

## **Beloved Dog 201**

Chapter 201

I Left Range Village

“Sorry to keep you waiting.”

“Thank you for your hard work, Phillip.”

I had spent a relaxing six days in the village, which made it nine days in total?

It was then that Phillip arrived from Ractos, along with several horse-drawn wagons.

“By the way...how did you manage to detach yourself from Leo?”

“...Leo just tore the ropes with her mouth... And so I was able to get off... Or rather...fall off...”

“I see...”

As Phillip would have been unable to untie the ropes himself, Leo had torn the ropes that were around her body.

So Sebastian had been wrong about the guards doing it, but it hardly mattered now.

Phillip winced as he seemed to remember the pain of falling to the ground.

...Perhaps I should tell Leo to be careful...but she had made such a difficult journey, and I didn't want to admonish her either...

“Mr. Takumi, we have finished loading the barrels of wine.”

“Thank you.”

Phillip and I also helped, and we were able to load all of the barrels that I had purchased.

And they were also strapped on securely so that they wouldn't fall out later.

Once we had confirmed that they were all on, the job was finished.

"Should we leave immediately?"

"...I would like to rest a little..."

I looked at the tired-looking Phillip and asked if we should leave at once.

After coming to this village, Phillip had to ride Leo back to the mansion, and then return to the village and help with the orcs, and then monitor the merchants, and then he was tied to Leo as she ran to Ractos. And if that wasn't enough, he had to bring several wagons back to the village... It was a rather harsh schedule when I thought about it... So it was no wonder that he felt tired.

It was also more than enough to forgive the whole matter of drunkenness and falling asleep in the wine storage house.

"Well, you and the others, as well as the horses should rest."

"Yes, thank you."

Mr. Hannes suggested that they all rest in the village.

Aside from Phillip, there were drivers from Ractos as well, and they were also tired.

"Very well, then you can leave as soon as you are rested, Phillip. I will go on ahead to Ractos."

"You are going to meet up with Mr. Sebastian, yes? He told me when we met on the road."

“Yes.”

So Sebastian and Phillip had crossed paths between Ractos and the village. Well, it was no surprise if they were on the same road.

“Leo. Let’s go.”

“Wuff.”

Just like when we had come, I had all of my belongings wrapped up in a large cloth and strapped it to Leo’s back.

And then I climbed onto Leo so we could depart for Ractos.

As I had stayed in the village for quite a while, I did feel a little sad to be leaving it.

“Mr. Takumi, it is not much, but please take this.”

“...What is it?”

“Some of our most aged wine that we keep in the back. Since you seemed to enjoy our wine so much.”

“Thank you. Is that all right, Leo?”

“Wuff!”

When I was on top of Leo, Mr. Hannes had come and brought me a small barrel of wine.

This wine was not affected by the disease.

It was delicious, and I had been wanting to drink it again, so I was quite grateful.

Perhaps I could drink it with Ms. Claire when I returned... If she drinks, that is.

...And Tilura and Milina were too young.

I strapped the barrel behind my other belongings, so that I would be holding onto it while riding.

While this was an unexpected increase in baggage, Leo seemed to be fine.

“Fairwell, Mr. Hannes. Thank you for everything.”

“No, not all. Thank you.”

“Come again, Leo!”

“Wou!”

I then said my goodbyes.

While it was sad, we could always come here again.

As we were about to leave, the children also came out and shouted at Leo.

Upon hearing this, Leo barked in reply and then began to run from the village.

“Well, you’ll have to come back then and play with the children.”

“Wuff-wuff.”

As I talked to her, Leo ran at an even slower pace than when we had come.

Leo had enjoyed playing just as much as them.

While playmates like Tilura, Sherry and Milina were waiting for her back at the mansion, it was not really the same thing.

...Besides, Sherry was more like a baby that she took care of.

“Leo. Just keep going straighter here!”

“Wuff!”

After we had been on the road for some time...

Normally, you would have changed direction at the crossroad, and Leo was about to make a turn, but I told her to continue going straight.

Leo barked in reply, and instead of slowing down, continued to run ahead.

I didn't want her to run on the main road and startle passersby.

...Though, it might be a little too late for such concerns, since she had already run down that road before, with Phillip tied to her back...

Well, the fewer horrified people, the better.

“Wuff-wuff!”

“Hmm... What is it, Leo?”

“Kuuunn...”

After she had been running for a while, Leo suddenly slowed down and tried to tell me something.

What was it...

Leo then stopped completely, and so I got off and asked her what was wrong. She then barked pleadingly.

Uh...you're hungry...?

“Ah, that’s right... You haven’t eaten since this morning.”

“Wuff!”

Leo nodded.

Now that I thought about it, Phillip had arrived in the village just before midday.

And then we had loaded the wine and left without any time to rest.

As the sun was starting to set, it was no wonder that she was hungry.

...In fact, I was pretty hungry as well...

“I never thought of such things at my old job. All right, Leo. Let’s eat!”

“Wuff-wuff!”

We weren’t even allowed to take breaks at work, so there was no time to eat lunch.

But it is important to rest... And while I knew that it was bad to skip meals, I always prioritized getting some sleep over eating.

And so it wasn’t until I came to this world that I started eating three proper meals again... It was good that I could live a more healthy life now.

...Perhaps that was why I never felt sick.

We Arrived at Ractos

“Leo, if you’d be so kind.”

“Wuff. Wou...grau!”

I had gathered some fallen tree branches, and then had Leo ignite them so we could have a good bonfire.

Unlike when we had first left the mansion, we did not have a lot of food with us. However, they did give us some bread and soup.

I was grateful to Mr. Hannes’s wife for that.

“It’s not...much... There’s some sausages. I’ll sandwich them with bread. Here.”

“Wuff-wuff.”

As I didn’t have enough sausages for Leo to become full, I added some bread.

Still, Leo ate it happily.

In the meantime, I would heat up the soup.

“Ah...this soup really is delicious. There is something comforting about it. And it warms you right up.”

“Wuff?”

“Do you want to try some? Here.”

“Guff-guff... Wuff.”

“Isn’t it good?”

As I drank the heated up vegetable soup, Leo looked at me with interest.

And so I gave her some, and then Leo sighed after tasting it... She really was expressive...

I had prepared some milk for her... But perhaps she would prefer it if it was hot.

Since she had just had hot soup, some hot milk would be perfect. And so I gave her some of that as well.

“All right, we should get going then. If we don’t hurry, we’ll be late in meeting up with Sebastian.”

“Wuff.”

Leo was satisfied after having her bread, sausages, soup and milk, and she stood up leisurely after I climbed onto her back.

I had already extinguished the fire and packed everything.

While we hadn’t spent much time eating, it really was no time to be relaxing here.

“Sorry to make you run right after eating, Leo.”

“Wuff!”

As if to suggest that running right after eating didn’t affect her, Leo dashed out at a great speed.

Perhaps she was able to run faster now because she was no longer battling the feeling of hunger.

Though, she was surely heavier now... She really was full of energy.



“...We'll have to go down the main road here. Over there, Leo.”

“Wuff-wuff.”

While she had been going straight after leaving Range village, we couldn't continue like that forever.

Otherwise, we would end up in the northern mountains.

As we wanted to reach the town, we had to follow the road to the eastern gate.

Though, I did feel sorry for the people that would be shocked by Leo.

“We're almost there.”

Leo returned to the main road and dashed towards Ractos.

As it was getting late, there weren't that many people around, but I still saw some shocked expressions as we passed people by.

Some even bowed with reverence... Did people actually worship Silver Fenrirs?

“Mr. Takumi. Good Leo.”

“Good evening.”

“Wuff-wuff.”

We reached the gates and greeted the guards.

As it was the same person who we met the last time, we recognized each other.

“I was greatly surprised when Leo came with a man strapped to her back... But I see that you have accompanied her this time.”

“Haha... Yes, that was special.”

So, the guard had seen Leo and Phillip enter the town.

It must have been a very surprising sight indeed.

“Uhh, I’m supposed to meet Sebastian here, but...”

“In that case, please come this way. We’ve already finished interrogating the merchants.”

“I understand. Sorry, Leo. Can you wait here?”

“Wuff.”

The guard had pointed to the guard house to the side of the gate.

As Leo would not fit inside, I had to ask her to wait for me.

“If Leo is here, she will be the best guard there can be.”

“Haha, that’s true. But I hope she doesn’t scare away people who are trying to enter Ractos...”

“Indeed... I’ll let the others know, just in case.”

Yes, when Leo sat by the gate, she did look like the most reliable guard.

Besides, she seemed to have some kind of detection ability.

However, she might end up scaring people as well.

Thinking this, the guard had gone to tell the other guards about it, so they could explain it to any people coming into Ractos.

Everything should be fine now... I think.

“Excuse me. I’ve brought Mr. Takumi.”

“Mr. Takumi. You must be tired. I did not expect you so soon.”

I had been led to a room in the guard house.

A table and chair had been prepared. It was like a small waiting room... A cup of tea was on the table, and Sebastian appeared to be resting.

“Leo did her best. So, what happened to the merchants? I heard that the questioning was finished.”

“Well, they have seen Leo. So it was easy to make them talk by just reminding them of her. I will fill you in once we return to the mansion. I have to make a report to Lady Claire anyway.”

As the merchants had been threatened with Leo before, it was a simple thing to threaten them again, since they were still scared.

Thanks to this, the interrogation had gone smoothly. I suppose some good could come out of people being frightened by Leo...

No, I still felt sorry for her when it happened... After all, she was the most adorable girl.

Regardless, Sebastian said that we would talk about it later.

Indeed, it would be better to discuss it when Ms. Claire was present.

Besides, if we started talking about it now, our return trip would be delayed.

“Very well.”

“Now, let us pay Isabelle a visit. Is Leo outside now?”

“Yes. She couldn’t exactly fit in this building.”

Sebastian stood up and we said our farewells to the guards and went outside.

After reuniting with Leo, we went into the town.

We walked down the streets for some time, and then eventually arrived at Ms. Isabelle’s shop.

“It really is...a unique looking place...”

“That is Isabelle’s taste. She says you must stick out if you are going to sell magic tools...”

Just like before, there was a hexagram sign in the front, and a black door. The building itself was painted a gray color. It definitely stuck out when compared to the other buildings in the area.

I didn’t know how this appearance was related to magic tools, but if that’s what she says...it must be true.

...Or maybe she just likes that it looks mysterious?

Chapter 203

We Talked To Ms. Isabelle

“Excuse me.”

“Welcome... Ah, it’s just you. What do you want?”

“It’s about the glass sphere I asked you to inspect the other day. Did you learn anything from it?”

“Ah, that thing. Yes, it was rather impressive, it was. Something the average magic user would not be able to make.”

I had Leo wait outside as we entered. And the same old woman we saw last time...Ms. Isabelle, was sitting there.

Sebastian then asked her about the glass sphere. It seemed like she had already finished inspecting it.

She sounded quite impressed with it.

“What can you tell us?”

“Now, wait a minute. I’ll put on some tea first. ...I think this will be a long talk. So sit down.”

“Very well.”

“Yes.”

Ms. Isabelle stopped Sebastian, who wanted to hear about it as soon as possible, and she got up to get some tea.

I did catch her glancing at me as she left. It seemed that she realized that the glass sphere wasn’t the only reason we were here.

Aside from Sebastian, elderly men and women in this world seemed to be very wise and perceptive...or maybe it was just me.

“Now, about the glass sphere.”

Ms. Isabelle began to talk after she had poured the tea and sat down again.

“While it is impressive, as I’ve mentioned...it is also dangerous. If used by someone ignorant, it could lead to a great disaster.”

“Indeed?”

After studying it, Ms. Isabelle had determined that it was very dangerous.

Someone who was ignorant... Well, the merchants had not been ignorant, and look what happened... So she was definitely right about it being dangerous.

“Once the glass sphere is placed somewhere, it begins to gather magic energy. The magic energy that is found in nature. There is no place that does not have this energy. Understand?”

“Yes.”

Sebastian was nodding at her explanation.

I had heard that there was magic energy within humans, but I didn’t know about it being in nature.

But since Sebastian was following just fine, I didn’t want to interrupt her, and so I kept silent.

...Besides, Sebastian would gladly explain it to me later.

“It gathers magic energy and then amplifies the source of the illness within the sphere. After all, the source of the illness can be found in the air as well. And by using the magic energy as a medium, it can make the amplified illness...envelop nearby food or drinks.”

“Not humans directly?”

“Not directly, no. This is only speculation, but I think that the magic energy within people interferes with it. But once you eat or drink something that has been affected by the energy and illness from the sphere...”

“Then the person would become sick...”

“Yes. But it is worse, because those who become sick can then spread it to other people. Because the source of the illness continues to increase.”

“I see... So that’s why.”

While I still didn’t know all the details of how it worked, what she was saying was in line with what I had expected.

The glass sphere was used to infect the wine.

And people who drank the wine became sick... And then it would spread from person to person... explosively fast.

Thankfully, no one had become sick in Range village after that. However, as there was a lot of traffic in and out of Ractos, it would likely continue to spread for some time.

Thinking this, I was glad that I told them of simple preventive measures like washing hands and mouths.

“The frightening thing is that there is no way to check if food or drink has been infected. It could happen without you knowing, and so you eat it and spread the disease... You cannot stop it.”

“Even magic detection won’t work?”

“It’s not the kind of energy that human senses can detect. You would have to use a magic tool for that. ...And will you really check all the food and drink with a magic tool?”

“...That would be difficult.”

So, once it was mixed with food or drink, there was no way for a person to detect it.

I myself had not been able to sense anything from the wine.

And it was not very realistic to use magic tools to check everything, when so many people were eating and drinking.

Such magic tools would be expensive, and there was likely not even enough to go around.

...It made it all the more impressive that Leo was able to tell the wine apart.

“You were right to place it in a sealed box when bringing it to me. While it wouldn’t affect anyone directly, if there was any food nearby, it could have led to quite a disaster.”

“Indeed. We do not want it to spread any further. Mr. Takumi made the right decision.”

“I did?”

“Yes. You were the one who saw that there was something wrong with the sphere... When bringing it to me, Phillip said that you warned him to keep it away from other things as much as possible.”

“Well, yes...”

I had thought it was suspicious, but it was Leo who confirmed it...

And since I knew about pathogenic organisms, it seemed best to keep it isolated... But people didn’t know about such things in this world.

“So we know what the sphere does. I will leave the disposing of it to you... Please make sure that it isn’t misused.”

“Very well. While it may be an impressive magic tool, its use could lead to grave consequences.”

Sebastian decided to let Ms. Isabelle deal with the glass sphere.

As she was a specialist, she would not use it to do anything wrong.



He clearly had a lot of trust in her.

“Also...I believe Phillip also brought some wine...?”

“Ah, that. I thought it was a gift at first, and almost drank it.”

Sebastian had sent a small barrel with Phillip.

And inside was some of the infected wine that Leo had sniffed out. Had she accidentally drank it, then Ms. Isabelle would have become sick as well...

While she would have been healed with some Ramogi, it would not have been too pleasant for her.

## Chapter 204

### We Also Asked About Weed Cultivation

“Well, I’m glad that you didn’t drink it then.”

“Quite so. After checking it with the magic tool, I was able to confirm that it was influenced by the glass sphere.”

“So it was... Is there any way to make the wine drinkable again?”

Whether or not the infected wine could be changed... Or rather, whether or not the wine I purchased was of any use at all.

“Well, it could be drinkable, yes. Once you remove the disease from it.”

“How can we do that?”

“It’s simple. Just boil it once so that the magic energy is diffused. And then the magic energy that is responsible for the disease will disappear.”

“And it won’t affect its surroundings?”

“It will not. As you know, magic energy has no power once it disperses. And it is the same even if that energy has a disease.”

“I see...”

So it can be drunk if you kill the bacteria by boiling it...

I didn’t know much about magic energy, but if you thought of it as pathogenic bacteria, then the idea of boiling it to kill the bacteria made sense.

...However, that also means burning off the alcohol...

“It wouldn’t really be wine...”

“Yes, it wouldn’t. But it tastes good, and can be treated like grape juice.”

“You drank it?”

“I had a taste, yes. After I was sure that the magic energy in it was gone.”

So, Ms. Isabelle had drunk some of it.

Grape juice, huh...? While it was a pity that it wouldn’t be wine anymore, it could still be enjoyed.

That was at least better than throwing it away. And Tilura might be happy to hear it.

...Of course, boiling all of it would also be a hassle.

“We can have Helena deal with it at the mansion. After making it very clear that it must not be drunk before, and managed strictly... Especially from people like Phillip.”

“...Yes...”

I nodded at Sebastian’s words, but I was sure that we didn’t need to worry about Phillip anymore.

He was very repentant after being tied to Leo. Besides, he knew what the wine had caused in the village. There was no way he would want to drink it again if it would make him sick... I think.

“Now, is there anything else you want to ask me? Especially you...uh, Mr. Takumi, is it?”

“Yes.”

“Indeed... Mr. Takumi, I think you better tell Isabelle.”

“Very well.”

Ms. Isabelle had looked at me and seemed to know there was something on my mind. It was true that I wanted to talk to her about Weed Cultivation.

After being encouraged by Sebastian, I told her in detail about how Weed Cultivation had activated while I was battling an orc.

As for Ms. Isabelle, she listened to my explanation without a hint of surprise on her face.

“Hmm... I see. I understand what you are asking. However...”

“Yes...?”

“Did I not tell you before? This Gift... The effect of Weed Cultivation.”

“You...did?”

Uhh... Back then, what Ms. Isabelle said was...

“About being able to make any kind of plant, anywhere, as long as it wasn’t related to farming.”

As I tried to remember, Ms. Isabelle repeated the words for me.

Yes, she had said something to that effect.

And then I remembered.

...Anything and anywhere...

“Anywhere...do you mean...it doesn’t have to be on the ground?”

“Exactly. Your Weed Cultivation can be activated wherever you are. And so you can use an orc as a medium. Though, I don’t know what will ultimately happen to living creatures if you do that.”

“...I see...”

“While it is a convenient ability...it is...”

Apparently, both Sebastian and I had misunderstood Ms. Isabelle’s words.

Anywhere...it wasn’t restricted to the ground, but quite literally anywhere...or anything...

While Sebastian looked quite surprised as he listened, he also came to the same conclusion as I did.

If it could be activated on an orc...then it could on a human as well...

“Are you saying that...it will activate on humans too?”

“Indeed, it will. Anything, whether alive or dead...”

“That...might have its uses, but...”

“A most dangerous ability...”

This meant that it could activate on any human that I touched.

And considering the effect it had on the orc...I did not want to think about what might happen to a human.

I looked down at my hands with a feeling of fear.

“But don’t worry, it won’t be activated that readily.”

“Huh?”

As I looked at my hands fearfully, Ms. Isabelle spoke in a gentle voice.

“Humans have magic energy. Monsters do as well, but...it’s especially weak in orcs. But the magic energy will resist.”

“Resist...?”

“Can magic energy really resist the Gift?”

“Not completely. The Gift is too strong. However, if a person had a lot of magic energy, they should be fine. Think about it. When you activated it with the orc, were you willing it to work harder than usual?”

Upon hearing Ms. Isabelle’s words, I thought back on when it happened.

When activating it, it was true that I was wishing that I had medicinal herbs.

While I was almost always thinking about them in some way or another, regret made me think of them more than usual.

“Yes, I think I was. I was wishing that I had some...”

“That is why. The strength of the wish became the strength of the Gift. I don’t know too much about it, but wishing and the Gift respond to each other.”

“I see...”

“And so Weed Cultivation shouldn’t activate unless you are wishing for it tremendously. After all, it hasn’t been activated when touching people before, has it?”

“Yes...that’s true.”

Both Sebastian and I sighed with relief upon hearing this.

In other words, unless I am touching someone and strongly wishing for Weed Cultivation to be activated, there would be no danger.

It still meant that I had to be careful when touching people, but I didn’t have to worry much when it came to daily interactions, which was a relief.

## Chapter 205

### We Returned to the Mansion

“Well, it’s not just magic energy, but the power of will is related too... Or so I’ve heard. But the research on that is insufficient.”

“I see... In any case, it won’t activate on living creatures unless you strongly wish for it. ...That’s good...”

“And you need not fear it as a dangerous ability.”

“It’s a good thing you were able to hear all of this. If all we knew was that it could be activated on living creatures, then you might have been isolated as a person with a dangerous ability.”

Sebastian brought up the chilling possibility as I sat there with relief. But he was right. Without the whole truth, I would be judged to be a dangerous person. Someone who no one could ever touch. Someone who was separated from everyone else.

...If this was back on earth and in Japan, I might have become the subject of research.

“Thank you, Ms. Isabelle. I am now much wiser about my own ability.”

“Bah, it was nothing. I enjoy finding out how rare Gifts are used. And finding out about magic tools as well.”

“Well, thank you for everything.”

“Please bring me more magic artifacts if you find any. ...You can also come just to have a cup of tea as well.”

We thanked Ms. Isabelle and left the store.

...Judging by the last words that she muttered, she was probably a little lonely, tending to the store all by herself.

Perhaps it was rude of me to assume, but I somehow doubted such a store had many customers...

So it may be a good idea to come and visit her the next time we were in Ractos, if we had some spare time.

“That was more fruitful than expected.”

“Indeed. I’m glad that we relied on Ms. Isabelle.”

While we had ended up talking for a long time, it was all very much worth listening to.

The glass sphere, dealing with the wine, my Weed Cultivation ability... There were things that I hadn't known about, and was able to learn in detail.

"The sun will be setting soon. We should return to the mansion. I'm sure that Lady Claire is impatient for our return."

"Does Ms. Claire know that we are returning today?"

"I sent a message to the mansion after we arrived in Ractos."

"I see."

Sebastian was a very capable butler indeed.

And so we decided that we should not keep Ms. Claire and the others waiting for much longer.

"Now, Good Leo. May I?"

"Wuff!"

After leaving through the east gate, Leo lowered her posture so I could climb onto her back.

Then Sebastian asked for her permission, and then climbed on as well.

From here, Leo should be able to take us back in less than an hour.

...It had been a long time, but we could finally return.

While the duke's house might not be my official home, it was the place I was most familiar with.

And though Range village had been a relaxing place, I couldn't help but want to relax in a place that I knew better.



“Thank you, Leo.”

“Wuff-wuff.”

As I thought of such things, we arrived at the mansion, and I thanked Leo for carrying us.

Really, Leo had run so much for us lately, and I was very grateful.

“Welcome back, Mr. Takumi.”

“Welcome back.”

“Mr. Takumi. Leo! You’re back!”

“Kyau-kyau!”

I stepped through the front door with Sebastian.

The servants were waiting for our return inside. As were Ms. Claire, Tilura, and Sherry, who greeted us.

So the servants came out even when it was just me...

“I’ve returned, Ms. Claire, Tilura, and Shery.”

I greeted them all.

Ms. Lyra and Ms. Gelda then stepped forward and took some of my belongings.

...I didn’t let them take all of it, as my pride wouldn’t allow it.

Well, I also just felt modest.

“Mr. Takumi. Was everything alright? I heard that there was a monster attack...”

“You fought monsters!? Mr. Takumi!”

“Well, it was all fine in the end.”

“...By the time that we arrived, he was badly hurt... So I don’t know if I would agree with everything being fine...”

Ms. Claire and Tilura must have heard it from Sebastian. They knew about my battle with the monsters.

As Leo had detected that something was wrong, they must have been quite worried about what had happened.

Though, Tilura seemed more interested in the fact that I had been in a real battle.

Ah, Ms Johanna was here as well.. As she had gone to Ractos with Sebastian when escorting the merchants, she was probably the one who returned to the mansion first with the message.

“Badly hurt...”?

“It was so bad that it was astonishing that he didn’t collapse on the spot.”

“...Good heavens... Then what happened?”

“I was fine. Thanks to some Loe.”

“Loe... Thanks to Weed Cultivation then.”

As I hadn’t looked in a mirror, I didn’t know how deep the cut actually was, but there was a lot of blood, and it was coming from my head.

It would have likely been very bad if I didn't have any Loe.

And it was just the excitement of battle that dulled the pain at the time.

"Mr. Takumi, Mr. Takumi. What was the battle like?!"

But Tilura was more interested in hearing about fighting monsters than listening to talk about a head wound.

"Tilura, that's not important now. We're talking about Mr. Takumi's wounds!"

"But..."

"Haha. The injury is nothing now, Ms. Claire. Tilura, I'll talk to you about it later."

"Okay!"

"Well, I'll let you put away your belongings and get settled first. Helena. How is dinner?"

"It can be prepared immediately."

Ms. Claire admonished Tilura for being so inquisitive.

But while I was thankful that she was worried, I really was fine.

I would tell her as much as I could later on... It seemed like a good idea to teach her what a real fight was like.

As Sebastian said, we had only just returned, and so I wanted to put away my things... And perhaps enjoy a cup of tea.

Ms. Helena assured us that dinner could be prepared immediately, and so we decided to all gather at the dining hall.

## Chapter 206

### We All Exchanged Information

“Master, Leo. Welcome back.”

“Milina.”

“Wuff.”

As I was walking towards my room to drop off my things, I bumped into Milina.

It felt like it had been a while since I was called master... Though, it wasn't actually that long...

“I continued to study medicine while you were away!”

“I see. Good for you. Will you tell me how much progress you made?”

She seemed so happy as she reported to me about her studies. She was kind of like a younger sister now.

And she walked down the hall with me and told me everything until we reached my room.

Considering how long I was away, she might have more knowledge about medicine than I do now.

As the person who was called master, I had to do my best.

“Well, I'm sure Mr. Takumi is very tired now, so we should eat dinner first.”

“Let's eat.”

I went to the dining hall after dropping my belongings in my room.

The food was already served on the table, and we started to eat immediately.

While the food in Range village was good, Ms. Helena had put a lot of effort into her cooking, and it was especially delicious.

“Sebastian. How did it go?”

“Yes. We acquired a lot of information, and conclusive evidence.”

“Oh? That is good to hear.”

While we ate, Ms. Claire started to converse with Sebastian.

She likely wanted to know about the store and the illness.

“Now that I think about it, you were doing all of the work while Sebastian was away, weren’t you, Ms. Claire?”

“Yes. Though there were things that only Sebastian could do, I somehow managed to do the rest.”

To me, there was something in her expression that suggested that she was quite exhausted.

I suppose taking on Sebastian’s work really was a great burden.

...Perhaps I should give her some recovery herbs later?

“While you are still eating... I shall make my report regarding the glass sphere that Mr. Takumi discovered.”

“Yes, please do. I know about the sphere, but it seems like you’ve learned more about it.”

While we were having dinner, since everyone was gathered together, Sebastian took the opportunity to make his report.

Well, it seemed like it was best to do such things quickly, so it was probably a good decision.

Though, Tilura, Sherry and Leo looked very uninterested, and continued to focus on gobbling up their food.

“Well then. About the glass sphere’s effect. I went with Mr. Takumi to see Isabelle...”

And so Sebastian started with the glass sphere.

It was everything Ms. Isabelle had said, and I remembered it well.

“I see... So it was as dangerous as we imagined.”

“Indeed. It is very fortunate that Mr. Takumi found it. The thought of someone using it in such a terrible way...”

“Well, it was really Leo who found it.”

“Wuff?”

To be precise, Phillip had found it first, but it was Leo who saw that it was connected to the illness.

If Leo hadn’t been there, it might have gone back to the wine storage house, and the disease would have continued to spread.

While Leo was busy eating, she looked up and tilted her head upon hearing her name.

“Leo is so amazing. She was able to detect weak magic energy that humans cannot.”

“Perhaps it’s related to her sharp sense of smell as well.”

“Wuff-wuff.”

Leo used to be a dog... She was a wolf now, but her sense of smell would still be quite superior to humans.

I believe...dogs were something like a hundred million times more sensitive to smell than humans... Or was that only with smells that they liked?

Apparently, it changed depending on the smell. Regardless, they were still much better than humans.

Perhaps her sense of smell was enhanced even further after becoming a Silver Fenrir. And she might also be sensitive to monsters.

“Next, I will tell you about the merchants that we captured. It was mostly thanks to Mr. Takumi and Leo’s cooperation that we were able to catch and question them.”

“The merchants who left the sphere...”

Sebastian then moved onto the interrogation.

This was the part that I didn’t know about, and so I was extra attentive.

Though, I continued to eat the delicious food as well.

“The merchants brought monsters to Range village.”

“Familiars?”

“No. They were just captured and imprisoned monsters. They were hidden under the tarps of the wagons so no one could see them. They were chained inside.”

Then the merchants had removed the chains and released the orcs.

Such chains wouldn't have been necessary if they were familiars. They would have been as obedient as Sherry.

“And then the monsters were unleashed on the village. They were all orcs, so it was no wonder that they weren't familiars.”

I didn't know if being orcs was a reason for them not to be familiars, but I didn't say anything.

“But thanks to the efforts of the villagers, Mr. Takumi, and Leo, the orcs were swiftly defeated.”

“That was very brave of you, Mr. Takumi and Leo!”

“Though, some were wounded... It was not the best possible victory. Besides, Leo did most of the work in the end.”

“But it is because of you held them back until Leo's arrival, Mr. Takumi. Otherwise, I am quite sure that there would have been deaths.”

As Sebastian talked about how Leo and I fought, Tilura's eyes shone with excitement.

But it was all due to the cooperation of the villagers. I could only buy a little time. It would have been for nothing if Leo hadn't arrived. ...And people were still hurt.

However, Sebastian said that it was good enough that no one had died.

Yes, perhaps we were quite lucky.

“And what happened to the wounded?”

“Some were bandaged up and that was enough. Those with heavier wounds were treated with Loe by Mr. Takumi.”



“I see. That is good to hear.”

Ms. Claire was concerned when she heard about the wounded, but looked relieved when assured that they were all fine.

“As for why the merchants brought the orcs... They wished to annihilate Range village.”

“...Good heavens!”

Well, it seemed obvious enough. Why else would they have brought so many orcs? The merchants really did want to kill every last resident of the village.

As Sebastian spoke of it, both Ms. Claire and I became very serious.

## Chapter 207

### We Listened to the Results of the Interrogation

“Their main purpose was to spread the disease and recover the sphere. As it is a rare artifact, they did not want to lose it after using it once. However, they did not expect to find Range village in such a state.”

“Indeed?”

“When they arrived, no one was sick. As it was the village where the disease first started to spread from, it is only natural to assume that the people there would be sick and weak.”

In fact, it had been the case at first. It was just their timing that was off.

But had the villagers still been sick when they came with the orcs, then they would not have been able to fight back... Everything would have gone according to their plan, and we would have all been killed.

“Thanks to Mr. Takumi, the disease had stopped spreading... But the merchants still wanted to retrieve the sphere, and so they released the orcs.”

“Judging by what Isabelle told you, it must be very expensive. And I’m sure there are many ways one could use it for ill.”

I didn’t know how much it was worth exactly, but it was definitely a rare treasure.

They would have wanted to retrieve it at any cost.

“Now, as for why they placed it in Range village in the first place...”

This was the most important part.

I believed that they were connected to the store, and by spreading the illness, they wanted to sell medicine and raise their profits.

“The merchants’ purpose was to spread the illness through Range village and recover the valuable magic tool.”

“And what was the reason?”

“The reason...they say that it was on Count Barsler’s order.”

Count Barsler... The nobleman who ruled the neighboring lands.

So it was by his order after all.

“But we don’t know what the Count was thinking when making the order...”

“Even the merchants don’t know?”

“They were just following orders. I even used Leo to threaten them, but they would not change their story. ...I believe that they’re telling the truth.”

It seemed like a typical thing for a villain to do. They were just disposable pawns who knew nothing...

However, it also seemed rather lazy to send such clueless people to retrieve something as valuable as the glass sphere.

“Why would the count do such a thing...”

“I cannot say... However, we already know that he does not feel kindly towards His Grace. ...He has made that quite plain now.”

As Ms. Claire narrowed her eyes and muttered, Sebastian answered her.

Sebastian was right. It was quite evident now that he saw the duke as a great enemy.

It wasn't just the spreading of a disease, but an attempt to crush an entire village... This was no mere game.

“...Mr. Takumi. Please calm yourself. I can see it on your face, you know?”

“Drink this, Mr. Takumi.”

“...Sorry. ...Haa... Thank you. It's good... Yes, I am better now.”

“I understand how you feel, Mr. Takumi. It's not just the hostility towards this house, but he is also attacking innocent civilians in the process.”

The good people of Range village, the residents of Ractos, and the children from the orphanage.

Many people had been involved and hurt by them. And then they had sent monsters to Range village.

When I thought about such things, a rage towards Count Barsler rose up in me and began to show on my face.

But after Sebastian's remark, I calmed myself with some tea that Ms. Lyra handed to me.

After that, I felt much more calm.

As Ms. Claire was also furrowing her brows and agreeing with me, she clearly felt something similar.

We were all angry with this count.

Sebastian was always calm on the surface, I'm sure he also felt angry.

...After all, he had used Leo to threaten them.

"While we don't know what the count is plotting, this is a clear act of hostility towards His Grace. And so I'm sure that he will react severely."

"Yes, father will not ignore it when people are suffering."

Mr. Ekenhart was a rather wild man, but he also seemed to be compassionate.

And so he would surely use his authority as a duke to do something.

"Also, regarding that store. I think that things will be wrapping us soon."

"Are those merchants related to the store?"

"Not directly, no. They did not know anything regarding the herbs being sold in Ractos. The count must have given the order to someone else."

"I see..."

When I found the glass sphere, I had assumed that the merchants were connected to the store, but apparently, they were not.

But I was a complete amateur, so it was no surprise.

“As for the store, they must have been receiving the information from the count.”

“Yes. About the disease and the coming need for certain herbs, I suppose.”

“Indeed. And after receiving such information and orders, they were able to act ahead in Ractos. Also...”

“There’s more?”

“He must be sending them gold as well. After all, they were able to buy most of the stock in the whole town.”

That was also true.

It was only because they were backed by a nobleman that they were able to do it... After all, most herbs were not cheap.

Also, they would have needed money in order to hire workers.

Considering all of this, it was at such a scale that it couldn’t be a personal project... Unless that person was very rich.

## Chapter 208

### They Would Deal With The Store A Little Later

“So the count offered the funds, and then received a portion of the profits... If things went according to plan, the business would be a success. So he would not lose anything.”

“Why would the count do such a thing...”

“I am not sure. Is it to hurt His Grace, or merely increase his fortune... Well, I doubt it is that alone...”

As for his intention, you would have to ask him to find out.

What purpose could he have for doing something in such a roundabout way, and hurt innocents in the process...

“If all he wanted to do was make a profit, he could do that on his own lands... There would be less risk of it being known outside. And there would be less taxes as well.”

As Sebastian said, if he wanted to ensure that no one found out about it, doing it on his own land would make more sense.

Sebastian and the others would not have found out, and he would not have made an enemy of a duke.

But then again, he would be making his own people suffer, and there would be a lot of other problems that would arise.

However, he went out of his way to do it on the duke's lands. It had to be a purposeful act of hostility... Though, that was assuming that he was even acting with any rationality.

“In any case, we know so much more now. Shouldn't we have that store closed immediately?”

“Well, I think we should wait a little.”

“...But why?”

If the store was gone, then people wouldn't be fooled into buying their herbs.

I wanted to lessen the number of people who suffered, but Sebastian was against it for some reason.

“Thanks to you, Mr. Takumi, good herbs are being sold in Ractos again. Also, I made sure that certain rumors of that store are spread.”

“Rumors?”

“Yes, it’s quite simple. That store sells herbs of terrible quality, and one must not buy them even if they are cheap. Instead, Mr. Kalis’s store...is run by the duke, and sells effective herbs at low prices...”

“And is the rumor working?”

“I checked while you had gone to Range village. It seems to be adequately effective... People do love to talk. Besides, a lot of people were helped by the herbs you made, Mr. Takumi.”

Through spreading rumors about the malicious store, Sebastian was able to guide customers over to Mr. Kalis’s store instead.

“It really is thanks to you. Because you lowered the price of the Ramogi.”

“Really?”

“Yes. As it was lowered as much as possible, people were willing to try it at that price. People who couldn’t afford it before can now buy it, and so the spread of the disease has subsided. And the rumor continues to spread.”

So now that there was enough Ramogi to go around, the illness was no longer spreading at a rapid pace.

If we continued like this for a little longer, it would naturally subside altogether.

And it was the people who bought it at Mr. Kalis’s store that were helping to spread the rumor.

Word of mouth really has a powerful effect in any age.

“However, why can’t you deal with the other store now?”

Even if their reputation was ruined and no one bought from them anymore, that was no reason to leave them be.

“To let them squirm... Well, not exactly... But I think they can be pushed a little closer to the brink.”

“What do you mean?”

“There is no doubt that their herbs are no longer selling now. So they must be very frantic. And so it’s the perfect time to use that wine you purchased that was selected by Leo.”

“The wine?”

Sebastian started to look highly amused.

I felt a chill run down my back as he talked... Even Ms. Claire looked a little put off.

“Mr. Takumi’s wine... It will arrive in a few days. We will take some of it to the store.”

“And then...?”

“We will say that it is a gift, and make them drink it. ...But if they should hesitate or refuse...”

“You’ll tell them that you know that it was used to spread the disease...?”

“Exactly. Of course, they may use some other excuse to avoid drinking it. But we’ll just insist that it was from the duke himself.”

If we went to the store empty-handed, they might feign ignorance.



We did have evidence, such as the diluted herbs and medicine, but they might still find some way to avoid taking responsibility.

I suppose Sebastian wanted to make them as desperate as possible, and then use the wine to finish them off...

If he said that it was from the duke...they would find it difficult to refuse.

It would be like refusing a drink from the boss of a client company... Well, maybe not exactly.

Still, it was rather ruthless of Sebastian, and the atmosphere in the room changed noticeably. However, he continued to look amused.

...Yes, he was clearly very angry inside as well.

“Aside from that, I must also make a report to His Grace.”

“To Mr. Ekenhart?”

“Yes. Lady Claire and I have been given the authority to act on his behalf. But we are still merely representatives.”

Yes, it was true.

While they could act in his place on many matters, it didn't mean they could make decisions about everything.

Especially since this was related to another nobleman. It would be necessary for Mr. Ekenhart to deal with it himself.

“When Leo returned to the mansion...I sent word to him about the glass sphere. However, now that we know so much more, I must write to him again.”

“Yes. Father must decide what is to be done.”

“I doubt His Grace will have any objections on the matter.”

“He will not forgive those who hurt his people.”

Yes, Mr. Ekenhart would likely deal with them with a firm hand.

Like Sebastian said, what would likely happen is that he would send the message and acquire permission. And then we would act...

As the main house was quite far from the mansion, he may not want to come here directly.

## Chapter 209

### I Talked About The Time I Fought The Monsters

“Very well. I will write the report and send a messenger to deliver it to His Grace.”

“Thank you.”

Sebastian bowed and then left the room.

After that, the reports...or meeting, ended, and things returned to the usual relaxed atmosphere.

And so I was able to drink the tea that Ms. Lyra poured and relaxed as the time went by.

It was during times like this that I could really appreciate that I was back in the mansion.

The place was really starting to feel like my home.

“By the way, Tilura. I hope you have been diligent with your training?”

“Of course. I continued to train in your absence, without rest!”

As I drank my tea, I remembered to ask Tilura about her training.

It was something that she greatly enjoyed doing, and so I doubted she would be skipping it. And it turned out that I was right.

I had trained as well while I was gone. However, I had not been able to concentrate much, and so I was a little worried about being left behind.

“But more importantly I want to hear about you, Mr. Takumi!”

“Me?”

“Yes. How was the battle with the monsters?”

Ever since we had returned to the mansion, Tilura had shown a great interest in the battle.

And since dinner was finished and we were all relaxing here, it was the perfect time to talk about such things. And so I decided to tell Tilura about what had happened in Range village.

“Uh, the monsters were orcs. Dozens of them. Though, I don’t remember the exact number...”

“And you defeated them all by yourself?”

“Hahaha. Of course, not. Just like you, I have only started my sword training recently.”

“Is that so? Then what happened to the orcs?”

Even though I could handle a sword well enough, it would be impossible for me to take on so many orcs alone.

All I could do was buy some time.

Well, if it was one on one, and I kept my guard up, I could defeat one orc. That showed my own growth, and I was quite happy about that.

Tilura's eyes shone as she listened with great interest as I told her about the battle.

Leo was curled up into a ball, and Sherry lay on top of her.

Ms. Claire was just like Tilura, and seemed to be very curious and amused with what I was saying... As they were sisters, they could be very similar sometimes.

Ms. Lyra and Ms. Gelda stood and waited without changing their expression, but it also seemed like they were listening.

...Was this story about fighting monsters really that interesting?

"That's right, Tilura. What Mr. Ekenhart said was true after all."

"Father? What do you mean?"

When learning to fight with a sword from Mr. Ekenhart, he had taught me a few points to be careful of.

As Tilura had heard them as well, she tried to remember what they were.

"About not stopping your movement during combat..."

"During combat... What happened?"

Of course, in a one on one battle, if the opponent doesn't move, then you might stop and observe them, but when you were being attacked by multiple orcs... When it was a battlefield with both allies and enemies, to stand still would be suicidal.

When I had activated Weed Cultivation, I stopped to think about why it had happened.

And that's when an orc targeted me from behind... Thankfully, the spearhead was broken, but I was still badly injured.

"I was lucky to survive... But stopping in that situation could have easily meant my death."

"...I see..."

"...Oh..."

As I talked about it, Tilura nodded seriously, as if to carve the words into her mind.

Ms. Claire also sighed with relief at my luck.

...Perhaps I shouldn't have told her about it.

"Well, it didn't just end there. After all, the orc was still going to attack me, and I couldn't ask for help, as the other villagers had their hands full."

"...And so what happened?"

"...How exciting."

As I continued to talk, Tilura listened intently, but Ms. Claire...seemed to be thinking out loud, which was a little awkward.

Well, I suppose she was also listening intently in a way.

"Due to my injury, my body would not move how I wanted it to. I thought I was done for when I saw the orc raise its arms over me."

After all, I couldn't move and the orc was targeting me.

Others were there, but none could help me.

If I couldn't dodge it, I would have to be struck by the orc once again. And I wasn't confident that I'd be able to stay conscious.

"And so I closed my eyes and braced myself..."

"Then what?"

"What happened?"

"...Leo came to help me."

Tilura and Ms. Claire were leaning forward as they listened.

I almost chuckled at how similar they looked. But I held it back and continued.

"Leo did!"

"...Oh."

"Wuff?"

When I said that Leo came, Tilura broke into a big smile and Ms. Claire sighed. Leo looked up and turned to me questioningly.

"I am so glad that you came when you did, Leo. Thank you."

"Wuff-wuff."

I petted Leo, who lay next to me, and thanked her once again.

After that, I told them about how Leo helped with capturing the merchants, and how we healed the wounded with the Loe.

By the time that I was finished, it was quite late, and since Tilura was getting sleepy, we decided to retire for the night.

I was quite sleepy myself, and so I decided to sleep without swing practice today.

“I can skip one day... Besides, things have been so tense recently.”

“Wuff.”

I was sure to at least take a bath and warm up before going to bed.

As always, Leo lay half of her body on the bed so that I could rest against her like a pillow...

If anything, Leo was the one who should be coddled after working so hard.

That being said, I was grateful for her kindness, and drifted off to sleep while enveloped in her fur.

It really was the best way to sleep.

## Chapter 210

### I Consulted Them About Using the Wine

The next day, I woke up feeling refreshed, thanks to Leo. And so I washed up and went down to have breakfast with the others.

After that, Leo and I trained with Tilura, and then I studied with Milina.

Apparently, she had made quite a lot of progress, and there were some points where she was the one who was teaching me.

I was happy to see her work so hard, but it also reminded me that I had to do my best as well.

“Mr. Takumi. Can you spare a moment?”

“Sebastian?”

After lunch, I had meant to go out to the garden to make some herbs to send to Ractos, but Sebastian stopped me.

“It’s about the wine... Phillip reached the village on the same day that we met in Ractos, yes?”

“Indeed. Phillip arrived, and I confirmed that all of the wine barrels were loaded before leaving.”

“I see... In that case, it should arrive here in four to five days...”

Apparently, Sebastian wanted to know when the wine barrels would arrive at the mansion.

“If what Isabelle says is true, we cannot drink the wine unless it is boiled first...”

“Yes... I wish there was some other way.”

You could kill the source of the illness by heating it.

But that meant burning out the alcohol, so it would be nothing more than a kind of juice.

That was fine. And while Tilura might be happy to hear it, those who preferred wine would be disappointed.

“Herbs... Do you think you might be able to do something by using Ramogi?”

“The Ramogi?”

“Yes. Ramogi is able to heal the disease that is spread through the wine. So perhaps it can change the wine without the need of heating it as well...”



Since it works against the disease, perhaps it could remove whatever it was that was in the drink.

...While I understood why he might think this...it seemed unlikely.

“I don’t know... I won’t say that it’s impossible, but I would not be hopeful about that...”

“I see... Well, I was thinking of decoctions and medicinal liquors...”

Decoctions... I think it was when medicine is boiled with water so you can drink it... I studied it with Milina.

As for medicinal liquor... I did know a little about that as well.

They sold them in little red boxes in pharmacies in Japan...

I see... The idea of mixing medicine with alcohol was not too strange then.

...Though, I didn’t know how it was made...

“Perhaps medicinal liquor might work. It existed in the place that I came from. But I don’t know how to combine the two...”

“Of course... In that case, it might be best to consult Helena about it.”

“Ms. Helena?”

“She is the head cook of this mansion. And she should have some knowledge when it comes to wine.”

After all...wine was heavily related to cooking.

Yes, it was obvious that we should ask her about it.

Sebastian did now know enough to give me an answer, so I had to talk to someone else.

Besides, as soon as the wine arrived, Ms. Helena would be involved with its fate.

“Very well. I will discuss it with her. Should I do that now?”

“As it is right after lunch, it should be a good time. However, don’t you have to make the herbs?”

“Well, that won’t take long. So I can do it later when I have time.”

“I see. Very well then. Come with me.”

As I had Weed Cultivation, it did not take long to make weeds.

If someone...like Ms. Lyra or Milina helped me, then it would be over quickly. And so I could do it later.

Sebastian then guided me to the kitchen where Ms. Helena was likely to be.

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...Now that I think about it, while I had been here for a while now, I had yet to see the kitchens.

I wonder what it will be like...?

“Excuse me.”

“Sebastian? And Mr. Takumi. Did something happen?”

We moved through the mansion and arrived at the kitchen. Inside, Ms. Helena and a few other cooks were in the middle of eating their meal.

Aside from the ovens and stoves, there were metal counters, knives, wooden cutting boards, shelves filled with tableware, and a place to wash things. It was a very substantial kitchen.

The cooks sat around a small table in the corner and ate.

“Is this a bad time?”

“...Mmm...gulp... Not at all. I have just finished. So, what brought you all of the way down here?”

As she was nearly finished, Ms. Helena hurriedly ate the last few bites on her plate and swallowed before answering Sebastian.

The other cooks also began to eat hurriedly.

As it wasn't an emergency, there really was no need...

“We wanted to ask you about something. It's not related to food, but drink...”

“That's unusual of you, Sebastian. Is there something you want us to improve?”

“No, that is not it. Lady Claire is very satisfied with your work here.”

“I also enjoy your cooking very much, and have no complaints.”

As it was unusual for Sebastian the butler to confide in her, Ms. Helena wondered if there were complaints about the food.

As she worked for nobles, she would have to always listen and make improvements based on such feedback, which must be a lot of work.

...Perhaps it was like having to listen to customers complain at a restaurant.

But Sebastian and I then assured her that this was not the reason we were here... And that her food was as good as we could hope.