

## Beloved Dog 241

### Chapter 241

#### I Asked Her About Refusing The Offer

“Also, Mr. Takumi. There is one other thing I want to ask you...”

“Yes, what is it?”

As we both petted Leo and relaxed, Ms. Claire said that there was something else.

She looked rather serious... Perhaps this was the real reason she had come here?

“Anne... Anneliese’s proposal. What will you do?”

“Ah, that...”

“I suppose it would be strange for me to hear the answer first. But...I cannot help but think about it...”

Ms. Claire was very curious to know about my response.

Indeed, it would change things greatly, so I understood why she cared.

If I decided to marry into her family, then I would not be able to stay in this house and would have to move to Count Barsler’s lands.

...And then, what would happen to the contract that I made with the duke to sell the herbs...?

Well, there was no point in thinking about that, as I already knew what I was going to do.

“There’s nothing to worry about. I will reject it, obviously. It is really just a matter of how to tell her. That is what I’ve been thinking about.”

“Is that so? ...Reject... I see. What a relief.”

Ms. Claire stood with surprise when she heard me.

I couldn’t hear the last few words, but she seemed pleased.

Well, I’m sure she was also concerned about our contract.

“Yes. I just want to be able to do it in a way that will not offend her... You see, I’ve never experienced something like this before... Was it like this for you, when you had to turn down your many suitors?”

“Indeed. ...Well, it was not all that difficult. After all, I am the daughter of a duke. And some of them were even commoners... But either way, they could not be too forceful.”

“I see. I suppose it only gets complicated when you are a commoner who is rejecting a noble...”

As Ms. Claire adjusted her position on the bed, I asked her about the suitors that Mr. Ekenhart had brought to her.

Even among nobles, the duke was of the highest rank.

The only people above him were the royal family.

Considering this, Ms. Claire always had the upper hand.

So it was no wonder that she found it easy to reject them.

“...Of course, since there were so many, I sometimes had my doubts. After all, it would be quite rude to deal with all of them in the exact same way...”

“I see...”

Yes, it must have been difficult to deal with so many of them.

Even if she had the superior position, one would get tired of thinking of new ways to reject the suitors that arrived with every new day.

“So, if a commoner receives a proposal from a noble... What should they do?”

“...Well, when that happens, people almost never refuse. After all, it is very rare for a commoner to marry into a noble family. Most people would never get such a chance.”

“I see... That’s why Ms. Anne was so confident...”

“Well, yes. That is part of it. But I think you’ll find that she is just confident in general...”

So she was always like that... I suppose I wasn’t used to such people, since I was always around Ms. Claire.

Well... She had stubbornly gone off to the forest alone. Though, that was against the wishes of Sebastian and the servants... She even apologized about it after. There was no point in thinking about that now.

In any case, commoners usually don’t turn down such offers...

It was true that it was a rare opportunity to become a noble, and so I could understand why most would accept.

Besides, there was the promise of comfort and luxury... That would be appealing to most people.

Still...if rejecting them was so rare, then it put me in even more of an awkward position...

Not that it would make me change my mind or anything.

“Hmm... How to tell her...”

“It can be difficult... I know how it is.”

And so the two of us sat there and pondered on it.

During such times, it was nice to have Leo here. We both touched her soft fur, which was very comforting.

“I think I have an idea, Mr. Takumi.”

“You do?”

“Yes. You are currently contracted by my family to sell herbs. In other words, your ties to the duke are quite strong.”

“Indeed. ...And I’ve been living here for some time now.”

Ms. Claire had thought of something.

It was true that my ties to this house were strong now.

And it wasn’t even just Ms. Claire, Tilura and Mr. Ekenhart. I had even become close with the servants that worked here.

“If you marry into her house, you will no longer be able to do business with us as before. After all, it would mean doing business with their house, not you as an individual.”

“...Is that right?”

“Yes. While noble houses may do business together, it is almost unheard of for individual nobles to make contracts.”

Indeed. Nobles would enter different businesses as a way of improving their lifestyle, when taxes were not enough.

And if they succeed, they can lower taxes, so doing so was highly recommended...

Well, everything would be fine if you didn't break the law like the count, or fail in other ways.

And if your business did fail, you have to then raise taxes to make up for it.

While business might expand to other territories, it was generally kept on your own lands.

And while it happened sometimes, contracts between individual nobles were rare, apparently.

If you went through another noble, that noble would also be making a profit...which meant more expenses, perhaps.

And so maybe it was best to do business with residents of other lands directly.

Even in Japan there were ways to sell directly to customers, which meant less expenses and cheaper prices.

...But there were also disadvantages to that as well.

Chapter 242

A Voyeur Appears

"How about you say...that you cannot accept, because of the contract?"

"I see... I will use the contract as an excuse. That way, I can turn her down without offending her."

"Yes. It would be very different if you said it was because of her appearance or character. ...Though I do think she would be deserving of such excuses."

“Hahaha. Well, insulting people as much as possible when refusing them is not something I enjoy... But that’s just me.”

“It is good that you are kind, but... You really should improve your ability to refuse people.”

Oh, she was warning me.

Yes... It had been that way before, when we went to the Fenrir forest. I found it hard to say no when people asked me fervently.

I suppose I didn’t like to disappoint others... But from Ms. Claire’s point of view, she probably did not like to see a friend be used by other people.

Though, I didn’t know why she should be this concerned.

“Thank you. I think I should be fine now.”

“I’m glad that I could be of help... But, Mr. Takumi?”

“Yes, what is it?”

“Anne’s proposal might be an advantage to you in the end. After all, you could become a noble...”

“Yes, that’s true.”

There was still a lot that I didn’t know about the aristocracy in this world...

However, they clearly had special privileges and could live in luxury.

Though, I’m sure they had their own duties as well.

But it would still be better than the way I had lived in Japan.

However...

“I am quite satisfied with my current situation.”

“You are?”

“Yes. You have all been very good to me. And Leo gets to play with everyone. And through making the herbs, I am able to help this house and the people in the town.”

“You don’t have to worry about helping us... Still, I see.”

“And nothing is more fun than being able to talk and laugh with you, Sebastian, Tilura and Milina. Also... I enjoy my sword and magic training, which should be very useful if I ever have to fight again.”

“Is that so... So you want to stay with us.”

There was no doubt that becoming a noble had its appeals.

However, as I just said, I very much enjoyed my current situation in life.

It was a far cry from my old job and days of unending exhaustion.

Leo was with me, and everyone was nice.

Besides, I couldn’t really imagine being a nobleman with lots of servants and having to deal with people who lived on my land... That was probably the biggest reason...

“In any case, I will probably have to leave this mansion eventually... So I want to enjoy my time here while I can.”

“...But...you really can stay here for as long as you like...”

“...Ms. Claire?”

Perhaps I had said a little too much, and was feeling a little embarrassed. But that’s how much I wanted her to know that I enjoyed being here.

And as we talked, Ms. Claire moved closer and closer. Eventually, she was leaning against me with her head on my shoulder.

...When she was this close, it was difficult to not think about her scent again...

“Mr. Takumi...I...”

“...Ms. Claire...”

“In this mansion, forever... Ever since you helped me in the forest, I...”

While her head was still on my shoulder, she turned to look up at me.

We were so close that the smallest movement could...

My heart started to beat faster and louder.

While I doubted she could hear it, I almost worried that she would.

My hands and legs felt numb, and I could not move or look away.

I had not felt anything like this when Ms. Anne made her proposal...

“...Mr. Takumi.

“...Wuff!”



“!”

“!? Leo?”

Just as Ms. Claire had closed her eyes and leaned into me, Leo suddenly barked.

...That was close... A few more seconds and... Huh? What was happening?

“Wuff...wuff-wuff.”

“Leo. What is it?”

“...Good Leo?”

Leo had suddenly stood up and started to bark. Then she sighed and went over to the door.

“Grau!”

“Woah!”

“Kyaaaa!”

“What!”

Leo used her front paw to pull the door open.

...Leo. So you can open doors now... But there was no time to think about that, as a flood of people poured into the room.

“Mr. Ekenhart...?”

“Father... Sebastian and Tilura?”

Yes, the flood of people were made up of Mr. Ekenhart, Sebastian and Tilura.

Tilura was flattened on the floor under the weight of the others, and seemed to be in pain.

But Sherry was on top of them all, and seemed to be having fun... Though, this really wasn't a game...

"I can't breathe..."

"Oh, sorry."

"Forgive me."

As Tilura raised her voice painfully, the others swiftly got back to their feet.

"...Father...surely...surely you were not spying on us?"

"...Hahaha... No... Well...Sebastian?"

"It is not noble of you to blame me, Your Grace."

"Wuff..."

"...Tilura?"

"Ye-yes! Father said that Claire went to visit Mr. Takumi's room with an unusual look of resolve, and that this must mean something!"

"Kyau-kyau!"

"Ah... I see..."

“Ti-Tilura! That’s not what you were supposed to say!”

Mr. Claire stood up slowly and then approached Mr. Ekenhart.

As he could not think of any excuses, he pushed Sebastian forward. But soon after, Tilura explained everything in a clear voice.

Sherry nodded in agreement.

Leo sighed with exasperation by the door... I knew exactly how she felt.

Chapter 243

Sebastian Explained How It Happened

“I’m sorry, Mr. Takumi. I suppose that is all we will be able to discuss today. But I did enjoy it.”

“Uh... Yes, I enjoyed it too.”

Ms. Claire said without turning to look at me. She kept her face directed at Mr. Ekenhart and the others.

As her ears were red, she must be quite embarrassed to have been spied on.

...Or...she was just really mad.

“Father! As the master of this house...!”

“Wa-wait, Claire! Yes, I was wrong! I apologize! Ahhh!”

“Your Grace... Be safe...”

“Claire, you’re scary...”

She shouted at Mr. Ekenhart and grabbed him by the collar.

Even though he was very tall, her slender arm pulled him down. I was so stunned that I couldn't speak.

Was Ms. Claire a lot stronger than she looked?

Sebastian just closed his eyes, and Tilura looked scared.

“Haa...”

I had felt nervous ever since Ms. Claire entered the room. And now I was exasperated at the situation. And so I let out a heavy sigh.

“Are you tired, Mr. Takumi?”

“Tilura... No, that's not it.”

Ms. Claire had gone off somewhere with her father, and now Tilura was back to normal.

She was looking into my face with a worried expression. But I wasn't sighing because I was tired.

...Well, perhaps I was tired mentally.

“Still, why did he do such a thing...?”

“It is likely because I reported to him about you and Lady Anneliese.”

“You did?”

“Yes. I told him that she offered you her hand in marriage.”

“...And how did you know about that?”

Apparently, Sebastian knew about what had happened in the carriage.

Even though it was just us three inside.

I doubted that Ms. Claire would tell him... Perhaps it was Ms. Anne then?

“I was driving the carriage, remember? And you were all talking so loudly.”

“...I see.”

It was true. The window had been open so we could watch Leo and Mr. Ekenhart. And Ms. Anne had certainly been talking very loudly. So it was not too odd that Sebastian had heard.

I should have realized that sooner.

“After I told His Grace, he became very anxious about Lady Claire.”

“And so he wanted to see how she was doing?”

“Yes. But when he went to visit her room, he saw her leaving as if in secret.”

“...And yet she didn’t see him?”

“No... He was hiding when she came out of her room... Perhaps he was still thinking about what had happened at the store...”

So he was worried that she would get angry again...and hid himself.

After all, Ms. Claire had said that she would continue to lecture him after they returned to the mansion.

Though, I couldn't help but think that it would be difficult for someone of Mr. Ekenhart's size to conceal himself... But Sebastian knew every inch of the mansion, and was probably able to help him.

Still, why did they decide to spy on us...

"After that, we saw Lady Claire go to your room while looking very anxious. I suppose His Grace was hoping something would happen."

"Hahh... Hoping... Why would anything happen?"

But then again, Sebastian had seen and heard it all, so I would not sound very persuasive.

In fact, Sebastian was grinning right now... It was a very villainous face.

"Well, I will not question you about what was said or done. ...That is more interesting, anyway."

"...Are you thinking out loud?"

"Oh, excuse me. ...While we watched Lady Claire, we bumped into Lady Tilura..."

"Father said we could see something amusing, and so I went!"

"I see..."

Even though he had muttered something by accident, Sebastian was as calm as ever.

And apparently, they had met Tilura before reaching my door.

Perhaps she wasn't able to sleep and was looking for someone to play with. Or she needed to go to the bathroom...

But to bring his own child along... Mr. Ekenhart...

“It was a good thing that the door was still open. Lady Claire must have been so nervous that she forgot to close it.”

Well, it wasn't a good thing for me or Ms. Claire.

If they had tried to open it after it was closed, then Leo might have noticed them sooner.

In any case, Mr. Ekenhart was curious about Ms. Claire, and so he had taken Sebastian and Tilura and peeked through my door...

Even if he was a duke, he was a parent. So I could understand why he was curious about his daughter's actions... But still...

“Well, I have bothered you for long enough.”

“Good night, Mr. Takumi and Leo!”

“Wuff-wuff!”

“Good night, Tilura. ...Sebastian. You are just as guilty for not stopping him, you know?”

“Hohoho. What are you babbling about?”

“You can feign ignorance...but it will make no difference when I tell Ms. Claire tomorrow. ”

“...I am very sorry.”

Leo and I answered Tilura and bade her good night. I then reminded Sebastian of his role in all of this.

He chuckled innocently at first, but bowed once I brought up Ms. Claire's name.

...He really was afraid of her... Well, I understood why, after seeing her with Mr. Ekenhart...

Well, I suppose she could only act like that because they were family...

Chapter 244

I Turned Down Ms. Anne

“Hah... It’s like the moment after a storm.”

“Wuff...”

Now that Sebastian and Tilura had left, and it was just me and Leo in the room, I let out a sigh.

Leo was sighing as well... Yes, who wouldn’t be exasperated by that?

“Still... Ms. Claire...”

“Wuff-wuff. Wuff?”

“No, I can’t do that. She is a noblewoman. I couldn’t...”

As I was thinking about how Ms. Claire had been acting before the door opened, Leo suddenly called to me.

But I didn’t want to think about what she was saying... It was surprising that Leo would think of such a thing in the first place... Was it because she was a Silver Fenrir?

In any case, I had been quite nervous with Ms. Claire.

Ever since we had first met, I always found her to be attractive.

And it was all the more evident when I was so close that I could touch her.



Ms. Claire did have a rather wild side, but was also a proper lady. She never acted self-important. In fact, she seemed to dislike such people.

And so even if I didn't know anything about manners, she taught me patiently and said I shouldn't worry about it too much.

Even though I was probably making a lot of mistakes without knowing it...

Regardless, up until a moment ago, we had been so close...

"...I don't think I'll be able to sleep if I keep thinking about it."

"Wuff."

"Alright, time for bed, Leo. It's already quite late."

"Wuff-wuff."

I said to Leo, and then petted her a little after she curled up next to the bed. And then I went into my own bed.

After all, I wouldn't be able to sleep if I kept thinking about it... And I had things to do tomorrow, so I had to hurry up and sleep.

...But before I fall asleep, I have to think about how I'm going to tell Ms. Anne... That's what I thought, but then my mind kept drifting to Ms. Claire, and so I just closed my eyes.

---

The next day, I washed up, dressed and went down to the dining hall with Leo.

A lot had happened yesterday, and I wasn't able to sleep as early as I would have liked. Thankfully, Leo woke me up in the morning.

When we arrived, Tilura was rubbing her tired eyes and petting Sherry.

As for Sherry, she was curled up on a chair next to Tilura and sleeping.

Well, they had stayed up pretty late as well.

“Good morning, Ms. Claire, Tilura, Ms. Anne.”

“Good morning, Mr. Takumi.”

“Go...ood...yawn...morning...”

“Good morning, Mr. Takumi.”

We greeted each other and then I sat down.

Tilura was so sleepy that she wasn't able to talk properly.

But Ms. Anne seemed fine. Her hair was perfectly set with vertical rolls, and she was sitting straight.

Though, she was sitting as far away from Sherry as possible.

“...Is Mr. Ekenhart still sleeping?”

“Yes. The same as always.”

I did not see him in the dining hall.

It had been this way before. And since Ms. Claire would have been scolding him late into the night, he would find it even harder to get up.

And while Ms. Claire didn't seem to be tired at a glance, I could see that she had dark rings under her eyes.

...For how long had she been angry at Mr. Ekenhart?

"Now, let's eat."

"Yes."

"Wuff."

"Kyau."

The food that Ms. Helena made was served, and we all started eating.

The smell seemed to help wake up Tilura and Sherry.

Especially Sherry. The moment that the food was brought in, she raised her head and her eyes widened.

She really was sensitive to smell.

"It is rather good."

"Helena...our head cook, is quite brilliant."

Ms. Anne said as she ate her breakfast.

Now that I thought about it, Ms. Helena had the day off yesterday, so this was Ms. Anne's first time experiencing her cooking.

And as Ms. Claire said, Ms. Helena's food was very delicious.

They were proud of their cook.

As Ms. Anne ate with pleased expression, I glanced towards Ms. Claire and nodded.

Once breakfast was finished, I would have to give her my answer.

“Hah... I am satisfied. Ms. Claire, it must be quite a luxury to eat this every day.”

“I wouldn’t say that. It’s just that she is very good. The actual ingredients are nothing special. ... Unless you are saying that having such a cook is a luxury.”

After breakfast, we drank some tea that was made by Ms. Lyra and Milina. And as I listened to the others talk, I thought about what to say.

While I had decided what to do after talking with Ms. Claire, I still wasn’t sure how to say it.

Well, maybe it was better to not overthink it.

“Uhh...”

“That’s right, Mr. Takumi. Have you come to a decision?”

Just as I was about to talk to Ms. Anne, she suddenly turned and asked the question first.

I was a little stunned...but pushed myself to continue.

“...About that. The answer is no.”

“...What? What do you just say? It sounded like you were rejecting...a most generous offer that I did not have to make.”

“Exactly. I refuse.”

Apparently, Ms. Anne found this difficult to believe. And so I made it very clear to her.

Though, I was a little nervous, and my hands were clenched tightly under the table, and I was sweating a little.

As for Ms. Claire, she was positively delighted by this blunt rejection, and she was beaming with joy.

“...Surely... You are not going to throw away this chance to become a noble? Do you really mean to refuse me?”

“Yes.”

Ms. Anne was still in disbelief.

For the vast majority of common folk in this world, being a noble was a very appealing prospect.

However, it was not that appealing to me.

Chapter 245

Ms. Anne Was In Quite A Shock

“...And will you tell me the reason?”

“Yes. First, I am currently in a contract with House Liebert, for the selling of herbs. If I were to become a noble...”

As Ms. Anne’s face was frozen with surprise, I explained to her what I had talked about with Ms. Claire. That I wanted to honor the contract and had no intention of becoming a noble.

Sebastian was nodding as he stood behind Ms. Claire. So I suppose I was not saying anything wrong.

“...But... That is hardly a reason to refuse... Besides...I have never been rejected in my life...”

Ms. Anne's level of disbelief only rose after my explanation.

Indeed, because she was beautiful, a marriage with her might be appealing to some.

Especially since she was her father's heir.

Ms. Claire had talked about it yesterday as well. There were few opportunities to become a noble in this country, and so turning it down would be unthinkable.

However, it meant nothing to me, and I was not like those other people.

Well...not that stupid thoughts of playing with Ms. Anne's rolls did not enter my mind...

"But... Surely you wouldn't... But you can become a noble...!"

"Well, how unfortunate for you, Anne. But I must tell you now, any more attempts to seduce Mr. Takumi with promises of titles will only make things more embarrassing for you."

"...This can't be happening..."

While Ms. Anne was still stunned, Ms. Claire was overjoyed.

Was it because I had rejected Ms. Anne with such clear words?

"Hahaha! Our Mr. Takumi is not the kind of man to be swayed by such promises! I knew it all along!"

Suddenly, the doors of the dining hall burst open, and Mr. Ekenhart entered while laughing boisterously.

Apparently, he had been listening to the conversation.

...As Ms. Lyra was standing by the door but turning her head away, she had probably noticed him, and opened the door a little.

“...Father...you were eavesdropping again...? After everything I said...”

“Oh, not at all. ...I was just about to enter the dining hall when I noticed that Mr. Takumi was in the middle of an important conversation... And so I thought it best to not disturb him.”

Ms. Claire was looking at her father with narrowed eyes.

Well, after what happened last night...it could not be helped.

Mr. Ekenhart looked a little uncomfortable as he made his excuses.

“Hah... Well, nevermind then. It would have indeed been wrong to interrupt Mr. Takaumi’s very determined and final decision.”

“...Yes...of course!”

Ms. Claire sighed with resignation and her father smiled and nodded.

“However, you must not do such a thing again.”

“Yes, I know.”

Mr. Ekenhart replied as he went to sit at the table.

Ms. Lyra placed a cup in front of him and poured some tea.

...Her movements really were smooth and practiced.

“So, Anne. What a shame for you.”

“Your Grace... Why would Mr. Takumi refuse to become a noble?”

“It is quite simple. Because he is currently under my protection... And who would trade that for your house?”

“...Because a count is lower than a duke...”

Mr. Ekenhart. That makes it sound like I just sided with the house with more authority...!

“Well, uh... Mr. Ekenhart... I must say that the ranks of the houses was not something I considered...”

“Is that so?”

“Of course. Mr. Takumi is not the kind of person who decides matters based on power.”

“Hmmm... I suppose you are right. Well, there you have it Anne. ...You must abandon this cause of yours.”

“Not moved by authority...what kind of man...”

Mr. Ekenhart was satisfied once Ms. Claire and I had corrected me.

Since I was born and raised in Japan, I didn't want to choose a marriage partner just based on the level of power.

Though, I suppose it depends on the person.

In any case, Ms. Anne was surprised that I would not change my mind, even when she reminded me of her influence.

I didn't know what her life had been like up until now, but she had probably been surrounded by people who obeyed her.



Thankfully, I was with a house that did not like to show off. But perhaps between most nobles, and the upper class, greed and power were things that were more visible.

...After all, there were similar things happening even in Japan.

“Hah... I think Ms. Anne hasn’t quite recovered from the shock.”

After breakfast, as I went out into the garden and made herbs, I thought about what had happened earlier.

Ms. Anne had just stood there and repeatedly muttered to herself, ‘But...I’m a noble...’

It showed how much she believed that I wouldn’t reject her.

Due to her rank as a count’s daughter, she had likely very few experiences where she didn’t get her way.

“Well, she is supposed to be here for an education...after all.”

She had been placed in Mr. Ekenhart’s care, and Ms. Claire would see that she was disciplined... Though, it was bound to take a long time.

Ms. Claire never refused to do anything because of her rank. And she had even treated the orphan children with warm friendliness.

She never brought up her family name in order to get people to listen.

Previously, she had told me in the forest that she disliked those who used their authority to forcefully bend others to their will.

The exact opposite of... Well, I won’t go that far. But it was a different approach than someone like Ms. Anne, who relied a lot on her family name.

“This whole business of educating her is going to be very difficult... And I want no part of it.”

“Indeed. She has lived in the way that she wanted. And so it will be difficult to change so suddenly.”

“...Mr. Ekenhart?”

Chapter 246

I Talked With Mr. Ekenhart

“Ah, Mr. Takumi. Are you making herbs then?”

“Yes. Because Nick comes to pick them up in the morning.”

As I was making herbs and muttering to myself, Mr. Ekenhart walked over to me.

Apparently, he had heard what I said... Thankfully, it was nothing strange.

“Where is Ms. Anne?”

“She is in the room that was prepared for her. Your rejection was most effective, it seems.”

“...Will she be alright?”

“Well, if she does not pull herself together soon...”

Ms. Anne would not leave her room now.

I suppose it was because part of her worldview had crumbled, and she was still in a state of shock.

But as the person put in charge of her, Mr. Ekenhart seemed to have known something like this would happen.

After all, he and the count were so different...in direction. And so he could make some predictions.

“Do you think I made the right decision?”

“What? Do you want to be a noble now?”

“No, that’s not what I meant, but...”

“Then there is nothing to worry about. It is not as if nobles can force people to marry them.”

“I know that this house doesn’t use their authority like that, but...”

“What? Is that what Claire told you? Indeed, we do not believe in doing that. ...Though, there are exceptions, of course.”

“Yes, I’m sure.”

Even if he preferred to not use his authority...he was still ultimately a duke.

Besides, it didn’t change the fact that other people would treat him and Ms. Claire differently, and do what they could to prevent them from getting angry.

“I knew about the differences between Barsler and I. Annelieis will be confused and have to get accustomed to this new life.”

“Are you really that different?”

“We do...think quite differently. But all humans do. He likes to use his position whenever he can over his people.”

People think differently...yes, that was obvious.

And unlike Mr. Ekenhart, Count Barsler had done as he pleased up until now.

From the malicious store to the attack on Range village... While it was on someone else's lands, he really did see commonfolk as disposable pawns.

Unlike Ms. Claire...who felt that the people must be treated with respect.

"Aye, that's right. While we've been talking about Anneliese, I came to discuss a different matter."

"What is it?"

Mr. Ekenhart changed the subject as if suddenly remembering something.

It was the main reason he had come here. But what could he have to say to me?

"Am sorry...for telling Sebastian to incite Wood into reacting violently at the shop."

"Huh? Oh..."

So Mr. Ekenhart had come to apologize about what happened yesterday.

I felt a little awkward as he bowed his head.

"I realized it after Claire said it. While it was training, I shouldn't have put you in danger. Apparently, my expectations for your growth were too great..."

"Expectations?"

Was there a reason that he would have such high expectations?

Weed Cultivation was one thing, but there was so much that I didn't know and was not used to...

Even now, I could not hit Leo or Mr. Ekenhart with my sword.

“When you protected Range village...both with the herbs and with your sword. I thought that surely you would be able to manage it... Such were my expectations. ...Though, they were completely unwarranted.”

“...Yes. I do have my limits. But I'll do what I have to...”

“Indeed.”

It's not as if I had done everything at Range village.

A lot of it was Leo.

As for the herbs, that was because of Weed Cultivation... While it was my power, it was just something I was able to do out of nowhere.

And my skill with the sword... Though the herbs did allow me to train longer than normal, I didn't feel as if I had grown all that much.

That being said, it did help me at Wood's store, and during the orc attack.

“I forced you to do something beyond your ability... And for that I apologize. From now on, I will try to avoid placing you in harm's way.”

“I understand. But if I can be of service in any way, I will help.”

“Thank you. ...Now, where is that Leo?”

“Leo? Is something the matter?”

After apologizing, Mr. Ekenhart promised that nothing of that nature would happen again.

And when a duke bowed his head and made a promise, I had a feeling that it would be kept.

Well, as he had said before, his word didn't really have anything to do with his rank.

In any case, Mr. Ekenhart seemed to be curious about Leo now.

What had Leo done? No, it did not appear to be something like that...

"I...uh. Good Leo carried me back to the mansion yesterday and..."

"Yes, that's right."

"And ever since... I feel as if she is glaring at me... And so I suppose I should apologize to her as well. One does not like having a Silver Fenrir glare at them like that..."

"...Are you calling Leo...scary?"

"...Exactly. Our family has always revered them. And so I would rather this tense situation continue no further..."

"I see."

He had been like that when first meeting Leo, and he still felt that way a little.

After all, it wasn't just Ms. Claire who scolded him, but Leo as well.

...But then again, it wasn't like Leo to glare at people. So it was possible that Mr. Ekenhart's fear was causing him to imagine things.

Regardless, as the head of his house, which was tightly related to Silver Fenrirs, he wanted to avoid being glared at, or feeling like he was being glared at.

Chapter 247

I Recommended That He Play With Leo and Tilura

"Very well. Should I call Leo now?"

“Mmm...”

Mr. Ekenhart nodded, and so I decided to call Leo over.

When I had come out to the garden to work, Leo had come out as well in order to play with Tilura. They were currently running around.

I felt bad disturbing her now, but it could not be helped.

“Hey! Leo!”

“Wuff?”

“Come over here for a minute!”

“Wuff-wuff!”

“What is it, Mr. Takumi?”

I called Leo, who was running, and she immediately stopped and turned towards me.

She then came running over, while carrying Tilura on her back.

Mr. Ekenhart looked like he was about to make a retreat.

“Sorry to disturb your play time. Uhh... Mr. Ekenhart?”

“Mmm... Yes... Tilura? Could you play with Sherry over there for a moment?”

“...Yes. Sherry!”

“Kyau!”

“...Now it’s just the three of us.”

“Wuff?”

I suppose Mr. Ekenhart did not want his daughter to see him like this.

And so he told Sherry to go and play somewhere else. Tilura obeyed him and went away with Sherry.

Leo watched this with her head tilted to the side. And then she turned to me as if for an explanation.

It’s not me that wants to talk to you, it’s Mr. Ekenhart.

“Well...Good Leo.”

“Wuff?”

Leo looked at Mr. Ekenhart, who was talking awkwardly.

It did not look like she was glaring at him, or even thinking about what happened the other day. But I suppose it just appeared that way to Mr. Ekenhart.

“I want to apologize about what happened yesterday...”

“Wuff. Wuff-wuff?”

“She is asking, ‘what happened yesterday?’”

Mr. Ekenhart could not understand Leo, so I interpreted for him.



“I um... I am sorry for putting Mr. Takumi in danger. I promise to never do something like that again, so will you please forgive me?”

“Wuff? Wuff-wuff, wou!”

“What did Leo say?”

“Uhh, really? She said, if it happens again, I won’t forgive you!”

“Yes! It is a promise. I will not put Mr. Takumi in danger again like yesterday!”

“Wou-wou. Wuff.”

“Mmm. She says if that’s the case, you are forgiven.”

“Truly!? Thank you very much!”

As Mr. Ekenhart apologized to Leo, I told him what Leo’s answer was.

Now that he was forgiven, Mr. Ekenhart thanked her with a relieved expression.

...He really did seem happy.

“Wuff-wuff? Wuff, wuff-wou.”

“Hmm? Ah, that’s true. That might be better.”

“...What is she saying?”

I nodded at Leo’s suggestion.

Mr. Ekenhart looked like he dreaded what he was about to hear.

And then Leo and I turned to him and explained what we meant to do.

“Well, Leo is saying... That you will know that you’re forgiven by riding on her. As this is a good opportunity to get used to her, why don’t you play with Leo and Tilura? She will not be running at the same speed as she did yesterday.”

“...I don’t mind playing with Tilura but... With Good Leo? The first time I rode her, it was normal and comfortable but... Yesterday...”

“Don’t worry. Leo understands that perfectly. She will not run like that again. Especially since Tilura will be with you.”

“I see... Yes.”

“Wuff-wuff.”

As Tilura would be playing with them, Leo wouldn’t do anything reckless.

Besides, Mr. Ekenhart had apologized and promised to never do it again, and Leo had genuinely forgiven him.

And since Mr. Ekenhart hadn’t completely overcome his fear, playing with Leo was probably the best way for him to get used to her.

And since Tilura got to play with her father, it was two birds with one stone.

“Now, go ahead.”

“Yes, father!”

“Uh...hmm...”

“Wuff!”

“Kyau!”

I pushed Mr. Ekenhart’s back and encouraged him to get on top of Leo.

While he was still unsure, he gave up any resistance after both Tilura and I pushed him.

And so he got onto Leo’s back with Tilura.

Sherry was on top of Leo’s head...which was her favorite spot.

“Now, Leo.”

“Wuff!”

“Woah!”

Leo nodded at me and then stood up. And then she ran off to the area where she and Tilura had been playing earlier.

When she started to run, Mr. Ekenhart looked surprised and clutched her tightly.

This wasn’t his first or second time, he should be used to it by now... But I suppose this would do the trick.

“Ahhh! Yes, like this, Leo!”

“Wa-wait, isn’t this a little too fast?”

“Wuff!”

“Kyau! Kyau!”

“...They appear to be having fun.”

I muttered as I watched her run from a distance.

Well, it was just Tilura and Sherry who looked like they were having fun. Mr. Ekenhart still seemed uncomfortable.

...Oh, and Leo was enjoying it as well.

“Now, I can’t just pay attention to them. ...I have to think about the medicinal wine as well.”

As I had finished making the necessary herbs, I decided to use my free time to think of something that could be used with the wine.

The quality of the wine would depend on this part.

Though, the boiled stuff tasted quite good already.

But as this could lead to a new business for Range village, I had to think about it carefully.

“Medicinal wine... We had something like in my old world, but... I don’t know how it was made...”

I had drunk it a few times in Japan.

But I didn’t like alcohol that much, so it wasn’t often.

And since I never checked to see what was inside, I didn’t know how it was made.

Well, it was obviously Chinese medicine and stuff that is good for you.

“Hmm. What should I do... I don’t know much about Chinese medicine either...”

## Chapter 248

### I Thought About The Medicinal Wine

As Japan was overflowing with things, there were a lot of products that claimed to be good for you.

However, I had little interest in such things. I was too busy with work.

There were times when I tried some, in order to help recover from fatigue, but I never felt that they were very effective.

...But I was probably working so much that it wouldn't have even mattered much if it was effective or not.

After all, there was no point if you didn't take time to rest...

Regardless, the recovery herbs I took after coming to this world were different, because I could sense the difference immediately.

But they were made with the special ability that is Weed Cultivation... Though I still needed to rest.

...Now that I thought about it, the herbs were a lot like magic.

"Hmm. Fatigue recovery... I think that's what the medicinal wine was supposed to do?"

I muttered, even though there was no one to hear me.

I didn't know if it could be mixed with wine and be effective while not sacrificing the flavor, but it was worth trying.

"I should start with Ramogi. Right now, it's important to remove the disease from it first."

Even if we succeeded in making wine that had a healing effect, it would mean nothing if it was still the source of the disease.

As I thought about herbs, I made extra Ramogi for Ms. Helena to use.

“Hmm... Fatigue recovery, nutritional supplement, sleepiness...no, maybe not that one. Sleep was not something I should avoid. If anything, maybe making something would make you sleepy...like a sleeping pill? No, it could be too potent and dangerous.”

I thought, while I picked the Ramogi that I made.

“...Wait a minute? If it doesn't have to be limited to just one...”

I processed the picked Ramogi and separated it from the stock that would be given to Nick.

...It was a good thing that no one was close by. I would look very suspicious as I muttered to myself like this.

“A nourishing tonic...or something to improve blood circulation... No, that shouldn't be combined with alcohol.”

Perhaps it would be fine if you only drank a little. But in this world...people didn't practice moderation when it came to such things.

Well, maybe they would listen if I told them. That would be a hassle.

For the people selling it, anyway.

“People who want to get drunk quickly might like it, but... I don't want to do anything dangerous. In the first place, alcohol already improves your blood circulation...”

Maybe I would make medicinal wine for blood circulation that is drunk in small amounts one day, but not now.

First, I had to think of something that can be shipped in great quantities, for Range village.

“I suppose the ones I want are fatigue recovery, nutritional supplements and a restorative... With those three, you will be less likely to get sick.”

And if you didn't get sick, then you wouldn't need Ramogi or similar herbs.

Though, you couldn't prevent people from getting sick completely, so there would still be demand.

“For fatigue recovery, I could use the herbs I already have. The problem is the other two... When it comes to nutrition, there are so many substances... How should I make them...”

Take in the nutrition and then something with a restorative effect.

And then you can make sure that the necessary nutrients are distributed through the entire body.

As I didn't have much knowledge about it, I didn't know how accurate this was. But it shouldn't be too wrong.

But there were so many kinds of nutrients, and there were some that you couldn't take too much of... So it was difficult.

“In general, people get nutrition from their meals... Protein and vitamins... Also, a little iron as well. But not too much. Just as a supplement...”

Kind of like those dietary supplement products.

They were merely things to take along with your regular meals to make up for any lack of nutrition.

And the restorative drink would ensure that everything was properly absorbed...I suppose.

If only I had a nutritionist certificate, I would be able to do a lot more.

But I didn't have one, and have never studied stuff like that.

And I doubted there was any way to analyze the nutritional value in this world.

“All right, so the restorative and nutritional supplement herbs...”

Once I had gathered my thoughts together, I put my hands on the ground and activated Weed Cultivation.

After a few seconds, a plant started to grow.

I picked this plant and placed it in my palm. Then I activated Weed Cultivation again.

Now some of it was dried and turned to powder, while some was left alone. Now the processing is finished.

“Hmm... While this must be the restorative one...the other...”

The restorative herb looked a little like ashitaba.

While processing it, a yellow fluid had come out of the leaves and enveloped everything before drying.

Because it looked like a familiar plant, I had an idea of its effect...but what was it called in this world...?

Just like aloe was similar to Loe, this was also probably a more powerful version of it... I would have to ask Sebastian about it, or check one of the books.

In any case, onto the next one.

I had made several other herbs, but I didn't know what effect they had.

As I had been thinking about a nutritional supplement, it should be a herb that was rich with nutrients... But since there were five, I didn't know which one to use...



...I guess I would have to ask Sebastian about this as well...?

“In any case, that’s enough for now. I’ll take the Ramogi to Ms. Helena. And then she can test it.”

I picked up the herbs and made my way back to the mansion.

“Leo. I’m going to the kitchens now. You can stay here and play.”

“Wuff!”

“Kyau!”

“See you later, Mr. Takumi!”

“Hey, wa-wait a minute!”

I called to Leo and told the others I was going to the kitchen.

Mr. Ekenhart looked like he was asking for help... but he also seemed to be enjoying himself a little, so I left him be.

Chapter 249

Ms. Helena Looked Busy

“Ah, Ms. Lyra.”

“Mr. Takumi. I thought you were in the back garden?”

“I finished my work and came back inside. Uhh, here... Please give this to Nick when he arrives.”

“Certainly. Are you going somewhere now?”

“I’m going to see Ms. Helena in the kitchens so I can talk to her about the wine. ...She is there, isn’t she?”

“Yes, Ms. Helena should be in the kitchens and preparing lunch. Very well, I shall pass this to Nick for you.”

“Thank you.”

As I had met Ms. Lyra on the way to the kitchens, I asked her to give Nick the herbs in my place.

I also asked her about Ms. Helena, and she confirmed that she would be in the kitchen now.

Preparing lunch... She was always working so hard, and I was grateful for that.

“Excuse me. ...Uh, are you busy now?”

“Mr. Takumi? What do you want?”

“Where is Ms. Helena?”

“You want to see her? I’ll call her now.”

“Sorry to disturb you at such a time. But thank you.”

When I arrived at the kitchen, there were a lot of cooks running around in white uniforms.

I suppose they really were busy making lunch.

I felt bad for coming at such a time.

A young man noticed me, and so I asked him about Ms. Helena, and then went to call her.

That was fine... But if she was too busy, then I could just come later.

“Mr. Takumi? What is the matter?”

“Uhh, I brought you some Ramogi to soak in the wine... But I suppose you are busy now?”

“Ah, yes. There is a lot to do when preparing lunch. That being said, we are all used to this work. Alright, I’ll take the Ramogi. Then I can put it to the test after we are finished with lunch.”

“Thank you. Ah, please call me and Leo when it is done. Otherwise, we won’t be able to tell if it will still make you sick.”

“Certainly.”

According to Ms. Isabelle, there were magic tools that allowed you to detect it as well, but we did not have such a device here.

And so we had no choice but to have Leo do it.

“Also, there are some herbs that will improve the wine...”

“Ms. Helena, please help me!”

“Very well! Mr. Takumi, I’m sorry. But the cooks...”

“No, I’m the one who is sorry for bothering you. I will come again when there is time.”

“Thank you...”

Ms. Helena was called by the other cooks and had to leave.

She was very apologetic, but I told her I would be back and then left the kitchen.

They were making food for everyone, so it was best to not get in their way.

“Oh, Mr. Takumi? Did you have business in the kitchen?”

“Sebastian. I was giving Ms. Helena the herbs to be added to the wine.”

“I see.”

“And some other herbs for medicinal wine as well, but... She was quite busy, and so I’m going to go back later.”

“Yes, the kitchens are like a battlefield during this time of the day, so it cannot be helped. Still, medicinal wine?”

As soon as I left the kitchen, I bumped into Sebastian.

Was he on his way to the kitchen?

“Yes. While making herbs in the garden, I decided to make some others as a test. And because they were new herbs, I wanted Ms. Helena’s opinion on them...”

“I see. Hmm... And what kind of herbs were they?”

“Uhh...to put it simply, they are herbs that were made for the purpose of being a supplement for the things your body needs. So you become tougher to illness... That’s what I was thinking...”

“But?”

“Uh, Sebastian. Aren’t you busy? I thought you were going to the kitchen...?”

“Ah, that’s right. It is just that this is so interesting... Well, I will talk to you later, Mr. Takumi... Maybe I will join you when you talk with Helena.”

“Very well. I will call you when I go to see her.”

“Very good.”

Sebastian was so interested in the new herbs that he forgot the reason that he had come down here.

As it might be related to the food, it would be no good to stand around here and talk.

When he remembered, I promised to call him later and we separated.

“Now, I have some free time... What to do... I suppose I should go back to the garden and see how Mr. Ekenhart is doing?”

I still had some time before lunch.

And since there wasn't much for me to do today, I had plenty of time to spare.

As for my training, I planned to do that before dinner... And as for Milina's studies, she was busy learning to be a servant today, so there would be no lessons.

So even if I would talk with Ms. Helena and Sebastian between lunch and training, I had nothing to do right now.

“And I already gave the herbs to Ms. Lyra... So I guess I'll just go to the garden.”

Maybe I should have just handed them to Nick myself... I thought of such things as I walked down the hallway towards the back garden.

“Thank you, missy. I guess my old brother is busy.”

“I told you to stop calling me that...”

“...Huh?”

As I walked down the hallway, I heard a man and woman talking.

When I turned to look, I saw that Nick was holding the back of her head and talking to Ms. Lyra.

“Ms. Lyra. Nick.”

“Mr. Takumi? Are you finished already?”

“Brother! I thought you were busy?”

“Hahaha. Well, they were pretty busy in the kitchen. And so I finished up early and came out.”

I went up to Nick and Ms. Lyra, who were talking in the entrance hall.

Both of them were not expecting to see me.

Nick looked rather happy for some reason... it wasn't because he was able to meet me...right?

Chapter 250

Nick Was Happy To See Me

“I see. I have already given the herbs over to Mr. Nick.”

“Thank you.”

“Yes, I have them right here! Still, I thought I wasn't going to see you today, so I must be pretty lucky...”

“You're that happy to see me...?”

So he really was smiling so much because he was able to meet me.

...I couldn't say it made me feel good. But I suppose it was better than being hated.

"Of course! After all, I respect you more than anyone! I wish I could see you every day!"

"...Respect..."

"He seems very fond of you, Mr Takumi."

"Ms. Lyra... I have no idea why..."

Nick just smiled and went on about how much he respected me.

I hadn't done anything for him to see me in such a way...

But Ms. Lyra seemed amused by it all.

"You helped me when I was about to be punished! And then you hired and paid me generously... So why wouldn't I respect you!"

"I see... Well, as long as you are working hard?"

"Of course, I am! Mr. Kalis is in the middle of teaching me. I won't do anything that will dishonor you, don't worry!"

I had just hired him to see if he could be reformed... And if he caused any trouble, I would have Sebastian capture him again.

As for his wages, it was just what I thought he was owed after working. So it wasn't anything to be so grateful for.

The herbs brought in a lot more than I was expecting, and so I wasn't hurting financially. And so it was true that I gave him a little extra...hoping that it would encourage him.

“I’m sure a lot of people would work harder if they knew about you! Of course, some people will never want to work honestly. I suppose I better not talk about it...”

“Yes, I’m not thinking about hiring anyone else right now, Nick. That being said, is it really that great?”

“Of course, brother. The pay is good. Better than other places. And that’s very appealing for someone as uneducated as me!”

“Mr. Takumi, this isn’t something restricted to Ractos, but...there are a lot of people who use wanderers or even ordinary residents for work, but do not pay them adequately. The duke does what he can to punish such offenses...but it is difficult...”

“I see...”

Such things happen everywhere in every age.

Employers use their workers to their convenience, but pay them little so that they can maximize the profits of their company or store...

I wasn’t saying that all people were like that, but it’s true that many people thought that way.

Otherwise, I never would have ended up working at such a black company.

...Though, I’m sure that managers also had their own problems...

In Japan, I suppose that Nick would be considered delinquent.

Someone who lived outside of society.

Such people were more likely to have to work for lower wages, which would make things difficult. It was a bad environment.

Well, I wouldn’t say that they were blameless for that situation, but...it was a difficult issue.



It was probably because of this, that Nick was so happy to be able to receive enough money to live and even save up, in spite of having nothing to recommend him.

“Well, I’m off then. I’ll take these right to Mr. Kalis!”

“I’m counting on you, Nick.”

“Aye!”

“Be careful...”

I stood in the entrance hall as Nick left with the herbs.

“...Are you thinking about something?”

After seeing Nick leave, I stood there for a moment, deep in thought. And then Ms. Lyra spoke to me.

I hadn’t meant to look so serious...but it was obvious to her that I was thinking about something.

...I suppose I should be more careful so that it didn’t show on my face?

Though, I’m sure that no amount of effort would save me from Sebastian.

“Uh... I was just thinking about the difficulty of hiring people. Also, I didn’t realize such things happened in Ractos...”

“Well, there is a lot of trade happening in Ractos. So many people come and go, and so there are a lot of wanderers. As for the people who hire them... I do not know. After all, I am a person who is merely hired.”

“I suppose such things are more common in densely populated places. Still...I’m sure from the perspective of the duke, I am also a hired person.”

“Well, I hope you are careful Mr. Takumi. If you do decide to hire someone else.”

“...Careful about what?”

After talking with Ms. Lyra, I understood that even under the duke’s management and Sebastian’s watchful eye, such things happened in Ractos town.

And I was thinking thinking about how I was also like a contracted worker, Ms. Lyra suddenly warned me.

I knew that there were things you had to be careful about... But what was she thinking about specifically?

“I do not know a lot about such matters, but...since Mr. Nick seems to be working seriously, your decision was not wrong in the end. However, there are plenty of people who do not work and just try to take money from you. Some even steal and at worst...kill their employers.”

“...Yes.”

“And so you must be careful to not hire such people. I’m sorry, perhaps I am being presumptuous...”

“No, I will keep your words in mind, Ms. Lyra. Thank you. If it ever happens that I have to hire someone else, I will be careful. Of course, I doubt that will happen anytime soon.”

I didn’t think there were many people like that in Japan, but perhaps it was different here.

After all, while there were guards, there weren’t actual police officers.

But if I ever did hire someone, I would discuss it with Sebastian first... It was with such thoughts that I decided to keep her advice etched in my mind.