwarf friend!" I said, hugging her little body. "You're cute too!"

"Eek! D-Don't touch me so much! I am married! Married!" She said while struggling adorably.

"Haha, I know, I know~" I sighed. "Well, Aquamarine. Can I still get the benefits?"

"Yeah, I had already figured out that you wouldn't join us completely. But due to being the guild master and because these two other idiots are the vice guild masters, we can give you as much authority as if you were our member." Said the old lady, giving us some metallic badges. "Use these to be able to cross into several sections. There are dungeons, special mining areas, and even unexplored depths where only strong miners can get in... The Dungeon I am talking about is in the depths of the mountain, so you'll have to cross the Rainbow Crystal Cave, the Underground Lake of Lakesia, and the Dark Haunt Caves, these three areas are connected to dungeons so monsters roam freely, but there are also very expensive ores growing everywhere. Due to not being as much of a controlled area, only strong enough guild members form parties to go mining down there and also hunt monsters."

"I see... So as honorary "members" of your guild, you're giving us our first quest, huh?" I asked.

"Technically..." She said. "You don't have to do what I asked you if you don't want to, but I'll add a good bounty. We can pay you through materials, food, or even workhand, and well, money too."

"I would like the whole package! My town is in dire need of a reconstruction as well as need more seeds, those beans you guys got and the tubers, we want a bunch of those seeds." I said.

"Yeah, that would be nice for our greenhouses!" Said Emeraldine.

"H-How many greenhouses do you have in those cold lands?" Asked Aquamarine.

"We have built six so far." Said Baldur.

"Nothing too much." Said Balladur.

"S-Six Greenhouses?!" Asked the old lady.

"It is necessary for our food production." Darfu added. "Lady Emeraldine and Lady Maria have amazing Skills that allow them to enchant crops so they can grow faster and healthier, alongside being able to, sometimes, make some of those plants grow into magical plants. They have produced Medicinal Herbs and Antidote Herbs this way, alongside incredibly tasty veggies that only take about a week or two to grow completely."

"So short?!" Aquamarine asked.

"You guys don't have magic to enchant your growth of products?" I wondered.

"W-Well, we do..." Said the old lady. "We have magic items and more, but after overusing such items for a long time, they stop being as effective, our soil is imported from the Goldsand Confederation as we lack it in the mountains. We also plant all sorts of mushrooms too, thankfully those don't need as many things to grow and simply naturally absorb the nutrients of the rocks to grow."

"I see..." I said.

"This is why pure Skills such as the ones you two have are actually valuable." Said Aquamarine.

"Wait, why?" I wondered.

"Unlike Magic Items or Spells, Skills are very mystical and unique powers, engraved in the soul book and all... their effects never get old, nor they ever stop making an effect. Unlike spells or magic items which exhaust the earth, skills can continuously be used without becoming ineffective after a bit." She said.

"Ohhh... now that's interesting." I said. "Emeraldine, we might be pretty valuable."

"Uuuuhh... What do you have in mind? Ah, I also have my spirits..." Said Emeraldine.

"S-Spirits of Light and Nature!" Aquamarine said, looking at the beautiful spirits that Emeraldine brought out. "Incredible... Elves are so lucky to have such an amazing affinity with spirits! We dwarves only have affinities with spirits of Fire and Metal, sometimes, someone with a Dark or even Earth Spirit Affinity appears. But they're exceedingly rare. The only two Earth Spirit Users are already helping our crops as much as they can."

"Hm, I see... Nature Spirits might be better at enchanting the growth of plants than Earth Spirits, as the later can only enchant the soil." Emeraldine analyzed.

"Hm, that's right. So aside from that request, how about you work for us in enchanting our crops? We could pay you nicely, and you would be helping our country prosper." Said Aquamarine. "I can talk this to the Viscountess and she'll agree."

"I see, well, I don't see it being wrong." I said, looking at Helga. "After all, we are already quite close to this people. We have seen Helga's kids and we can't simply say no to you after thinking they might starve if we don't help at the end..." I sighed.

"Maria... Thank you for thinking about us." Sighed Helga. "I feel like I am getting a bit too much of a good treatment for what I am though..."

"A friend is a friend!" I said, laughing. "You invited us to your house, to eat, and even offered us your services, you bought my potions, you helped us get here... What else can I do to repay you?"

"You're way too nice..." Helga sighed. "Sadly I'm not into girls, hahaha!"

"Aw come on, I am not trying to flirt with you..." I said. "Well now, Aquamarine. We'll be going to an Inn to pass the night for now."

"A-Ah, sure thing then. But how about you stay in my home?" Wondered Aquamarine. "This house is rather empty most of the time, and there are many rooms. You can also discuss what you'll be doing from now on leisurely."

"Thanks, we'll do then." I said. "Helga, you'll be staying?"

"Eh?! No way, I'm going back home, it's getting super late now!" Helga said.

"Alright then, take these, youngster." Aquamarine said, quickly giving Helga a sack of gold coins.

"Huh?! So much money, what?! Eh?!" She cried.

"This is a compensation for bringing to me such a talented group of strong people. Also for helping them get here and being so nice with them, a proper reward for you. Also, it might help you establish your Guild officially."

Chapter 425 Plans

425 Plans

"My guild... Right..." Helga said. "But this is too much..." She sighed.

"Come on girl, just take it!" Baldur said.

"At the end of the day that's just ore shaped into coins anyways." Said Ballardur.

"Make sure to make a guild, I'll be joining as well." Darfu said.

"Old man Darfu..." Helga said. Darfu seemed well known as well as an amazing architect and designer.

"Come on! Don't hesitate, you got five kids to boot!" I said, petting her head again, her hair was so soft and fluffy I couldn't stop myself. That she was small enough to be in head patting range was also quite a deadly combination.

"Geez... Okay then! I'm going, thanks for everything! I'll see you tomorrow!" Helga said, quickly moving out. I left a few Phantom Familiars with her to protect her in the way back home.

"Now then, let me show you the dorms." Said the old lady.

Like that, we were once more treated like nobility as many maidservants and manservants offered us their services, we were given many rooms to stay. I had asked for one with two big beds to sleep with my waifus and my husbando, and they seemed to quickly move, relocating one of the beds into the biggest room.

"I was not aware you had three partners, sex must be crazy, huh..." Said Aquamarine, the old hag was also quite the degenerate it seemed. However, I wanted to play around with her.

"Well now that those two old men are back how about you give them a little love at night?" I laughed.

"Heheh... Don't underestimate this old lady!" She said. "That's just what I was about to do anyways!"

"E E H H?!"

I saw her walking away while giggling devilishly, quickly entering the room where the pair of dwarves were. It seems they were really into some sort of relationship with her, huh. Maybe that's why she also missed them so much.

"Alright you bastards, we are going to make up for all the time lost! Gyehehehe!"

I was able to hear her giggle as the dwarves seemed to be all into it.

"Come to bed already old hag!"

"I didn't think you still had the stamina, but your body's still hot!"

Holy shit, the mental image is a bit disgusting. I better flee before hearing anything else... I guess you could say this world isn't safe for work at all, everybody just talks openly about sex!

The next morning quickly came, as we slept like babies. The sunlight lightly came from the windows as the entrance to the cave city let the sunlight from outside get inside just barely. Last night we had a bit of fun in bed while I took turns with all three of them, it was a nice and relaxing intercourse. In fact, it hasn't been this harmonious in a while. I guess we are finally getting used to it and getting along better. Partner is specially becoming more tolerant to Lucifer's presence now and disputes happen less frequently.

However, Partner has a very jealous nature so she still sometimes get too jealous and barks a bit... and then Lucifer barks back and I have to stop them before it becomes too loud and annoying. Emeraldine intervenes sometimes, but she has a very passive personality so she lacks the strength of will to be able to stop them most of the time.

Anyways, before having breakfast, we decided to discuss what to do right now, there were now several things we wanted to do.

First, we wanted to go to the Dungeon with Miasma and see if there's really a Fragment of the Evil God there, and if it is there, to quickly seal it somehow. Maybe if it is considered an item, I could store it inside my Inventory and be done with it, I was able to store in my inventory the Demonite Heart Core of Agatha, so maybe it could be possible.

Second, we want to Mine Resources and Magic Ores, alongside picking up magic mushrooms with various effects for both smithing and alchemy, in the way, I also want to learn Skills related to Mining, Crafting, and Smithing if possible. We already got the best blacksmiths with us so we just need the time and a good furnace for it. For the Mining thing, we want to both explore this mountain and also explore the mountain where Helga is.

Third, we want to sell our potions and see if we can make more connections with merchants or sellers, if we can mass produce potions and the like, it would be pretty neat. They also give me EXP so I can grow stronger while just making potions. If I can get a good deal with someone, I could get materials from them and convert them into potions to make better and quicker profits too. Oh right, we also need to buy several things such as a few furnaces, various magic items, and golems! I want golems.

Fourth, we want to conquer some Dungeons. We heard there are many dungeons nearby, so going to conquer them, defeating all monsters inside and seeing if I can possess those Dungeon Cores is a must. Although it wouldn't be good if I take over so many dungeons, so maybe the taking over thing might not be possible. The dungeons here provide food and materials to these people, which keep their country ongoing, I can't take that away from them... but that doesn't mean we won't clean the dungeon in our visit there just for fun and EXP.

And fifth... Making a Guild! I guess that's up to Helga, so we'll leave it up to her.

However, I never thought it would be so quickly.

After discussing what to do, a maidservant quickly knocked the door and entered.

"Lady Maria and company, Lady Helga has come with the idea of making a Guild, so she's inviting you to accompany her..."

"Oh, she's really quick, huh?"

Chapter 426 The Various Benefits Of Having A Guild

426 The Various Benefits Of Having A Guild

"Helga! You're back already and we have yet to even take a bath! What's the hurry?" I wondered, quickly descending downstairs.

I noticed Helga came with her husband this time, Myriad, alongside seven other dwarves, the same guys we meet yesterday. Alongside them there was also Blackard, the black bearded dwarf that was so nice with us too.

“Hey Maria and company! We just got called by Helga, she wants to make the guild asap now that she got the money.” Said Blackard.

“So it was a lot of money then!” I said in surprise.

“Yeah, we discussed it for a while with my husband and then I called the troop to my house, it is a good investment. Guilds get special benefits when paying exchanging ores for money and paying taxes. My husband also wanted to join the guild so he can get special benefits as a crafter.” Said Helga. “It is overall a win-win, so come with us, you said you wanted to join right?”

“Sure! Guys, let’s go!” I said, as I saw my troop all sleepily walking behind me. “Can the kids join?”

“Oh no, they only let people above 20 years of age to join a guild, children are not allowed to work, and they’re only considered adults when they reach 20 years.” Said Helga. “It is part of the norm; we are very careful of our kids.”

“Wow, another point on why you guys are more civilized than humans...” Partner said.

“Impressive, you’re really a well-organized society.” Emeraldine said.

“We do what we can, poverty is still a thing, but it is not that big nowadays, the guilds suck a lot of profits, but they reinvest them into the city.” Said Helga.

“Huh, an interesting model of society indeed.” Lucifer said. “Well, I might as well join.”

“Oooh, we are getting an Ancient Dragon to join us, holy shit man!”

“Is he going to do all the job for us?”

“Maybe we can ask him to fend off monsters while we mine? If he does that it would be of great help, we could mine a shit ton!”

“Maria’s Inventory would also be super handy, right?! She’s gonna be a great addition!”

The dwarves were all hyped about us joining. Although I wasn’t planning on staying here for the rest of my life, I was going to come every month at the very least, staying for maybe a week or half a week. This place will provide a lot of things to our small town, so it is important to come constantly.

“Hahaha! I’ll do what I can guys, but lower your expectations a bit, I don’t even have any Skills related to Mining.” I giggled.

“We’ll help you learn some right away then!” Said Helga. “After the registration of the guild, of course.”

“Alright, alright, let’s get going then.” I said. “Aquamarine, can your maidservants and manservants take care of my kids?”

“Yeah, I’ll be coming with you as well, if you register your guild with my help, it’ll receive special benefits as well.” Said the old hag.

“We are coming as well, if you are joining that guild, we might as well.” Baldur said.

“Yeah!” Ballardur said.

“Me too...” Darfu said. “Can you two old men get some better clothes? You’re on your boxers!”

“Ah shit, right.” Said the twins, quickly moving back to their room.

“They seem a bit... reinvigorated. What did happen last night?” Helga asked with a cocky smile.

“Helga don’t go asking such things!” Her husband reprimanded her.

“Gyahahaha! I actually have a long history with those two.” Aquamarine said. “I was really missing their embrace in bed.”

“Huuuh... For being an old hag you’re still going at it, guild master!” Helga laughed her lungs out.

“Hahahaha!”

“Gyahahaha!”

The two dwarf women laughed cheerily as the other dwarves behind Helga also began laughing at how hilarious things were for them. They were so open about stuff that it felt a bit shocking, the cultural differences are really big compared to Earth, or even human society in here as well... Well, not everyone, Dwarves seemed to be like this but Myriad was just covering his face in embarrassment.

“W-Well, can we go now?” I sighed. “Also can you explain me the benefits of the guild while we are on our way there?”

“Sure, sure~!” Helga said.

As we walked across the various streets of the Stoneville city, we saw many of the enormous golems walk through, some were moving like carriages, and others were moving carriages. There were even a few ones piloted by dwarves inside, who were small enough to barely fit in their chest, it seems they used them to lift heavy objects or build their enormous houses and buildings.

“You see, when you register a guild, you access several benefits in exchange for paying for its creation, which is very costly and a big investment.” Said Helga. “First of all, you can rent various golems from the facility for big discounts, so we can move stuff quicker, you also get an increase in the money you earn by selling items in all affiliated shops, and above all, you get discounts from taxes that you get discounted from selling your ores, and above all, you also access discounts from these affiliated shops, specific ores and other things that cannot be easily brought, even such things as food, will be cheaper. And not only that, but guilds can also be inherited, so my kids will have the guild when their old hag and

their papa pass away to support them. I'm doing this as a big-time investment while looking into the future."

"Oh, so you guys did it also for your kids..." I said.

"Yeah, not only ours, Blackard and the other dwarves as well." Myriad said. "Most of them got families, having a guild to support them is a big thing. It could become a family business as time goes on."

"We dwarves created guilds as a way to help our workers and let them earn benefits, while also keeping control over how much it is mined and extracted. If there is no order, our economy will fall, so we created guilds to take over all of this and maintain order." Aquamarine said.

"I see..."

When we reached the Guild Registration Building, we were amazed by its size, this building was probably as big as a ten-floor building from back in Earth. It was a rather modern-looking city thanks to the advancements and help that golems provided to the dwarven society.

"And here we are! Now let's go register, there's no time to waste!" Helga said, leading the way.

Chapter 427 Creating A Guild!

427 Creating A Guild!

As we looked into the big building in front of us, we saw many people getting in and out, not only dwarves but there were also a lot of other races mixed in. It was a rather beautiful and varied scenario, something that you don't see all that much in the human countries, most of the time, elves, dwarves, and beast-kin are cautious and know that slavers and bandits usually target them more, so they often only pass through a town for a day and a night and keep moving, never truly staying to live in a town filled with humans. But in here they know it is secure for them so they just stay... Damn, maybe if I didn't make my own town, I would have perfectly moved in here with everyone.

As we walked upstairs towards the building, someone covered in black robes stumbled over Lucifer, making him almost trip down the stairs.

"Huh? Be more careful." Lucifer said, looking at the one who stumbled upon him.

Suddenly, I felt something strange.

The one that stumbled upon him looked at him with bright red eyes, which had strange resemblance to the eyes of... reptiles? Or maybe cats? Maybe it was just a beast-kin.

"Ah... You're...!" She suddenly muttered, it was a girl. For a few seconds, she stayed there looking at Lucifer's face.

"What is it?" Lucifer wondered, seemingly rather annoyed.

"No... N-Nothing..." The girl quickly decided to walk away, without talking anything else.

"Odd, who was she?" I wondered.

"Hm... I don't really know. But there was something... in her... I... Hm, I really can't remember what it is or what I had in mind... Ah, it is hopeless." Sighed Lucifer, waving his head. "Let's get this done with."

"Right..."

Helga guided us inside the building, after talking for a bit with the people inside, we were moved to a private room where we meet one of the people in charge of the building, these people were in direct servitude of the Viscounts of this country and did all the paperwork. Registering a new Guild was something considered rather strange, the price was too high and most people just joined the other two old guilds most of the time.

What Helga was doing could even be considered ambitious, but now that she had the money she really didn't wanted to miss out in this big opportunity to change her life and that of those with her. At the

end, things got done almost immediately, the people in the building were nervous because Aquamarine was present, and the old dwarf milf quickly made them give the new guild some benefits that only higher ranked guilds have. Apparently, guilds have ranks which they gain after earning enough renown, such as selling materials to the county, defeating monsters, and more.

"With this, your E Rank Guild Should be almost done, but what name do you want to give it?" Wondered the receptionist.

"Huh..." Helga looked at the two of us and then came out with an idea.

"How about Valiant Dragons?" She wondered. "Sounds crazy!"

"Wait, that sounds way too..." Muttered her husband, but she didn't listen to him.

"Valiant Dragon it is!" She said.

"A-Alright..." The receptionist seemed a bit surprised over the childish name.

After that, Helga was given a special medal and a few papers filled with stuff, and we were all registered at the same time, being given medals. With that the guild was made, and it had special benefits as well.

"I wonder if I can bring them with me to the mines and dungeons reserved by the two big guilds, Aquamarine?" I asked while walking outside of the room.

"Huh, I had not thought about it, but I recommend to not do it, already with the special pass you got you will make a fuss, if you bring the new guild there even with the pass, you'll gain the enmity of the other guilds..." Said Aquamarine. "It would be better to go mine the mountain you were using, or go to the more dangerous but freer areas of this mountain in groups. But as long as you're going with your party alone, Maria, you can get in the guild's territory. Is that enough for you to understand?"

"I guess... Sorry about that, Helga." I said.

"Oh, don't worry about that!" Said Helga with a smile. "We were going to work right now after registering in the guild, do you guys want to come? If you help us our job would get done way easier! You also can acquire some Skills if you try hard enough in there."

"Huh... Certainly, a Mining Skill and a Title wouldn't be so bad! Alright, let's go." I said. "I want to explore that mountain as well, it is all uncharted territory after all, I wonder if we could find anything interesting."

"Maria, what about buying the things we wanted to buy?" Asked Lucifer.

"Geh... Right." I sighed.

"Then we can accompany you to buy whatever you need and then go; it is early in the morning anyways!" Blackard said.

"Yeah!"

"We'll help you out."

"We know the good places to buy from."

"How about you buy from my store?"

"I might as well accompany you as well." Sighed Aquamarine.

"A-Alright then, thanks a lot! Also we should look for clues about Ancient Dragons or anything dragon-related around here." I said.

"True, we came here for that reason as well, Maria." Said Lucifer. "But don't rush yourself, let's take it one step at a time."

"Indeed, we are here also to explore and have a good time, right? To take a break from battles and everything else." Sighed Emeraldine.

"I agree, I also want to go to the nearby restaurants, and there are food stalls everywhere in the market too!" Partner said, licking her lips while opening her eyes wide open while sniffing the smell of skewered meat from the distance. "Man, I'm so hungry! We didn't had breakfast after all!"

"Alright, let's go then!" I said.

Chapter 428 The Mysterious Watcher

428 The Mysterious Watcher

And like that, we spent several hours in the market buying a lot of stuff we found interesting just because. It was nice to explore new places and do shopping without worries. I ended buying a few items I found interesting and which the dwarfs' shops didn't had, such as Spirit Stones. These were rather expensive stones imbued with elemental magic power.

They can be occasionally mined from the mountains, usually in areas with a lot of Magic Essence, I only bought a few to inspect them, as I plan to buy them from other sources or to mine them myself. We secured most of the things we really needed though, such as big pieces of metal, nails, glass, and I also purchased two furnaces which I stored inside my Inventory.

After that, we went into a foody trip and we began eating anything we found in the food stalls. I had regretted not bringing the twins with me in this small trip, as they would had been happy to eat all this food themselves. Ultimately, we ended getting back to Aquamarine's home to bring them with us to the mining.

I had also sold the rest of the potions to Merchant who gave me the highest price, all the potions were sold after just a day of getting here, it was clear they were in high demand. The merchant also told me that he didn't had any materials to make potions as they were not that common around here, but if I brought him the potions another time, he would buy them with an extra +10% bonus.

With that said, we picked up the kids and quickly flew into the mountains, leaving the old men and the old hag in the big house. Darfu wasn't a good miner apparently, and although Baldur and Ballardur wanted to come, they were not allowed by Aquamarine because they were, once again, too old for this kind of work, apparently.

As we flew towards the mountain on top of the dragoons, Lucifer seemed a bit down.

"We couldn't find any substantial clues at all." He sighed.

"Yeah..."

We had looked around almost everywhere we could, there were only rumors about a Dragon Crypt in the depths of the mountain, but that was also connected to the dangerous dungeon we were avoiding for now, but that we might go explore in the upcoming days anyways. Some people said they saw dragon monsters in there in large quantities. But there was also another rumor, perhaps the only one we found could bring some substantial clues.

"But this thing about the Dragon Woman... is this real?" Wondered Emeraldine.

"Maybe it could be a survivor of your tribe, Lucifer! She might had transformed into a humanoid form." Said Partner.

"Certainly, that's a possibility, Polymorph is a Skill we learn when we reach adulthood so we can meddle more easily with smaller tribes..." Sighed Lucifer. "But we don't know anything about her."

"Well, a few things did we know." I said. "They said that she had sharp red eyes and horns, and a tail... She appears sporadically, as if she can meddle with darkness. Some had seen a girl like that wander around, but because there are so many races, they might confuse her for someone else entirely."

"Aquamarine, do you know something?" I wondered. "You've been keeping yourself pretty silent about this." I spoke to Aquamarine through my Phantom Familiar I left with her.

"Well... This is classified information so I cannot share it with anybody, but there's literally an Ancient Dragon with you guys." Sighed the woman. "This woman is indeed real, but she's very elusive. I had once met her, she had a very calm and soothing voice, and she said she was a "watcher". Apparently, her tribe lived here long ago but was slain by humans, ultimately, she remained as the last survivor, watching over as everything changed. Some said that there was a dragon with our founder, his first friend and the protector of our nation... I had thought many times that this mysterious woman might had been that dragon, but ever since then, several years ago, I had not seen her before. Also, my Appraisal doesn't work on her, she has some sort of power that cancels inspection-based skills effects."

"I see..." I said. "A watcher... We'll have to look for her some more later. Maybe if she learns that there's another Ancient Dragon here, she might willingly come to our side."

"Hmmm... Someone that can cancel the effects of Inspection-based Skills?" Wondered Lucifer. "Ugh... I think I remember somebody like this but... my mind is in shambles. My memories, as I told you before, had been dissipating over time before I was revived by you, so I am missing various ones. But at the very least, this person might be a dragon I knew."

"Oh! Then this trip might not have been as wasteful!" I said. "Maybe she's your wife? Would be nice if she survived... T-Though it would be weird to share you..."

"You're always worried about that, huh?" Sighed Lucifer. "I don't really know what I would do in such a situation either, so please don't ask me anymore. We'll see if that is even a possibility."

"I get it, sorry... I just hope it is someone close to you, meeting another Ancient Dragon would be super nice." I sighed with a smile.

"I suppose you're right." Lucifer said. "A family member would be great... We could invite her to our town and give her a better life, perhaps..."

"Hm!" Partner said. "Having a dragon buddy that is not a grumpy old man like you would be nice."

"Who are you calling grumpy old man?!" Lucifer roared angrily, as Partner began to laugh at his reaction.

"Come on you two, stop this... Especially Partner, don't say that while we are talking something serious!" I reprimanded my cute girlfriend.

"Geez..." She sighed. "I am just trying to lift up the mood. Okay, sorry." She said.

"Hmph..." Lucifer said while averting his gaze from us defiantly and angrily. He's really grumpy.

"Well, whoever that person was, we'll find her eventually." I said, nodding in confidence.

Chapter 429 The Sorrowful Survivor Of Ancient Times

429 The Sorrowful Survivor Of Ancient Times

The figure of a young woman covered in black robes, barefoot and only wearing just the bare minimum over her scale-covered body looked into the distance, as a group of flying golems, dragoons, carried away a recently formed guild. Her eyes, sharp red and reptilian in shape, seemed filled with a bit of light, a light that had been not there for many years now. She seemed happy, after many years of being gloomy and emotionless.

The wind swept through the mountains, as her black robe waved furiously before the strong winds. The sunlight covered her figure, as the sky atop the mountains usually was cloudless, mostly due to being so high the clouds were below them.

"I can't believe you're alive..."

She whispered with a small voice, while lightly smiling.

"I was surprised when I saw you... But it seems a lot has changed..."

She slowly walked over the rocky surface of the mountains, while feeling soothed by the warm winds sweeping through her almost nude body.

"It seems you have a new family with you... New friends... A new purpose, even..."

The girl's black robes suddenly flew away, as her body, covered in old red scales, which were slowly losing their color was revealed. Atop her head, there was a pair of black horns, the left one was cracked and only half of it remained, while the other seemed chipped down, and very old. Her long silvery white hair was beautiful and shiny, but it lacked color, which was lost as she aged over many years. Her tail, missing the tip of it, waved carefreely, as her feet, covered on scales seemed to be hiding many scars.

"I'm sorry for being shy... I couldn't bring myself to speak with you, Lucifer... It has been so long. I didn't know what to say to you... Everything is over now, but I'm glad to see that you're still alive even now, when everybody else... is gone."

She looked into the mountain with a bit of impatience.

"I wish to see you live your daily life for a bit more, before I make my decision... I don't know if you would be willing to take such a big responsibility... What lies in the depths of this mountain might be not... something you would be willing to slay."

FLASH!

Suddenly, her entire body shone brightly, covering itself completely in red light. As nobody was watching other than some wild wyverns flying around, her majestic draconic body, towering over 50 meters, was completely ignored by those that could have potentially seen such an incredible and colossal being. Her body, however, slowly began to shrink down in size, as if she was saving her energies, until she was no bigger than a wyvern.

"Being too big would bring too much attention... A smaller size is better." She said, quickly taking off into the skies, as she saw, with her hawk-like vision, as those of the Valiant Dragon Guild already have arrived at the "Second Mountain" as they called it.

"I want to see... How are these new people with you... I want to know them better; I want to see... how you're doing... My dear Lucifer." She thought, flying through the skies as she covered herself with a veil of anti-detection magic.

She suddenly recalled many memories within her pained and hurt mind. She recalled the things she went through, the warmth of family, and the coldness of solitude and loneliness. This entire time, for eons now, she had been alone, waiting for something, someone... to bring her the warmth she was missing, the warmth of family.

"I don't know why I've been waiting so long... Always hoping someone would someday come to my life... But to think that dreams can come true..." She sighed internally, as her eyes began to cry tears of happiness and sorrow combined together.

Memories flashed one after another within her mind, the happiness she shared with her family, the happiness she shared with Lucifer, the many memories.

The children playing around the caves, the parents and grandparents bringing hunts to enjoy together.

The occasional trips to nearby tribes of smaller people, the long trips across the skies, as they traveled through the continent in the skies.

The words, the love, the memories...

And then, the pain.

The suffering.

The sorrow.

The regret.

The hopelessness.

The horror.

The fear...

"So much has happened... I don't know if I am even the one I used to be myself, dear Lucifer..." She sighed. "Maybe... this is also why I couldn't bring myself to speak with you when we met. Maybe... I simply couldn't bring myself to see you in the face after everything that has happened since then." She thought, looking into the blue skies, and flying around the mountain.

A group of cranes flew atop her, peacefully and soothingly soaring the skies at her side. A smile emerged in her dragon lips, as she somehow felt her heart being reborn once more the moment she set eyes into him. His human-like transformation appearance was immediately recognizable to her.

"I wonder... if you could ever remember me as well... Although, I don't want to bother you." She thought, quickly landing into the mountain, and slowly walking over its rocky surface, lurking around, and hearing the words of those that accompanied Lucifer.

"Woah! This place's BIG! Let's go mine now! Mine! Mine!"

A childish girl with a phantasmal aura spoke, she was too bright in nature for what she identified as some sort of living calamity.

"But where are you going to mine without a pickaxe, dummy?!"

Lucifer, however, quickly reprimanded her back, without fearing her truest powers.

"Ah... Right..."

The girl seemed to act childishly and gently, without a hint of hostility. It was rather clear they had a special connection.

She smiled a bit as she heard him speak so carefreely and happily. Despite his grumpy expression, it was obvious he was very happy with... her.

"You're so happy... It has been a long time since I saw you being so happy..." She sighed, looking more and more, as the group went around the mountain, preparing to go mine for ores and explore its depths.

It looked... strangely fun.

...To have friends.

"I'm glad you're so happy... The smile of my little brother... I would never forget it."

Chapter 430 Time To Get Mining!

430 Time To Get Mining!

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When we arrived at the mountain, Helga quickly guided us down a path she and the dwarves had made with their amazing mining skills and earth shaping skills. Apparently not only they made a cave but even crafted stairs to move down easily. The caves were illuminated mostly by special crystals that generated light and also mushrooms. I had thought about picking a few, but Helga said that aside from their luminescence, they were not valuable and it was better to let them be there to illuminate places.

They were certainly more convenient than putting torches that will eventually get the entire cave with the smell of burnt wood and oil, or magic items that will eventually run out of magic and will need constant replacement like torches.

"But aren't these sold elsewhere?" I wondered.

"Yeah there are some people that farm these mushrooms for house decorations, though they're also edible but have a very plain flavor, they're not that cheap for their flavor though, so most people only keep them as decorations." Helga said. "Anyways, we are here guys! Time to work our asses off today as usual!"

"Time to work!"

“With Lucifer and the rest with us, we’ll have an easy time!”

“You guys can fend the monsters off for us, right? This way we can fully concentrate into mining!”

“Oh man, I’m gonna MINE!!!”

Helga roared as the dwarves roared behind her, raising their pickaxes, shovels, and other utensils they brought, which I quickly took out of my Inventory for all of them to hold.

The enormous cave expanded upon several meters, its ceiling reaching as high as 60 meters or even 70, there were many crystals growing around everywhere, many illuminating the entire place naturally, but amidst the walls and the ground, there were also other, shinier rocks than the normal ones, those were Ores! And some were shinier than others, emanating special essence, magic! Those were Magic Ores!

“Woah! This place’s BIG! Let’s go mine now! Mine! Mine!” I couldn’t help but act childishly as I felt excited about mining myself. Back in my previous life I was an avid player of Minecraft and Terraria, those two were my childhood alone, so I have always wished I could mine in this world.

With the addition of the game-like description of items, the power of alchemy to create items which also reminded me of my other favorite games, the Atelier series, and the knowledge of skills such as Mining, Crafting, and more existing, I couldn’t help but want to replicate those games mechanics in real life now!

However, I was quickly and abruptly stopped by Lucifer, who quickly realized, faster than I did, that I was missing the most important tool.

“But where are you going to mine without a pickaxe, dummy?!”

“Ah... Right...”

“Come on, didn’t you bring some more inside your Inventory? Get them out, we can mine all together here, Maria, you can pick any spot you want this is a cave we found ourselves, but it is completely

closed, we'll need to mine it to find another route somewhere else, but for now you can just pick ant spot." Helga said.

"Right, thank you Helga!" I said, quickly taking a Pickaxe from my Inventory.

This item was a very basic Pickaxe made out of Reinforced Steel Ore, specially made to break through stones to get the precious ores out.

[Reinforced Steel Pickaxe (D-Grade): Lv1]

[Effects]

[Attack]: [+500]

[Agility]: [+250]

[Abilities]

[Mining Speed Enhancement]: [Enhances the Speed while Mining by +20%]

[Description]

[A brand-new Pickaxe made out of Reinforced Steel Ingots; it comes with an enchantment that grants a faster speed while mining. Its high attack power is ideal to break through incredibly hard rocks and stone.]

In fact, I had brought a brand-new Pickaxe for myself! It was rather expensive as it was a new item, and it was enchanted to grant a boost to mining speed and also the ability to Level up, something not all blacksmiths can grant to their creations so easily. With this, I'll mine some new Magic Ores to enchant Partner's old spear, which she really wants to upgrade. For that she wants to use expensive materials that can only be mined from this big mountain range... I guess I am just giving myself a reason.

"Alright...! Ah, are you not going to mine?" I asked, with the pickaxe in my hands, as Emeraldine, Partner, and Lucifer seemed to be just looking around.

"Huh? I am not really interested..." Said Lucifer.

"I think I'll pass too; I don't really care about mining..." Said Partner.

"My body is rather not... suited for such things." Said Emeraldine. "But I'll make sure to inspect whatever you find!"

"Huh..."

I guess I am alone in the world of miners, desolated, completely alone and without friends... However, I quickly felt the pat of Helga on my back.

"Come on, don't let them get to you, if you're interested in the profession, then I'll guide you. You've got all of us here. We dwarves are fanatics of mining, finding new ores, and crafting stuff out of them, it runs in our veins." She said. "Now, hold the pickaxe and point at that piece over there, see that bulging piece of stone?"

"Oh yeah..." I said.

"When stone bulges like that, it means there's a big amount of ore or crystals below, hit it hard and make it crumble to reveal what's inside." Said Helga. "Come on, give it your best!"

"A-Alright!"

I pointed my pickaxe into that bump of stone and then...

CLANK!

I hit it with a strong and powerful hit!

Crack... crack...!

Right away, with a single hit of my pickaxe, the stone began to crumble apart, as cracks spread through not only the floor surrounding it, but also the walls in front, and even a bit of the ceiling!

Wait, what?!

RUMBLE!

Stones began falling everywhere around me, as I quickly generated a shield to protect myself and Helga.

CLASH! CLASH! CLASH!

"You hit it a bit too hard!" Helga reprimanded me.

"S-Sorry... It is hard to calculate the power of my strength sometimes..." I apologized.