

Beloved Dog 261

Chapter 261

My Nightly Swings Were Updated

“Well, Ms. Claire. I’ll leave the rest to you.”

“I will make sure that Anne does not do anything strange.”

“Haha. Well, I doubt anything will happen.”

And so we left Ms. Anne to Ms. Claire’s care and we went out into the back garden.

I would be a little nervous if Mr. Ekenhart was going to watch us. But it was also a good thing if he could correct me if I was doing something wrong, so I was grateful.

Judging by what I had seen during training, he definitely was not rusty. I suppose he was just using it as an excuse to join us.

“Oh, could I make the herbs first?”

“Mmm. Yes, you should deal with those chores before starting. Then you will be able to focus.”

“I want to watch as you use Weed Cultivation, Mr. Takumi!”

“Wuff.”

In the garden, I decided to make the restorative herbs for Ms. Helena first.

I didn’t think of it as a chore, like Mr. Ekenhart, but it would help me concentrate if I didn’t have to worry about it later.

Tilura held onto Leo, who was sitting down, and the two of them watched me.

...Well, she was probably more interested in touching Leo's soft fur than watching Weed Cultivation.

"Hmm... It really is a strange sight. Herbs grow from the ground as if it is nothing."

"Well, it feels strange, even though I'm the one using it."

While I had gotten used to Weed Cultivation, the sight of seeing plants grow from the ground where I placed my hand was still quite odd.

Because I still didn't know much about its power and how it worked... Though, it would probably still be strange even if I did know...

"Now, I'm going to go and deliver these to Ms. Helena."

"Mmm. Then Tilura and I will start training."

"Wuff-wuff."

And so I took the herbs and left the back garden.

Leo wanted to come with me, but would she be allowed in the kitchen?

"Excuse me. Is Ms. Helena here?"

"Yes, yes, Mr. Takumi. I'm over here."

"Ah, Ms. Helena. I brought the herbs like you asked."

"And so soon, Mr. Takumi. I didn't expect you to..."

“You seemed to be busy, so I thought I better bring them as soon as possible”

“Wuff-wuff.”

“Oh, is good Leo with you?”

“Wuff!”

As I was trying to see if Ms. Helena was in the kitchen, she noticed me first.

Thankfully, it seemed like she didn’t have her hands full this time.

“I’m sorry for bringing Leo to a place with food...”

“Oh, it’s alright. Leo is a Silver Fenrir. No one in the mansion will treat her as a nuisance.”

“Ah...”

“Wuff, wuff.”

“Leo, you already ate dinner. Just because you smell food, it doesn’t mean you’re going to get a treat, alright?”

“Kuun...”

“Ahaha. I suppose dinner was not enough then. Would you like an extra serving of sausages?”

“Wuff!”

“No, I don’t want it to become a habit... Sorry, Leo.”

“Wuffu...”

Even though it was a kitchen, Leo was apparently special enough to be allowed inside. But the kitchen was filled with smells.

I didn't want Leo to work up an appetite every time she smelled food... And so I would avoid bringing her here in the future.

While Leo's tail drooped in disappointment, I would try to have plenty of food prepared for her for tomorrow's breakfast.

...I guess I spoiled her as well.

"In any case, Ms. Helena. Here are the restorative herbs."

"Yes, I see. I will have them processed and ready to mix with the wine by tomorrow."

"Thank you. Leo, let's go."

"Wuff!"

I said goodbye to Ms. Helena and the other cooks in the kitchen, and then left with Leo.

Depending on how the Ramogi wine turned out tomorrow, she would try using the restorative herbs. That seemed to be the plan.

Ms. Helena was very enthusiastic, but we hadn't even started with mixing the medicine yet... I would have to do my best with Milina.

"I'm back."

"Wuff."

"Ha...hah... Leo...Mr. Takumi!"

“Oh, you’re back.”

“... You seem very tired, Tilura. What happened?”

“Wuff?”

When I returned to the garden, Tilura greeted us with a smile. But she was visibly out of breath as well.

She was used to doing the sword swings now, so while it might cause her to sweat, surely she should not be this tired?

Even Leo was looking at her with a puzzled expression.

“Isn’t it obvious? As she has become accustomed to her swings, I made her do something different.”

“Different? But it’s so late...”

“This training is something you do alone, so it’s quite similar to your regular swings. In fact, it will look mostly the same to an onlooker.”

“It looks the same? What kind of training is it?”

So, Mr. Ekenhart had taught Tilura something new.

As I trained with her, I was very curious.

“The swings are part of the training that builds your muscles. This new training does the same, but for your mind as well.”

“My mind? How do you do it?”

“It’s very simple. You just do your regular sword swings, only this time you pretend like you’re swinging at an opponent.”

“So...it’s like a kind of mental training?”

“That’s right. You imagine how they will move and dodge etcetera, and swing so that you can hit them.”

“I see...”

So it was like shadow boxing.

You would imagine their movements and try to defeat them... That did seem more tiring than normal swings.

Tilura must have become tired because she was desperately swinging.

“By swinging more than usual, both you and Tilura have learned to swing like it is second nature. And by thinking of enemies, you will learn how to fight them as well.”

“I see. Then I suppose I’ll do it too...”

“Mmmm. You should do it. It’s something that I should also do more often.”

“Yes.”

“I’m going to keep doing it too!”

Satisfied with Mr. Ekenhart’s explanation, I started the mental training at once.

Uhh, imaginary enemy... Since there was plenty of space in the garden, I suppose I’ll think about the orcs that attacked us in Range village.

I Managed To Do The Mental Exercise

“Fu! Ha!”

“Hmph! Hya!”

“Hah! Hah!”

In the garden, three people fought against imaginary enemies.

While an onlooker might think we were just practicing our swings, we were each fighting against something.

However, Mr. Ekenhart... His movements were so big...and fast.

It was clear that when he fought against me or Tilura, he was holding back quite a lot.

And so as Leo sat nearby and watched us, we continued this mental training.

“Hah...pew...hah... This is a lot more tiring than my daily swings... And I thought the swings were tiring...”

“Sometimes you move your entire body. So it can be more tiring than just swinging.”

“Hah...hah...”

After training for about an hour, we finally stopped.

I was just as tired as Tilura had been when I returned from the kitchen, and I had to catch my breath while talking to Mr. Ekenhart.

As for Tilura, she too was out of breath.

But Mr. Ekenhart seemed perfectly fine... Was this the difference brought by experience and energy...?

“While you did well enough, Mr. Takumi, you still have a ways to go, Tilura. I don’t think you were properly imagining an enemy?”

“...Ha...Ha... It is hard.”

“Phew... Hah... So, I was fine?”

“Mmm. You were far from perfect, but it seemed like you were able to really imagine your enemy. It was almost as if I could see them myself.”

“You could...”

“When I look at your movements, I can start to see the movements of your enemy as well. It is proof that you are doing it properly.”

“I see...”

Apparently, when you were as skilled as someone like Mr. Ekenhart, you could see such things.

He had been watching us, even as he trained himself... I had no idea how long it would take me to be able to do that.

“Wuff! Wuff!”

“Hmm? What is it, Leo?”

“Wuff-wuff. Wuff!”

“Could you see it too, Leo? The shadows of my enemies...?”

“What... Well, she is a Silver Fenrir...”

“That’s amazing, Leo!”

“Wuff!”

“Well, I’m going to ask you some questions then. What kind of enemy was I imagining?”

“Wuff? Wuff!”

“Orcs... That’s right.”

“...So you were imagining orcs, Mr. Takumi. Even I didn’t know that...”

As Leo had been barking loudly, I asked what was the matter, and she said that she could see the enemies as well.

Mr. Ekenhart and Tilura believed it, because she was a Silver Fenrir, but I was not persuaded so easily.

While I had seen displays of Leo’s strength, I still didn’t think she had changed all that much since she was a Maltese.

No, I suppose she had changed a lot in terms of size...

In any case, when I asked Leo about what kind of enemy she had imagined, she was able to clearly answer that it was an orc.

Even Mr Ekenhart hadn’t been able to see that much.

...What if Leo was even more of a master than Mr. Ekenhart?

Perhaps it was no surprise, because she was a Silver Fenrir. But I didn’t really think of such things.

“So you were imagining an orc... And you fought orcs at Range village. Were you remembering that time?”

“Yes. I fought against a number of orcs. And so I recalled the way they moved.”

“I see. That’s why... That is the difference between you and Tilura.”

“It is?”

“Mmm. Tilura hasn’t left this mansion very often. She only goes to town on occasion. However, she has never fought humans or monsters.”

Mr. Ekenhart began to explain the differences between Tilura and I.

Indeed, she had never been in a real battle.

While we had started training at the same time, she was still a child, so of course, she would not have that experience.

“Obviously, she has been in practice battles against you, Leo and I... But those are not serious battles.”

“That’s true.”

While Tilura and I rarely faced off, we did do it occasionally.

But neither of us were serious about it.

After all, we had been told that at our skill level, we ran the risk of getting injured if we fought too earnestly.

Leo never attacked us, and Mr. Ekenhart always held back.

In other words, she had never been in anything like a real fight.

“On the other hand, you have fought orcs in Range village, Mr. Takumi. And then you fought those men at the store. You know what it’s like to be in danger.”

“Yes, that’s right.”

Especially in Range village against the orcs.

While Leo had saved me in the nick of time, it was clear that I would have died without her help.

In fact, I had accepted my fate in some way.

“Obviously, fighting under such circumstances is drastically different. And so it is harder for Tilura to imagine an enemy.”

“I see...”

“Yes, it was hard... But I did my best to imagine you, father!”

“But you imagine me while I am holding back during practice, don’t you? That is not the same thing as imagining someone who is trying to kill you. Well, I am not saying that you are doing it wrong either. Hahaha!”

While Tilura insisted that she was doing her best, Mr. Ekenhart laughed and patted her on the head.

It may not be enough, but she wasn’t bad either. She just needed to continue training... I think.

“It cannot be helped now, since you haven’t experienced a real fight. And that is fine. After all, there is plenty that you can gain from just swinging.”

“Yes... I understand. I will do my best.”

“Good, good.”

Tilura was satisfied after hearing this.

While it made her sad, she would probably train hard after today, and slowly raise her skill level.

As she was a child, she had more potential to grow than I did... And she was also Mr. Ekenhart's daughter.

I would have to train hard so I didn't fall behind...

Chapter 263

I Gave Them Sleeping Herbs

“That's enough then. Don't forget to wash up before going to bed.”

“Yes. Thank you!”

“Thank you. And good night!”

I thanked Mr. Ekenhart after training.

But before returning to the mansion, I suddenly remembered something.

“Ah, Mr. Ekenhart. Tilura. Please wait one moment.”

“What is it, Mr. Takumi?”

“What's the matter?”

“Tilura, since you trained so hard today... And for you too, Mr. Ekenhart.”

They turned around after I called out to them. And then I gave them some recovery herbs for their muscles, as well as some herbs for fatigue.

“Oh, the one that rids your body of tiredness. Thank you.”

“Thank you, Mr. Takumi!”

“Now I won’t be tired tomorrow!”

“...Are you that exhausted, Mr. Ekenhart?”

During the training before dinner, as well as the mental exercise, he had not looked out of breath at all.

I hadn’t realized that he was tired...

“Well, a little. Especially after the matter with Claire... And riding on Leo today...”

“Wuff?”

“Hahaha. You’re tired after just riding on Leo?”

“Grr... You may say that. But Tilura and Sherry kept making her run faster...while I was still on...”

During the day, I had suggested that Mr. Ekenhart play with Leo and Tilura.

Apparently, things had gotten a little out of hand, and that was why he was so tired...

Well, I’m sure being scared of Leo made things worse.

And then there was the whole matter with Ms. Claire, that meant he didn’t get much sleep.

“In that case...you should take this too.”

“...What is that?”

“It’s a herb that will help you sleep better. Not only that, but you should feel very refreshed when you wake up tomorrow.”

“Oh, that sounds good!”

I hadn’t given anyone these herbs since the time we went to the forest.

There wasn’t anyone here who had trouble sleeping, and normal sleep was enough to rid yourself of tiredness.

Still, if combined with other herbs, he should be able to wake up the next morning feelings extra refreshed.

...But as it was probably similar to sleeping pills, it would be best to not use them too often.

“Now, I will return to my room.”

“Thank you, Mr. Takumi. Good night.”

“Good night!”

I gave him just one of the sleeping herbs and then returned to my room.

As I also felt more tired than usual, I ate the recovery herb.

While I could make them whenever I wanted, and it was greatly convenient, I didn’t want to rely on them entirely, so I just took the bare minimum.

I would use them when I could, but that was all... That was how I thought recently.

That being said, I would continue to research Weed Cultivation and help people with the herbs.

With medicine, you have to follow instructions and use them properly...

“Wuff.”

“You must be tired too, Leo.”

“Wuff-wuff.”

After returning to my room, Leo suddenly became playful.

I suppose she had been with Mr. Ekenhart and Tilura for most of the day, and so she wanted me to pay her some attention.

“That being said, we have to bathe first... I sweated quite a lot.”

“Wuff-wuff.”

“Haha. Fine then. I’ll go alone.”

“Wuff!”

As soon as she heard the word ‘bathe,’ Leo moved away and became quiet.

While things had gotten a little better, she still disliked bathing.

I would have to bathe her again eventually, but she wasn’t too dirty right now, and so I would go alone.

“I’m back, Leo.”

“Wuff-wuff.”

After washing off the sweat and warming myself, I returned to my room.

Then I petted Leo and sat on the bed.

“Wuff-wuff... Hah-hah-hah!”

“Hey, hey. Calm down. I’m not going anywhere.”

Leo started licking my face as if she wanted attention.

I laughed and petted her thoroughly on the head.

Once I had petted her enough, I got into bed in order to sleep.

A lot has happened today, and I will do my best tomorrow.

There was the medicine I had to concoct with Milina, and the wine.

—

The next day, Tilura and Sherry visited in order to wake us up. And I talked with her while washing up.

I am now used to shaving my beard... Which is to say, I could do it without cutting myself...much.

Though, I was still on my guard.

“Mr. Takumi, Leo. Let’s go and eat breakfast!”

“Haha. You sure are energetic, Tilura. Alright, let’s go, Leo.”

“Wuff!”

“Kyau!”

“And you too, Sherry. I haven’t forgotten about you.”

After seeing that we were ready, Tilura moved excitedly towards the dining hall.

Don’t forget about me! Sherry seemed to say as she rode on top of Leo’s head. And so I petted her as we walked.

Now that I thought about it, what happened yesterday, after Ms. Anne realized that Sherry was a fenrir?

Was she fine with Sherry?

Well, since Ms. Claire stayed with her, I doubt there had been any problems.

“Good morning everyone.”

“Good morning, Mr. Takumi.”

“Good morning.”

“Ah, Mr. Takumi. Morning.”

“Wuff?”

When I entered the dining hall, Ms. Claire and Ms. Anne were already waiting at the table.

I greeted all of them and realized that something was different.

...Mr. Ekenhart?

He was usually not present during breakfast, but he was now sitting at the table without a hint of drowsiness.

I had never seen him like this at breakfast before.

Leo must have thought the same thing, as she was looking at him with her head tilted in a puzzled expression.

Chapter 264

Mr. Ekenhart Woke Up Early

“I thought you dislike waking up early, Mr. Ekenhart? Are you alright?”

“It’s because of the herbs you gave to me yesterday, Mr. Takumi. The ones to help me sleep? Thanks to them, I felt very refreshed this morning!”

“That father would wake up in the morning when it isn’t even a special occasion...it must be the end of the world.”

“Indeed. I have never seen His Grace awake at this hour before.”

“You two... I have gotten up early from time to time.”

“Hahaha. Well, I suppose it was a very rare thing.”

“Wuff-wuff.”

“You too, Leo...”

When I asked him why, he said it was thanks to the herbs I had given him last night.

He had slept well, and been rid of any fatigue. That was why he was able to get up early.

People tend to be tired all the time once they get older, which makes it harder to get up... Though, I should be too young to feel that yet.

...But I was definitely different during my student days.

Regardless, Ms. Anne and Ms. Claire were surprised to see him at the breakfast table.

And even Leo was nodding in agreement...much to Mr. Ekenhart's dismay.

At the very least, I had never known Mr. Ekenhart to eat breakfast, so it was indeed rare.

But then again, I had not known him for very long.

"Hah... So that is how you all see me... In any case, let's eat then."

"It's because of the way you usually act, father."

Recently, Ms. Claire seemed rather severe when it came to her father.

She hadn't been like this when I first met Mr. Ekenhart.

Perhaps once the matter of the arranged marriages was settled, she was able to talk to her father without restraint.

"Now, let's eat."

"Yes."

"Wuff."

“Kyau!”

“...Uh, yes.”

With all of the food now on the table, Mr. Ekenhart told us to eat.

Ms. Anne looked a little confused when everyone said this, but she followed the others and began to eat.

I suppose it wasn't really a custom here... I didn't know how things were like at her home. Perhaps she usually ate alone.

Or she never talked with her father...?

Well, I shouldn't be making guesses of such things... I might be completely wrong, and it was also rude.

“The food here is always so delicious.”

“It's thanks to Helena. ...Father, please don't eat so hurriedly.”

“Mmm...gg... But don't you know that good food tastes best when you eat it quickly?”

“Yes, you've said that many times... Ha... Very well...”

“Hahaha...”

“Wuff-wuff... Wuf-wuff-wuff!”

Ms. Claire replied to Ms. Anne, who muttered her praises. And then her attention moved to Mr. Ekenhart.

While he stopped for a moment at how put off Ms. Claire looked as she sighed, he soon went back to eating hungrily.

Perhaps he was right. It was best to eat good food without worrying about how you looked.

...Leo was doing the same thing.

“Mmm! ...Leaving that aside, what are your plans for today, Mr. Takumi?”

“Me? I...”

Mr. Ekenhart had already finished eating. That was fast...

He was now asking me about my plans, but I had a feeling he was just trying to distract Ms. Claire.

In fact, both Ms. Claire and Ms. Anne were looking towards me as if they were also interested.

...Ms. Anne too? Well, I suppose it was fine.

“After breakfast, I will make the herbs for Ms. Kalis’s store, as I always do. I do not want them to run out of stock.”

“Yes, that’s true. Though, I doubt they are in any danger of that... But I suppose a steady supply of Ramogi is important.”

Said Mr. Ekenhart with a nod.

We had removed the cause of the disease, and dealt with the malicious store.

As long as there was enough Ramogi to go around, then the disease would stop spreading.

Though sadly...it wasn’t something that would happen immediately.

“Also... Milina and I have to study to concoct some medicine. And after lunch, Leo and I will go and see the wine that Ms. Helena made.”

“Hmm, I see. Good, good. So that means the wine will be drinkable by dinner time?”

“If everything goes well...”

“Father, are you really that impatient to drink the wine?”

“Yes. After tasting the juice... Why wouldn't I be looking forward to it?”

“That may be the case, but...”

“Yes, it was very delicious. And so I am also looking forward to drinking it as wine! But why was it turned into juice in the first place?”

“It was your fault! Your fault! It was dangerous and made people sick!”

Ms. Anne...

Did she already forget that it was her idea?

Well...perhaps she didn't know what wine or how it was done.

...Or she really was that forgetful.

“Huh?”

“What is it?”

As I smiled and watched Ms. Claire berated her, Mr. Ekenhart suddenly raised his voice as if he had remembered something.

“No...about the wine in Range village... It was being sent to the count’s lands as well. Mostly to Barsler himself... But I was wondering why he hasn’t become sick?”

“Ah, I see. Yes, one would wonder about such things.”

“Do you know something, Mr. Takumi?”

“Well, yes.”

Mr. Ekenhart was right to question it.

The infected wine was being sent to Count Barsler as well... That was what Mr. Hannes had said.

While I hadn’t talked about it with Mr. Ekenhart, he was the duke, and must be aware of export from his towns and villages.

However, then why was the count not sick... I thought back on my conversation with Mr. Hannes as we waited for Phillip to bring the wagons to Range village.

Chapter 265

Why The Count Wasn’t Sick

“Uhh...Mr. Hannes...the chief of Range village, said that the count was specific about the wine that was sent.”

“Really? In what way?”

“He wanted the aged wine that was in the back of the storage house... And Mr. Hannes was instructed to place the magic tool...the glass sphere, near the entrance.”

“Hmm, I see. So while it spread near the entrance, it didn’t reach the back. So that wine is all safe?”

“Yes. Leo checked them. All of the wine that was drinkable was the aged wine in the back.”

“So Barsler was able to drink the safe wine...”

“Father was always drinking wine. I didn’t realize he had acquired it like that...”

“You didn’t know, Ms. Anne?”

“While I have made some suggestions, it was his decision when it came to what he would use as a medium. I would never be that specific.”

“...I see...”

It was Barsler who acted, and Anne who advised.

But in the end, she did not know how he would do things.

Even if she was the heir, she was not that knowledgeable about what things were being made in villages in other territories.

“During my conversation with Mr. Hannes, we agreed that he secured wine for himself safely by specifying where the sphere was to be set.”

“Indeed. And then he had the village attacked. He was surely going to take the sphere and the wine at the same time. Besides, I’m sure he has tools to find out if the wine is infected as well.”

Considering the number of wagons that had brought the orcs, Mr. Ekenhart was probably correct.

Because I had temporarily blinded them, and because the orcs had thrashed around wildly, most of the wagons were too damaged to use.

However, if that had not happened...then they would be able to use them to carry the wine back.

“Well, since my father went through all that trouble for the wine... I am looking forward to drinking it!”

“...Do you really think you’re going to be drinking it?”

“What? What do you mean, Ms. Claire?”

“Isn’t it obvious? It became dangerous because of your suggestion. It would hardly be proper for you to...”

“This is an outrage! Ms. Claire!”

“Well, calm down, Claire. Mr. Takumi purchased the wine. And he is also going through the trouble of making it drinkable. So it is his decision.”

“Father... That may be, but... Mr. Takumi...”

“Uhh...”

Ms. Claire did not want Ms. Anne to drink the wine.

Indeed, as Mr. Ekenhart said, I had bought it, and made the Ramogi. So I suppose it was my decision to make.

As for me, since they were storing the wine, and Ms. Helena was the one processing it, I didn’t mind if they did what they wanted with it.

There was so much. Whether it was juice or wine, they should just drink as they please.

That’s what I thought... But I suppose that would not settle the matter...

“Well, since Ms. Anne is a guest here... I don’t see why she shouldn’t?”

“Hmph...”

“Perhaps if she tastes and sees how delicious it is, she will not think of doing such a thing in the future.”

“If you insist...Mr. Takumi.”

“Hahaha. You sure are weak to Mr. Takumi.”

“Father! That is not necessary!”

“Thank you, Mr. Takumi. Now I will be able to drink the wine.”

“It’s nothing...”

Delicious things should be enjoyed.

And that should not be disturbed by strange ideas... I just hoped that she would understand that...

Well, the rest was up to Ms. Claire and Mr. Ekenhart, so I would not say anything else.

And the time passed as I ate breakfast and watched Mr. Ekenhart tease Ms. Claire, while Ms. Anne looked excited.

As Tilura, Leo and Sherry had no interest in the wine, they were looking at Ms. Anne as if to ask, ‘Why is she so excited?’

I would ask Ms. Helena to make more juice for them...

“Milina.”

“Ah, master!”

“Are you busy now?”

“No. Since you talked about concocting the medicine yesterday, I’ve been waiting for you!”

After eating breakfast, I finished making the herbs to give to Nick, and then I went to the drawing room to search for Milina.

There, Milina was waiting while looking over the book and all of the notes she took up until now.

She really was passionate about her studies... I had to try and match her.

“Now, about concocting. It is right here...”

“Yes. This is what it says...”

While making the herbs to give to Nick, I had also made more of the three types of herbs that I showed to Ms. Helena and Sebastian yesterday.

I then used Weed Cultivation to change them into their most effective state, so that they were ready to be mixed together.

And so Milina and I read the book and went over the instructions.

“Uhh, turn them into powder and mix... Ms. Lyra, do you have a pestle and mortar?”

“Yes, I’ll bring one right away.”

“Thank you.”

While it depended on the medicine you were trying to make, you generally mixed them while crushing the herbs in a mortar.

As you couldn’t do that with liquids, there were other processes that included heating and cooling. But this was the general one that we would test first.

It seemed doable, even though I wasn't sure about the taste.

"Here it is."

Ms. Lyra returned with the pestle and mortar, and so I put the three herbs inside and began to grind them together.

There were two sets, and so both Milina and I tried different ones.

And so for some time, the sounds of grinding herbs echoed through the drawing room.

Chapter 266

We Concocted the Medicine

"This requires a lot of strength..."

"It does. You have to crush the herbs quite thoroughly."

It seemed that Milina was struggling a little with the work of grinding the herbs into powder.

Aside from one of the herbs, the others were leaves, and so we had to crush them ourselves...which was more tiring than expected.

But while Milina had thin arms, I had been swinging a sword for some time now, and so it wasn't too hard.

I suppose it was just something that she would have to get used to.

"Ah, it's starting to turn into a paste.

"Hmm. According to the book, it says in this state, to continue mixing them until dry... Is this the state it's supposed to be in?"

"I don't know..."

As the moisture remained from the leaves, it would not turn completely into powder. Currently, both Milina and I had bowls of paste.

While the herbs themselves were mixed, the book said we had to keep mixing it until it turned into powder.

...That would take quite a long time...

“Wuff?”

“What is it, Leo?”

“Wuff. Wuff.”

“Taste it? But the book says it has to be dried...”

Leo had come to the drawing room with me, and she was standing behind me and looking into the bowl.

She could have stayed outside and played with Tilura, but Leo seemed to be interested in medicine.

And so she had been watching us all this time.

As for what Leo wanted me to do... Well, she could tell a lot by just smelling something, so perhaps I should try it.

“All right, Milina. Why don’t we try tasting it?”

“Are you certain? What if we failed and...”

“Well, even if it tastes horrible, I don’t think it will make us sick. It’s not that kind of herb.”

They were just plants filled with nutrients, so even if the taste was bad, it shouldn't have a negative effect.

Though...I suppose it was possible to take too much... But we were just going to taste a little this time.

"Just a taste...hmm..."

"...Hmm."

I touched the edge of the paste gently with my finger and then licked it.

After seeing this, Milina also hesitantly dipped her finger in to taste it.

"...!"

"Ma-master!"

While we had combined three different kinds of herbs, the taste of the medicine was overpoweringly sour.

We both scowled and looked at each other in disbelief.

It was like those dried sour plums... My mouth kept filling with saliva after that.

...While I had eaten such plums before, it must be quite shocking for someone like Milina...

"Wuff?"

"...No, Leo. This is no good at all. It is much too sour to eat."

"Wuff..."

“Good Leo... It is so sour...”

“...Here.”

“Thank you.”

“...Glug-glug... Thank you. Hah...”

“Not at all.”

Ms. Lyra saw us and quickly poured us some tea.

I thanked her, and then we both rinsed our mouths with it.

Leo looked quite disappointed by all of this...as if it was a great failure.

Of course, she would not have been able to guess that it would taste like this...

“Master... Did we make a mistake?”

“No, I wouldn’t say that... However, in this state, it is...”

It was much worse than when I has tasted it with Ms. Helena and Sebastian.

I didn’t know why it came out like this. Perhaps mixing them together made the sourness even stronger.

It was definitely strange...

“In any case, we should continue until it’s dry, just as the book says.”

“Very well. I doubt the taste will change, but...let’s try it.”

While the taste might be a failure, we didn't know about the effect yet.

But as we could hardly mix it with the wine in this state, we would follow the book and continue until it was dried powder.

I agreed with Milina that the taste was not likely to change, but...since this was our first time doing it, I wanted to finish the job.

“Master, my arms are getting tired...”

“Yes, concocting medicine is tiring work...”

After grinding it in the pestle and mortar for some time...even I grew tired.

And if I was tired, Milina would be exhausted.

Still, it was commendable that she did not give up.

“Wuff?”

“Hmm? Leo?”

“Good Leo?”

“Wuff-wuff.”

“The book? Uh... Ah.”

“What is it, Mr. Takumi?”

Leo was looking into the open book and trying to tell us something.

And so I obeyed her and looked at the book... 'As the process of drying is time consuming, having multiple people create wind will help save time.'

"Milina...it says it's faster with some wind..."

"...Is that so?"

It reminded me how people used a fan when making sushi rice. Indeed, it probably would make it dry faster.

Milina looked puzzled though... Well, she did have such knowledge, I suppose.

"Wuff!"

"Leo? Oh, wind..."

"That's amazing, Leo!"

"...The magic of a Silver Fenrir. I didn't know that she could do such a thing."

"Wuff."

Leo, who had been looking at us, suddenly barked once, and then a wind was created as it blew towards us.

...I didn't know Leo could do that.

Milina and Ms. Lyra were also surprised by this magic, and Leo seemed quite proud.

"It is a nice wind."

"Yes. But we have to keep working. Thank you, Leo."

“Yes.”

“Wuff.”

While feeling the wind that Leo had created, we continued the work of mixing the paste.

And after what still felt like a long time...the paste finally turned into something like powder.

So, it had worked quite well after all.

Now, it would be ready very soon?

Chapter 267

We Finished Concocting

“...Is it ready?”

“Hmm. Yes. I think it is? Leo, I think it’s ready.”

“Wou.”

It seemed like quite a lot of time had passed since we started, and the paste had finally turned into powder.

But if Leo hadn’t created the wind, it would have likely taken much longer.

“It’s very black...”

“Yes...”

“Wuff?”

We looked at the powdered medicine inside of the bowls.

I didn't know if it was because the colors had mixed, or it was the effect, but...the powder had become black.

Milina and I looked at each other and then took a pinch of the powder and tasted it.

"Milina..."

"Mr. Takumi..."

"It's not sour anymore!"

"Yes! It has almost no taste at all!"

"Wuff!"

Unlike the paste, the medicine in my mouth had almost no sourness.

Where had it gone... I couldn't help but wonder. But perhaps that was how concocting worked.

There was magic energy in it, and perhaps the properties changed while it dried... I would just assume that was the case for now.

While Milina and I looked surprised, Leo barked happily.

"Ms. Lyra, please try some. You too, Leo."

"Yes, very well."

"Wuff."

And so I made Ms. Lyra and Leo taste some of it as well.

“While there is a faint sourness, I doubt it will affect the wine much.”

“That’s true. What a relief...”

“Yes. I was worried about what would happen if it remained the same.”

“Now we just need to see the effect...”

“Wuff? Wuff-wuff. Wuff.”

“Hmm? Leo. You can tell?”

“Wuff.”

Now that we had Ms. Lyra’s approval regarding the taste, we just needed to confirm the effect.

If the effect had been preserved, then this would be a success. If not, then we would have to try out different methods.

Succeeding on both taste and potency was hard.

As I thought of such things, Leo started barking at me.

Uh... You don’t know what effect they have, but the herbs haven’t lost it...?

“You can really tell that, Leo?”

“Wuff!”

“Mr. Takumi, what is Leo saying?”

“Leo says that...the effect of the herbs hasn’t been lost at all. Do Silver Fenrirs know such things?”

“That’s amazing, Leo!”

“Well, it would not be odd for Silver Fenrirs to be able to tell.”

“I see... She was able to differentiate the wine, after all.”

Leo looked quite smug about it, but I was still surprised...

Well, if the restorative herbs were affected by magic energy, then maybe the nutritious herbs were also affected.

And as a Silver Fenrir, Leo might be more sensitive to such things.

“So, I guess this is a success then?”

“Wuff.”

Leo nodded to me.

“So the method wasn’t wrong after all!”

“It looks like it. That’s good. That we were able to succeed with a basic concoction.”

Milina was very happy to hear Leo’s answer.

Because if this had been a failure, we would then have to test out other methods.

There were other ways of doing it, and most of them were quite advanced for beginners like us.

So I doubted that we would be able to test all of them... So this was quite a relief.

Though, it was still tiring and took a lot of time...

“So you succeeded. Then perhaps you should leave the rest of the herbs to Milina?”

“Just her?”

“Yes. I think you probably want to go and deliver the completed medicine to Ms. Helena...”

“Oh... Well, that’s true.”

“I have to do it all by myself...”

Ms. Lyra saw that we had succeeded with the medicine.

And she suggested that I let Milina process the rest of the herbs.

“...Well, there isn’t that much left. Do you think you can do it, Milina?”

“...I will manage... Yes, I will do my best!”

“I will help by creating a wind.”

While Milina hesitated at first, she nodded in agreement.

Judging by how much remained, she would only need to do it twice. And if Ms. Lyra was helping her, she would surely be fine.

“But Ms. Lyra...are you going to use magic?”

“No, I don’t need magic to help with a little wind.”

“Oh. Yes, I see.”

I suppose she could just use a sheet of paper or something to do that.

While it would take time, if the wind did not need to be strong, then anyone could do it.

“In that case, please excuse me. I will deliver this to Ms. Helena.”

“Yes. Thank you.”

“Thank you for the help, Milina.”

“Wuff.”

I picked up the bowl and stood up.

Milina had dumped her medicine into it, and had now started on a new batch.

And so I left them in the drawing room and headed to the kitchen.

“Excuse me... Ms. Helena, are you busy right now?”

“Ah, Mr. Takumi. I’m very sorry. We are almost finished with lunch!”

“Oh, well you don’t have to stop.. I just came to tell her that I finished concocting the medicine. Please give this to her.”

“Certainly!”

“I won’t bother you any longer. Leo, let’s go.”

“Wuff!”

When we entered the kitchen, the cooks were rushing around busily, as they were preparing lunch.

It seemed like once again, I had disturbed them at a busy hour.

And so I talked to the cook who noticed me, and left the bowl for Ms. Helena before leaving.

If I stayed, then I would only get in their way.

“Now, we finished what we had to do... What now?”

“Wuff? Wuff-wuff?”

“That’s right. We should go to the dining hall and wait. Lunch will be ready soon, so they won’t have to call us...”

Sword training was after lunch, and so I had nothing to do right now. And so Leo suggested that we go to the dining hall first.

She was probably hungry, now that she had smelled the food from the kitchen.

While the food wouldn’t be prepared any faster if we went to the dining hall, I understood why she was impatient.

Besides, they wouldn’t have to send someone to call us... And so I took Leo, who wagged her tail happily, and went towards the dining hall.

Chapter 268

Ms. Anne Was Very Surprised

“...Ms. Claire, Ms. Anne?”

“Oh, Mr. Takumi. So you are already finished?”

“Yes. As it was a success, I left the rest to Milina.”

“I see. I’m glad that it worked well.”

“There, there, there...”

“Kyau, kyau!”

“Here? You want me to pet you here?”

“Kyau!”

When I entered the dining hall, Ms. Claire and Ms. Anne were sitting there together.

As I answered Ms. Claire and looked towards Ms. Anne, I saw that she was petting Sherry happily... So, she was at least used to dealing with fenrirs.

Though, Sherry seemed to be...more interested in Ms. Anne’s hair rolls than she was interested in being petted...

She moved her front paws as if punching like a cat... Yes, it looked like a cat playing with some kind of toy.

But fenrirs weren’t supposed to be like cats...

“I see you’ve become quite friendly.”

“Yes. She absolutely insisted on playing with her while Tilura was studying.”

“I had no idea that fenrirs were such adorable creatures! This is quite the discovery!”

“...I think that this fenrir might be a special one... But more importantly, why are you here, Mr. Takumi?”

“Well, I went to the kitchen to give Ms. Helena the herbs, but they seemed very busy...and I thought since lunch would be ready soon...”

“Wuff. Wuff.”

“Hehehe. I see that good Leo is also impatient to eat.”

I watched Ms. Anne and Sherry play with a smile, and then I took my seat.

Ms. Claire was a little curious as to why I was here so early, and so I answered her, as did Leo.

“You seem to get along quite well with Ms. Anne after all?”

“...No, no we do not get along.”

“Really? But you’re together now...”

“That is because she stalks me relentlessly. And as Sherry’s guardian, I could hardly leave her alone with...”

“Oh, I see.”

“In any case, I will eventually tell you about what happened between us.”

“...Very well.”

They had appeared to be on good terms for a moment, but it seemed like it was merely a result of the advice that I had given to Ms. Anne.

I had suggested that she talk with Ms. Claire...which was probably something that Ms. Claire did not appreciate at all.

However, it did seem like there was a reason that the two did not get along...

“Wuff?”

“Hmm? You want to join them?”

“Wuff-wuff.”

“Well, go slowly, so you don’t startle her, okay?”

“Wuff.”

“Hehehe. I see that good Leo does not like to be seen as scary.”

Leo had watched Sherry being petted by Ms. Anne, and wanted to be petted as well.

I didn’t think that she was jealous of Sherry, because Ms. Anne wasn’t afraid of her, but she was still bothered at being avoided all of the time.

And so I told her to move slowly. Leo nodded and walked quietly over to Ms. Anne.

But Ms. Anne was too preoccupied with Sherry to notice Leo’s approach. Perhaps she had not even noticed that we entered the room...

And so Ms. Claire and I smiled and watched as Leo stealthily walked up behind Ms. Anne.

“Kyau?”

“WUFF!”

“AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHHH!”

“Pfftt!”

“Hahaha! Ms. Claire, you shouldn’t laugh at her.”

“But you are laughing too, Mr. Takumi. Hehehehe!”

Sherry saw Leo approaching, and so she barked and tilted her head to the side.

Just then, Leo barked behind Ms. Anne, who then let out a great shriek and jumped up from her seat.

Upon seeing Ms. Anne fall to the ground and land on her buttocks, Ms. Claire could not hold it back any longer. She burst into laughter, and so did I.

In the end, while Leo had moved carefully, it was the bark that spoiled it... Perhaps I shouldn’t have said anything to begin with?

“Wh-wh-wh-wh-why is it behind me!! Is it going to attack!?”

“Calm down, Anne. Good Leo would never attack a human.”

“Wuff.”

“Kyau!”

“Wou.”

Ms. Anne shuddered as she sat on the floor and looked up at Leo.

While Ms. Claire tried to calm her down, she was not very successful.

Now that Ms. Anne was not looking at her, Sherry jumped away from the chair and landed on top of Leo's head.

It was her favorite spot, and she seemed quite happy.

Leo didn't mind if Sherry was there, and she just barked quietly to her.

"It should not appear behind me so suddenly like that..."

"I think Leo just wants to play with you, Anne. Because you only play with Sherry..."

"That's easy for you to say..."

"Hahaha. Are you really so frightened by Leo, Ms. Anne?"

"By living here...I do see and understand that it doesn't really attack people... But you still cannot expect me to act normal when around such a huge Silver Fenrir."

"Wuff?"

Now that Ms. Anne had finally regained her calm, she got up from the floor and sat in a chair that was far away from Leo.

It's because I'm too big? Leo seemed to ask with a bark, which only served to make Ms. Anne jump.

Well, she was a wolf that was big enough to carry multiple people. And so the fear would not be easy to shake off for some.

"Oh, Claire, Anne, and Mr. Takumi, you are here."

"Mr. Ekenhart."

“Father.”

“Your Grace...”

“Wuff.”

“Kyau.”

“Haha. You looked very tired, Anne. Was it Leo again?”

As I was watching Ms. Anne, Mr. Ekenhart opened the doors of the dining hall and entered. Behind him were Sebastian and the maids, who brought in the food. So lunch was ready now.

Mr. Ekenhart sat at the table and laughed at the sight of Ms. Anne.

Unlike a moment earlier, she was calm and collected again, but her hair was in disarray, so Mr. Ekenhart could guess as to what had happened.

...Just by her hair... That was rather impressive...

Chapter 269

The Illness Was Nearly Stamped Out

“Leo, come over here. It’s lunch time.”

“Wuff!”

“And you sit over here, Sherry.”

“Kyau!”

“Lunch time!”

As I watched the maids serve the food out on the table, I called Leo to take her seat.

Sherry was on Leo's head, but Ms. Claire picked her and carried her to her usual spot.

Tilura had also finished her studies, and she arrived in the dining hall just as everything was ready.

Ms. Anne remained in her seat, far away from Leo, because she was still wary after being scared.

But she would occasionally glance over to Sherry.

"Now, let's eat."

"Yes."

"Wuff."

After the food was served, Mr. Ekenhart gave the order, and we started to eat.

As always, Ms. Claire watched her father's questionable table manners and sighed to herself.

But Tilura took no notice of it and focused on her own food.

Ms. Anne smiled at how daintily Sherry was eating, but then she would glance at Leo and stiffen.

...Well, Leo was eating with just as much speed as Mr. Ekenhart... Perhaps Ms. Anne was imagining what would happen if she was bitten like that.

"Mr. Takumi, I have a message from Helena. She says that the wine mixed with Ramogi is ready, and so you should go and see it with Leo when you have time."

"I understand. I will go after this then."

“Oh, so Leo is finally going to check the wine. I’m counting on you, good Leo.”

“Wuff!”

“Really, can you trust a Silver Fenrir to check for diseases?”

While we drank tea after lunch, Sebastian came and delivered a message from Ms. Helena.

And so I would get that over with before it was time for my sword training.

Since we were still testing it, there would not be a lot. And even if it took a long time, I could just leave Leo with Ms. Helena and go to the garden alone.

However, Ms. Anne seemed skeptical about Leo’s ability.

She did not have much trust in Leo at all...

Perhaps it was due to the connection with the duke’s family, but the people in this house seemed to believe anything related to Leo without question.

But I suppose Ms. Anne’s reaction would be more common for the average person.

“Hmm? You doubt it, Anne?”

“As far as I am aware, the only way to find out is to use a magic tool. And so...Silver Fenrir or not, it should not be possible.”

“So, I suppose you won’t be drinking the wine then?”

“I did not say that!”

“Hahaha! Well, I do understand that it is difficult to believe. However, if Leo’s ability was false, then the disease would have spread much wider in Ractos by now. And she would not have been able to find the glass sphere...which spread it in the first place.”

“That...is true, but...”

Ms. Anne was right to have doubts.

I probably would have been the same if it wasn’t Leo.

In any case, Mr. Ekenhart laughed and reassured her.

“Sebastian, how are things in Ractos?”

“Yes, Your Grace. Thanks to Mr. Takumi’s herbs, it is nearly stamped out. Fewer citizens fall ill every day. And since we know the cause of the disease, and have gathered most of the wine, fewer people are at risk.”

“Well, while that alone may not be proof of Leo’s ability...it is clear that things would have been much worse without Leo and Mr. Takumi. It is possible that the town would not be able to function as before.”

Mr. Ekenhart asked Sebastian to explain about the situation in Ractos.

Thanks to my focus on making Ramogi, fewer people suffered from the illness now.

I didn’t know that they had started to gather the wine as well. And even if it wasn’t all of it, if it was infected, then it was a necessary move.

“Fewer people are coming to Mr. Kalis’s store to buy Ramogi. And so it shouldn’t be long before we can return to selling them at normal prices.”

“Hmm. Yes, because the reduced prices were done through reducing Mr. Takumi’s pay. But tell Kalis to be careful, so as to not cause any confusion.”

“Yes, certainly.”

“Anne, I know you have doubts, but I believe it because it is thanks to Leo and Mr. Takumi that the disease is on its way to being stamped out.”

“I believe it too.”

“Kyau!”

“Me too!”

“Thank you.”

“Wuff!”

So, they would be selling the Ramogi at the regular price soon.

As for the pay, I didn’t mind, since I was the one that told them to reduce it.

In any case, since the malicious store was no more, there would be plenty of herbs to go around. And I hoped Mr. Kalis would be able to handle things well when it was time to change the price again.

On top of that, I was happy to know that Mr. Ekenhart and the others had such trust in us.

And so Leo and I held back a feeling of embarrassment as we bowed and thanked them.

“Very well. If you are all going to insist on it, then I will believe it. But you must provide me with Ramogi immediately if I do get sick!”

“Anne... It sounds like you still don’t really believe it?”

“Hahaha. It’s fine. In any case, Leo will decide if the experiment is a success, and then we can all drink it. And yes, it will be easily cured with Ramogi if necessary.”

“Hahaha, indeed. Do your best Leo, so that no one gets sick.”

“Wou!”

“Kyau?”

“No, Sherry... You cannot do what good Leo does...”

“Kyau...”

While she did not sound convincing, Ms. Anne insisted that she was satisfied.

And if something happened, I could easily make some Ramogi, so there was no problem. But Leo wouldn’t let that happen anyway.

Sherry had been listening with a puzzled expression, and then she barked as if to say that she would also do her best. But Mr. Ekenhart refuted it immediately.

I suppose Sherry thought she could just copy Leo... She looked rather disappointed by the realization...

Ah, now Ms. Anne was petting her consolingly... She really was fond of Sherry.

Chapter 270

We Tasted the Trial Wine

After tea time was over, I left the dining hall with Leo, where Mr. Ekenhart and Sebastian were talking.

I suppose they were talking about his duties as the duke.

Sherry was being consoled by Ms. Claire, Tilura, and Ms. Anne.

Well, I could leave the rest to them then... I'm sure it wouldn't take much to cheer her up again, and I would see her playing outside while Tilura trained.

"Excuse me, is Ms. Helena here...?"

"Wuff."

"Ah, Mr. Takumi. You're just in time... The trial wine is ready now."

As Leo and I went to the kitchen to see Ms. Helena, we saw that five large barrels had been lined up.

While mixing it with the Ramogi, they had poured the wine into smaller barrels.

"Thank you. Uh, so how did you do it?"

"Yes, we took the Ramogi that you provided, and starting from the right barrel...which has a quarter of the regular dose, then a third, a half, and then two thirds."

"So they all have varying amounts."

"That is so."

So I suppose this was a test to see how much Ramogi was the right amount to put inside of the wine.

That seemed very typical of a cook.

"So, Leo... If you will."

"Wuff!"

I said to Leo, so she could start checking the wine.

Leo nodded in reply and then she slowly moved her nose to the barrels and began to sniff.

Ms. Helena and the other cooks then watched her with bated breath.

“Wuff...? Wuff!”

“The one on the far right is no good...she says. What about the others?”

“Wuff... Wuff-wuff.”

“So the others are fine... Thank you, Leo.”

“Wuff.”

Leo had singled out the barrel on the far right...which had a quarter of the Ramogi content.

It had not removed all of the disease, but the rest of the wine was fine.

“Ms. Helena, the barrel on the far right is no good, but the others can be drunk.”

“I see... So the amount of Ramogi really does matter. Thank you, good Leo.”

“Wuff.”

I told Ms. Helena what Leo had told me.

Ms. Helena seemed to think about it for a moment, and then she thanked Leo with a bow.

It was a good thing that I had asked Ms. Helena after all.

I would not have thought of conducting such tests...and would have just dumped random amounts of Ramogi inside...

“Well...just to be safe, we’ll say that it needs half the amount to be drinkable. One of these barrels for half the amount... Two barrels for one dose of Ramogi. That should make things easy to understand.”

“Indeed. I think that is fine. Also...I would like to know if the taste has changed or not.”

“Yes. The taste might be altered depending on the amount of Ramogi inside. So, let’s taste some of the drinkable wine then. However...”

“Is there a problem?”

Now that we knew some of it was drinkable, the only thing left to do was to taste it.

However, Ms. Helena seemed to hesitate as she thought of something.

What could it be?

“Well, to be honest... We don’t really know what this wine is supposed to taste like. We have never drunk it before... Of course, we have tasted other wines, but...”

“Ah, I see... So it would be difficult to know if it tastes right or not.”

“Well, I suppose...we will just have to compare it to other wines while tasting it then. And you, Mr. Takumi, can compare it to the wine of Range village.”

“While I have tasted it before, I don’t have the most refined palate... But I will do my best.”

“Yes, thank you. Now...”

I was the only one there who had tasted Range Village’s wine before.

Well, because I had brought a lot back with us, I could try drinking it. But I didn't want to drink infected wine just to check its taste.

And since I had really only drunk it once, I was not too confident...

Maybe it would be better to call Phillip?

...But he might drink too much, and not be able to do his job. And then Sebastian would be furious. So I would leave that as a final resort.

"Here you go, Mr. Takumi."

"Yes. ...They are all different colors."

"Yes. It must be because of the Ramogi... The more you put in, the darker it gets."

The cooks had poured the barrels of wine into glasses.

And as Ms. Helena said, they differed in color depending on how much Ramogi was inside.

The wine with half the amount was almost pink.

The wine with two-thirds was a reddish purple.

And the one with the full amount was a dark purple.

Sebastian had said that Ramogi soaked in water becomes purple, so it made sense.

I didn't know much about wine, but the first one looked similar to a rosé.

In the glass, it was a very pretty pink color, and would probably be popular with women.

“Now, I’ll have a sip...”

“Yes. Me too...”

And so we tasted the wine in order, from the right side.

I hadn’t gotten drunk at all when drinking it at Range village, but how would it be this time?

As I had plans for sword training with Mr. Ekenhart after this, I tried just lick it a little instead of drinking a full sip.

Upon seeing me taste the wine, Ms. Helena and the other cooks started to drink it as well.

“I see...”

“I do not know how it compares to the original, but there are definitely differences depending on the amount of Ramogi...”

“Yes. But which do you think tastes the best, Ms. Helena?”

“For me, it’s the one with the least amount of Ramogi...with only half.”