

Beloved Dog 31

Chapter 31

We Returned to the Mansion

“Lady Claire, Mr. Takumi. We’ve arrived.”

Sebastian said as the carriage passed through the gate to the mansion.

It continued a little farther and then stopped in front of the entrance.

“This is so much later than planned.”

“Yes. I hope that Tilura hasn’t grown tired of waiting...”

The sun had fallen completely, and it was now night time.

I glanced at the pocket watch that I had bought, and it showed that it was 10 o’clock.

...Which I suppose would be 8 or 9 o’clock in Japan.

“Welcome back, Lady Claire and Mr. Takumi.”

“Yes, thank you.”

“...Thank you for greeting us. We’re finally back.”

When we entered the mansion, the entrance hall was filled with the same number of servants as had been there when I arrived yesterday.

I had felt the same when leaving, but it was a little embarrassing to have so many people see you off.

Up until recently, there had been no one to see me off or welcome me back, except for Leo.

“Lady Claire. Preparations for dinner have been completed.”

“Very good. Well, Mr. Takumi, let’s eat in the dining hall once you have dropped off your belongings.”

“Yes. ...Ah, where is the dining hall?”

Apparently, that’s where they were going to eat.

Previously, we had been eating in the guest room, and so I had not gone to the dining hall yet.

“Then I will show you the way. But we must take your belongings first, Mr. Takumi.”

Lyra stepped forward and took half of my baggage.

While she was a servant, my pride would not allow a woman to carry all of it, and so I carried half of them myself.

“I’ll leave it to you, Lyra.”

“Yes, Lady Claire.”

Lyra bowed to Lady Claire while holding the things, and then she walked with me towards the room that I was staying in.

“Phew...”

“Wuff.”

I let out a sigh once we had arrived and I put my things down on the ground.

I was still not accustomed to this world, and we had gone to a town for the first time... It seemed that I was more tired than I had thought.

That being said, this was still nothing compared to how things were in my world, where I might have to work for over a month without rest...

Lyra also put everything onto the ground. I decided to organize later and head to the dining hall, when I stopped.

First, I had to praise Leo.

“Leo, come here.”

“Wou?”

“You were so good for letting the townspeople pet you like that. Because of that, they’ll now understand that you’re not to be feared.”

“Wuff! Wuff!”

Leo came to me and put her face close to mine, and so I petted her thoroughly and praised her.

It was important to praise her when she did something good.

“Also, you really helped us when those strange people attacked us. Thank you.”

“Wou!”

Judging from her manner, I had a feeling that Leo was saying, ‘they were easy!’

Indeed, it probably was easy for Leo. If anything, I almost felt sorry for the men.

This time, Leo had only destroyed one sword, but if she had gone at them seriously, she would have easily torn through them with her claws.

But monsters were one thing. I hoped she wouldn't have to fight people if possible.

“Wuff. Wuff.”

“Hahaha. Thanks to you, I have nothing to worry about, even when in an unfamiliar place.”

“Wuff!”

Leo rubbed her face against mine playfully as I thanked her.

Really. While I had been thinking about the Gift and magic energy a lot today, I felt confident and not lonely as long as Leo was with me.

I was so thankful for her.

“...Mr. Takumi. We should be going...”

“Ah, right. ...Sorry.”

“...Not at all.”

As I continued to sit there and pet Leo, Ms. Lyra called to me.

...I had become too relieved after returning to my room, and forgot that she was there...

I felt a little embarrassed that she had been watching us this whole time.

I could feel that my face had grown a little hot as Leo and I followed after Lyra towards the dining hall.

Lyra...would occasionally glance towards Leo, and her fingers would twitch... Could it be that she wanted to pet Leo?

Now that I thought about it, from the very beginning, she had not been afraid of Leo and said that she found her cute.

If we had time later, I would let her pet Leo.

Besides, Leo seemed to have taken to Lyra and the other servants, as they were the ones to bring out the milk and sausages.

We entered the dining hall, which was a large room with a long table.

I think that about twenty people could sit at it?

Ms. Claire sat at the head of the table.

And Tilura sat down next to her.

As always, Sebastian stood waiting right behind them.

Now that I think about it, when did the servants eat...?

“Mr. Takumi.”

“Sorry to keep you waiting, Ms. Claire. And sorry for being so late, Tilura.”

“Welcome back Mr. Takumi! And you too Leo!”

“Wou!”

Tilura’s eyes shone as she looked at me...well, Leo.

She really had become attached to her.

Even now, she was about to jump out of her seat and pounce on Leo. And it was only because Ms. Claire had grabbed the hem of her dress that she didn't do just that.

Now, I should take a seat... But where was I supposed to sit...?

"Uhh...where should I sit?"

I didn't want to be known as someone who had ill manners. But making a mistake would be even more embarrassing.

It was momentarily embarrassing to ask, but eternally embarrassing to not ask.

"Please sit over here."

"Thank you."

"Wuff."

Seeing the table from the entrance, Ms. Claire and Tilura were sitting to the far right.

Lyra guided me to the far left seat.

There was no chair next to me, so Leo would have room to sit at the table.

Internally, I thanked the servants for their consideration.

"Normally, it would be proper for you to sit next to Tilura. But we don't want to be so formal now, and so I had you sit on the opposite side of us. It will be easier to talk if we can see each other's faces."

“Hahaha, that is true. I’m glad, as I don’t know a lot about such manners. I would very much appreciate it if you told me when I do something wrong.”

“Yes, you can count on it.”

“I will tell you too!”

“In your case, Tilura, you will have to actually learn some manners first.”

“...I will try.”

“Wou! Wou!”

“Hahaha. Tilura, I’ll do my best to learn with you. And look, Leo is cheering you on.”

“Yes! I will do my best!”

“Wuff!”

Chapter 32

I Thanked the Head Cook for Making Dinner

I talked with Ms. Claire and Tilura amidst a harmonious atmosphere, when the doors to the dining hall opened and the food was carried in on a wagon.

Tonight’s dinner was a sauté meat with sauce, a salad with a much thicker dressing than the one served at breakfast, and a white soup...or was it a potage?

They had said that since yesterday was a welcome dinner for me and Leo, they had served extra food and put a lot of effort into the presentation.

I think that this was probably closer to how they usually dined.

There was a plate of sausages in front of Leo now, but there were fewer sausages than yesterday. But she had a salad to make up for it.

And on the floor, right where Leo sat, there was a large bowl that was filled with milk.

“Lady Claire, Lady Tilura, Mr. Takumi. Please eat.”

Said a woman, who looked like the cook, as she wore a chef’s hat. And so we began to eat.

First, was the salad...unlike the refreshing dressing from this morning, this one was rich and tasty.

One had to eat a lot of vegetables to stay healthy!

Next was the main dish, the meat.

The texture and flavor was similar to beef, and it was quite juicy, and delicious when combined with the sauce.

I then tried the soup.

It was light, and easily washed away the oil in my mouth. It perfectly complemented the meat.

...All of the food in this world was incredibly delicious.

While there were differences in culture, as they did not have rice or miso here, I had no complaints regarding the food, which greatly helped in easing my anxiety about the future.

“Mmm. This really is delicious.”

“Wou!”

“Thank you.”

When Leo and I complemented the food, the woman in the chef's hat thanked us.

"You really seem to enjoy the food, Mr. Takumi."

"More than I can express. Everything I've eaten since coming here has been amazing."

"Hehehe. You must be very pleased, Helena."

"Yes, Lady Claire. As cooks, hearing that our food is delicious is our greatest joy."

"Mr. Takumi, this is Helena. The head cook of this house."

"Ms. Helena... Thank you for such a wonderful meal."

"No, thank you for being so complimentary towards the food that we made."

She thanked me back, and the atmosphere became a little awkward.

Well, one was thankful for the food, and the other thankful for the compliments. I suppose it was a good thing...I think.

Also, she looked rather young...perhaps in her twenties. It must be rather difficult, being the head cook at that age.

Most of the head cooks I had seen at restaurants were middle-aged men.

Well, maybe it was just me. Regardless, it was pretty impressive that she had that position.

And since everything I had eaten was delicious, it was clear that she was very capable.

"Helena! Your food is delicious as always!"

“Thank you, Lady Tilura.”

Tilura had the biggest smile on her face as she ate her dinner.

As she had taken a nap, she was full of energy and in a good mood.

...Leo might have to stay up quite late tonight.

After dinner, there was tea time.

The tea that Ms. Lyra made was always great.

Leo was full after eating sausages, and she was now curled up on the floor.

Tilura was pressed up against Leo's stomach, and seemed to be very happy as she was enveloped in the soft, silvery fur.

I had thought that she'd want to play, but she was surprisingly quiet.

It must be because Leo's fur was that comfortable to be wrapped in.

Sebastian, Lyra, and Gelda were standing in the back. And they would quickly pour us more tea when a cup was empty.

...Thank you. They are delicious.

Thoroughly satisfied at the sight of us smacking our lips at her work, Ms. Helena had taken the dish and left the dining hall.

Since this was such a laid back atmosphere, I could perhaps ask some questions without hesitating.

I really knew almost nothing about Ms. Claire.

“Ms. Claire.”

“What is it, Mr. Takumi?”

“Um, I was just wondering... Yesterday, I told you about myself. So today, I would like to learn more about you.”

“About...me? Oh...well, I... What can I say... I’m starting to get nervous...”

Had I said something wrong?

While Ms. Claire looked taken aback for a moment, she then blushed and began to mutter to herself.

And since she was on the other side of the table, I was not able to hear her.

“...Uh, well. I met you in the forest yesterday, but I was wondering about how you came to live in this mansion. Also, it’s not just the servants, but even the townspeople seemed to have a great respect for you. And I was wondering why that...is...”

“...I see... Very well. It would not be fair for me to have asked about you, and not say anything about myself... Really, I almost took that a different way...”

Huh? What...what did she just say...?

“Ms. Claire?”

“...No, it’s nothing. Um, yes, about why I am living in this mansion, yes?”

“Yes.”

“To put it simply, Tilura and I are here in order to be away from our father.”

Away from their father. That sounded a little ominous... Had their father done something?

Chapter 33

I Listened to Ms. Claire's Story

"Father... You are here to be away from your own father, Ms. Claire?"

"Yes. Our father is very fond of us, but... He keeps talking about how I need to get married."

"Married..."

"Nearly every day, he talks about acquaintances and colleagues who are unmarried. On one of the worst days, he brought over five people... It was very tiring to have to turn them all down..."

"I see... He sounds very eccentric."

I had no children, and wasn't even married myself, so I didn't know the feeling. But I always thought that fathers who doted on their daughters tended to not want them to marry.

Of course, I'm sure there were exceptions. Especially if the daughter remained unmarried for a very long time...

That being said, Ms. Claire was still quite young.

And everyone would agree that she was a great beauty.

So surely she wouldn't have trouble finding someone, without a father busily trying to find a match.

...I had to admit, there was a slight pang in my chest when this subject was brought up, but I wouldn't think about it.

That being said, it at least seemed like this wasn't a matter of father and daughter not getting along.

I was glad to learn that it wasn't so serious.

Well, perhaps it was very troublesome for Ms. Claire.

“And to make matters worse, he is already talking about matches for Tilura. And she has only just turned 10.”

“Even Tilura...”

I looked at the girl who was wrapped up in Leo. She looked back at me with a puzzled expression after hearing her name.

“Day after day, he would talk about marriage. I grew very tired of it and...and decided that I would leave and live in this mansion.”

“I see... Yes, I can imagine how that would get old very quickly.”

“Exactly! Mr. Takumi, listen to me! Father would...”

After that, Ms. Claire aired her grievances about her father for what seemed like half an hour.

Women were very intimidating when they became like this...

Well, I could only imagine how stressful it must have been to keep these emotions to herself for so long. She did not seem like the type to complain about others to servants.

I could see that even Sebastian and the maids were smiling awkwardly in the back.

“...Oh, forgive me.”

“No, I think that it’s very important to let it all out once in a while.”

After all, I knew what it was like to be worked to exhaustion and be overwhelmed by stress.

I wish that I had someone that I could complain to. But I had no one.

And so my only way of releasing that stress was to complain about work to Leo.

Whether Leo understood me or not, she always looked a little bewildered...

“...Umm... Oh, yes. About the townspeople.”

“Yes. They all called you Lady Claire. And the guards recognized you immediately...”

“Indeed... Well, that too is related to my father...”

Oh, were the grievances going to continue?

...But I was wrong.

From what she told me about her father, it was no surprise that he had a great mansion as this.

“My father has the rank of duke in this country. As the head of the house, the entire land surrounding this villa...which includes the town of Ractos, is governed by him.”

“...Duke... So you are all...nobles?”

“Yes. In this country, there are barons, viscounts, counts, margraves, marquises, dukes, and then royalty. So we are next after the royal family.”

They really were at the top of the upper class...

While it wasn't something I thought about much in Japan, in medieval European society, they were the elite.

Perhaps it was similar to being a vice-shogun during the Edo period...maybe...maybe not...

I now felt as if I had been terribly rude towards them up until now... What if they had punishments for such insolence...?

“...Umm, well... I am aware that I’ve been terribly discourteous towards you up until now...I hope that you can forgive...”

“Oh, Mr. Takumi. I don’t recall anything of the sort. Besides, you saved my life. You really should just treat me the same way as you have. ...And also...”

“...Also?”

“You do talk to us with polite words. But it does not seem to come to you naturally. Am I right?”

“Ye-yes.”

“You seem the most natural when you are with Tilura. I only wish that you would be the same with me.”

“...Are you sure?”

This wasn’t just a question towards Ms. Claire, but to Sebastian and the maids as well.

But Sebastian grinned and nodded.

“If that is Lady Claire’s wish, then I do not mind. Besides...you, Mr. Takumi, are a person with the Gift, and command a Silver Fenrir. If anything, you could be seen as someone who is above even a duke.”

“Above a duke...really?”

I was taken aback by Sebastian’s answer.

It was confirmed that I indeed had the Gift, while we were in town, and combined with having a Silver Fenrir...being with Leo, I could be considered to be above a duke...

But only the royal family was above a duke.

“I will take it from here. Surely you have noticed how I and the people here treat the great Leo with such reverence.”

“Yes. Sometimes out of fear, and sometimes not.”

“Do you not think it odd...and I don’t mean to be rude, but for a duke’s family to treat a monster with such respect...”

“Yes, now that you mention it... Perhaps it is a little strange.”

“When I first met you, I said that the Silver Fenrir is used on the crest of the royle family. ...Here it is.”

“Yes, it is...the fangs and claws...”

Ms. Claire had taken out a palm-sized relief carving.

There was engraved a standing wolf that looked just like Leo. Its mouth was opened, showing its fangs, and its front paws were raised so that its claws were visible.

It was made of silver. Probably to match the fur of the Silver Fenrir.

Chapter 34

I Learned About the Duke and Silver Fenrir Connection

“The royal family uses the Silver Fenrir on their crest, as they symbolize a country that cannot be defeated. On the other hand, the Liebert crest shows the fangs and claws, which symbolizes how we will defeat any foe. Also...this is a very old legend, but it is said that the first head of the Liebert house was friends with a Silver Fenrir.”

“Friends with a Silver Fenrir...But didn’t you say that Silver Fenrirs yielded to no one?”

“Yes, it was not about yielding. They were said to be of equal standing. Well, I do not know how it really was, but this friendship helped my ancestor greatly, and after accomplishing great feats in battle, my ancestor rose to the rank of duke.”

“Great feats in battle...”

“Yes. This country was fighting many wars during that time. And it is said that when the first Liebert went to war, the Silver Fenrir appeared like the wind and saved the duke.”

So if he fought, the powerful Silver Silver Fenrir would save him.

I knew that they were strong. They were said to be the strongest of monsters. How much impact had it had during the war, I wonder?

Well, he had ultimately become someone who was only under the royal family, so it must have been glorious indeed.

“It is because of the results of the war, and victory for the country, that House Liebert decided to use the Silver Fenrir on our crest. Ever since then, it has become our duty to respect the Silver Fenrirs.”

In other words, if it was because of the Silver Fenrir that he rose to duke, they had to show their gratitude towards it.

But it was hard to think of Leo as the same kind of Silver Fenrir. Not when she had just stuffed herself with sausages and was now curled up on the floor...

“Wou?”

As I looked at Leo and thought of such things, she raised her head and barked as if to say, ‘What?’

You are a reliable buddy.

I said to Leo with my eyes... But I didn’t know if she understood me.

“Many people who live in towns or villages governed by House Liebert are aware of the connection to Silver Fenrirs.”

“Because of the stories about the first duke...”

“Yes. For instance, Ms. Emeraldalda, who we met today. She thought Leo was a Silver Fenrir because I was there.”

Yes, she had said something like that.

I think it was... ‘It has silver fur and is with Lady Claire.’

As the duke’s daughter, and knowing that their family crest is the Silver Fenrir, she would have quickly assumed that Leo was a Silver Fenrir.

Especially since the appearance, including the fangs, were so similar.

“And that is why House Liebert will warmly welcome you and Leo. ...Well, aside from the personal reason that you saved me. Hehe.”

“Haha. It was Leo who saved you.”

Ms. Claire chuckled as her story ended.

She was even more pretty when she laughed.

I saw that Sebastian, the maids, and Tilura were all nodding with smiles, and I really did feel that we were welcome here.

I knew that, and yet I still felt awkward about having a room prepared for me, and having them pay for purchases that I made.

Still, it wasn’t as if I would continue to rely on their hospitality.

Now that I knew I had the Gift, ‘Weed Cultivation,’ I would have to think about a way that it could be useful.

“...Mr. Takumi. Do you have a minute?”

“...What is it, Sebastian?”

He had been waiting behind Ms. Claire up until now, but he suddenly stepped close to me and spoke in a hushed voice.

While Sebastian was a handsome older gentleman, I still didn’t care to have another man’s face so close to me...

“When do you intend on giving the items to the ladies? I am sure they will be very pleased...”

“The items... Ah!”

I remembered.

I had bought something for them.

My sudden exclamation caused Ms. Claire, Tilura and the maids to turn in our direction with puzzled expressions.

While I had bought it for the two, Sebastian had lent me the money. So it was a little awkward. Still, it would be best to give it to them now.

“...Do you think I should give it to them now, Sebastian?”

“You have both just explained your origins to each other, so it seems like the best time to do it.”

“I understand.”

While I had left my belongings in my room, I had brought the presents with me.

And so I took them out and placed them on the table.

“Ms. Claire, Tilura.”

“What is it?”

“What?”

They answered, but also looked very curious about the things placed on the table.

“Uhh... I wanted to give you something to show my gratitude...and thought these would suit you two... But, uh, I borrowed money to pay for them and uh...”

“...Mr. Takumi, please pull yourself together.”

As I hadn't been thinking about how I would give it to them, I ended up floundering through my speech. And Sebastian was not impressed.

Still, the maids seemed to have understood my intent, and they watched on with supportive looks.

I think...Sebastian may have told them before dinner... On the other hand, Ms. Claire and Tilura still looked at me uncomprehendingly.

One really shouldn't do things that they weren't used to. Still, I searched for the right words to say when handing them the presents.

“It's just that...the thing is...it is a sign of my gratitude for all of the help... Yes... Please take it.”

Surely there were better words to say...

Leaving that aside, I handed Tilura the necklace with the silver wolf.

As she was so fond of Leo, she would probably like it?

Chapter 35

I Gave Them the Presents

“Wow! It’s Leo! Thank you, Mr. Takumi!”

Tilura shouted as she accepted the present. She was smiling as she looked at the wolf on it... Good, so she did like it.

“And...Ms. Claire. ...Here.”

While I felt quite nervous towards her, I handed her the hair ornament of a white flower.

...I hoped that my hand wasn’t shaking... It was probably fine...

However, why did I get so nervous around Ms. Claire...? I hadn’t felt nervous when giving Tilura the necklace...

“This...is very beautiful... Thank you, Mr. Takumi. I am very happy!”

“Haha. I’m glad that you like it.”

Ms. Claire smiled happily as she looked at the hair ornament.

While Tilura’s smile had been cute, there was something especially gratifying about seeing a beautiful woman smile.

Though, her cheeks had reddened a little as well. I wonder why?

Well, I was just glad that I was able to give her the present.

“...How do I look?”

Ms. Claire asked me after Lyra put it in her hair.

“Yes, it suits you very well. A beautiful lady is now even more beautiful.”

“!? ...What...I’m not that...”

Ms. Claire looked a little embarrassed as she turned away.

Wait, did I just...!

...Why had that just come out of my mouth like that!?

Once I realized what I had said, my face started to grow hot.

Did I now look as red as she did...?

“Sister. Mr. Takumi. What happened?”

“...It-it’s nothing, Tilura.”

“...Ye-yes. It’s nothing at all.”

While she was looking at us strangely, we somehow managed to pretend that it was nothing.

...Still, she continued to tilt her head and stare at us...perhaps she wasn’t fooled...

“It must be nice to be young.”

“Indeed.”

“But you are still young, Ms. Lyra.”

“Wuff! Wuff!”

Ms. Claire and I were still looking away and trying to avoid Tilura’s questioning gaze.

But Sebastian and the maids watched us with great amusement.

Even Leo seemed to be laughing as she watched us.

And though our faces remained red for a while, we did our best to entertain and distract the others.

...Only Tilura looked puzzled until the end.

“Phew.”

“Wuff.”

“I’m back, Leo.”

After we were made the night’s entertainment, everyone retired, as it was late.

But as I tried to return to my room, Ms. Lyra suggested that I take a bath, and so I had done just that.

While this world was similar to the middle ages, they did have proper baths.

I was surprised that they even had a bathtub.

And since the mansion was so large, so was the bathing room.

The bathtub was probably big enough for ten people to sit in and stretch out their feet.

And so I scrubbed myself clean, soaked in the hot water, and came out all warmed up.

“You’ll also have to take a bath soon, Leo.”

“...Wou.”

She groaned quietly and moved away at the mention of a bath.

So even when she was big, she still didn’t like to take baths... And yet she had happily played in the river while in the forest.

“Wouldn’t it be a shame if your pretty silver fur became dull?”

“Kuuunn...”

“Don’t give me that face...”

“...Wuff.”

Looking very dejected, Leo rolled up into a ball next to the bed.

Was she sulking? Well, I’m sure she will be fine tomorrow.

Since Leo was like that, I decided to get into bed and think.

“Weed Cultivation...huh...”

When hearing the word ‘weed’ most people would think of the plants that grew everywhere around them.

I was the same.

They were weeds that I didn't even know the names of. They grow on the side of the road when no one wants them there, and people would step over them as they pass by... It wasn't the best image.

And so just hearing the name made it seem like a useless ability.

...I had also thought that at first.

However, after thinking about it, I had been able to grow plants like Ramogi, which could be used for medicine. So it was not useless at all.

And so I would think about how to use it as I lay here in my bed.

“The activation requirement...”

It's not like any random plant would grow.

The only plant I had made so far with this ability was the Ramogi.

I had been thinking about it as I touched the ground, and then it grew from that spot.

In other words, the plant I was thinking about would grow in the exact spot that I touched.

“And I also made the Ramogi dry up in an instant...”

Similar to when growing it, I just imagined it in a dried state, and then it had dried so that it could be used for medicine.

The explanation for this was that it would not activate when I wasn't thinking about anything, but would activate with a touch and the right thought.

And if I thought about what I wanted to happen to a plant and touched it, the desired change would occur.

Think and then touch. That's what it was.

"Plants will grow from what I touch..."

Ms. Isabelle had said that this excluded farm produce such as vegetables.

So I could not cultivate vegetables with this ability.

"...If I could, it would have been very useful for farming..."

I had no experience with farming, but there had been a time when I was a little interested in plowing fields.

However, my ability would just get in the way, and create weeds.

They say that weeds took all of the nutrients in the soil that the vegetables needed to grow.

While they didn't just grow randomly, I might still make weeds grow by accident while cultivating the crops.

"Had it been an ability that helped with farming, I could have made that my job in this world..."

Well, as I couldn't use it, there was no point in thinking about it now.

Now, how could I use this Weed Cultivation Gift?

I was able to make Ramogi.

In that case, I could perhaps make other plants that were used for medicine.

It would be important to have a grasp on what plants I could make and which I could not.

Also, I would like to test what kind of changes I could cause to occur, just like when I had dried the Ramogi.

Was it simply about making plants ready to be used as medicine, or could I manipulate them freely with thoughts?

...There were so many things that I wanted to know.

“...Well, I will take my time. Right, Leo?”

Leo did not reply, as she was still sulking...that made me a little sad.

Chapter 36

This Morning, I Was Awakened By Tilura

In the previous world, I was so overwhelmed with work, and had very little free time in my personal life.

But through coming to this world, I felt as if I was starting my life over, and so I thought that I would relax more.

Besides, I wanted to give Leo plenty of attention.

“While there is so much to think about, there is no reason to rush.”

Thankfully, Ms. Claire had been the first person I met in this world, and she had welcomed me to this mansion.

But I couldn't rely on her hospitality forever, and I also wanted to return the money that I had borrowed in order to go shopping.

“...And to Sebastian as well.”

If I could use Weed Cultivation to make plants that were used for medicine, then that could lead to all sorts of things.

I would think carefully and expand on what I could do.

Here, there was no superior who would get angry if I took a break, or would give me more work just as I finished up, or would shout at me for not being fast enough...

“Leo?”

Just as I decided to stop thinking and go to sleep, I suddenly remembered that Leo was sulking. She had ignored me the last time that I called her name.

I raised my head a little to look at the side of the bed, and saw that she was curled up and sleeping.

Perhaps she was dreaming of food, as her mouth was moving a little as if chewing. It was rather amusing.

“...So dogs...Silver Fenrirs, also have dreams?”

I watched Leo for a while, and then pulled the blankets over myself and closed my eyes.

“...Ah...tomorrow... I’ll ask if I can...test Weed Cultivation...in the back garden.”

Just before falling asleep, when I was barely awake, I thought of plans for tomorrow as the day ended.

I heard a knock on the door.

And then I opened my eyes.

“...Ah, it’s morning.”

The blinding morning light poured in from the window.

After blinking a few times, my eyes got used to the light, and I got out of bed.

In the meantime, the knocking on the door continued.

...I should not keep them waiting.

“Who is it?”

“Mr. Takumi, it’s Tilura. Can I come in?”

So it was Tilura who was knocking.

She sounded very cheerful even though it was early in the morning.

Leo must have heard the knocking as well, as she uncurled her body and got up before extending her two front legs and stretching.

“You can come in.”

“Excuse me! Good morning, Mr. Takumi and Leo!”

“Good morning. You’re up early.”

“Wou!”

Tilura flew into the room and greeted us first.

She had clearly been properly educated.

Well, maybe not. As she had entered without knocking yesterday in order to cling onto Leo...

Perhaps she only knocked this time because Ms. Claire had scolded her.

“Mr. Takumi, thank you for buying that necklace of Leo for me.”

“Hahaha. That’s not Leo. But I thought you might like it, since it’s a wolf.”

“Yes! I really like it! I’ll take good care of it!”

She was wearing it now, and she said this as she held the necklace preciously with both hands.

“Wuff?”

Leo seemed to be curious, as she pushed her nose towards Tilura’s hands.

“Leo, look! It’s you!”

“Wou... Wuff! Wuff!”

Tilura showed Leo the necklace, and then Leo noticed the part that looked like a wolf.

However, she did not seem to care for it, as she then shook her head.

...I think that she was saying, ‘That’s not me! I look so much cooler!’

She was a girl who wanted to be cool... Also, ever since coming to this world, I seemed to understand Leo’s gestures and barks a lot more...

Even when she was a puppy, she had sometimes moved in an oddly human manner compared to most dogs, but it was like I could actually hear a voice now.

“You don’t like it, Leo?”

“Wou... Wuff!”

Tilura must have felt that Leo’s gestures were a rejection, as she looked a little crestfallen. And so Leo rubbed her face against her as a consolation.

“Ehehe. You feel so good, Leo.”

“Wou.”

Tilura laughed as she touched Leo’s fluffy fur.

The two sure did get along... Yes, it was nice to see them be friends.

But as I smiled and watched them, my stomach suddenly rumbled.

“Ah, Mr. Takumi. Are you hungry?”

“...Ah... Ahaha. Yes, I am. ...Well, this is a little embarrassing.”

“Wuff!”

It seemed like Leo was laughing at me.

Damn it. I would have to be careful so that my stomach didn’t rumble next time.

“Are you hungry too, Leo?”

“Wou!”

“In that case, let’s go to the dining hall!”

So saying, Tilura took my hand and was about to dash out of the room, but I stopped her.

“Wait a minute, Tilura. I just got up. And so I need to get ready before going down to eat.”

“...I’m sorry.”

“It’s fine. You were just concerned because we were hungry, right? That’s very kind of you.”

“Ehehe.”

“Wuff!”

I patted Tilura on the head as she chuckled bashfully.

As Leo moved her face close to me, I patted her on the head as well.

“Well, then. I will be waiting for you at the dining hall!”

“Yes, I’ll be right there. Ah, could you take Leo with you?”

“Ah...yes! Let’s go, Leo!”

“Wou!”

Tilura seemed to be very happy to be able to go with Leo, as she nodded with a smile and then the two headed to the dining hall together.

“Now, it’s time to use that razor I bought yesterday.”

Well, it was a blade that looked like a razor. But I decided to think of it as this world's razor.

I took it out from my belongings from yesterday, and then faced the mirror.

You had to work quickly in the morning.

I shaved carefully so that I wouldn't cut myself, and then I washed my face.

Then I quickly changed my clothes and then rushed to the dining hall where the others were waiting.

Ms. Claire and Sebastian would likely be waiting for me as well.

...Ms. Lyra was waiting for me outside of my door again, and while I was a little surprised, she escorted me to the dining hall.

Chapter 37

Today's Breakfast Looked Delicious As Well

When I entered the dining hall, I saw that Ms. Claire and Tilura were sitting and waiting in the same place as last night.

"Good morning, Mr. Takumi."

"Ms. Claire. Good morning. Good morning, Sebastian."

"Good morning, Mr. Takumi. Lady Claire appears to be in very high spirits today."

"Is that so?"

"Oh, stop that, Sebastian. Mr. Takumi, it's nothing at all. I am always like this."

“Ha...”

Sebastian chuckled at Ms. Claire and then retreated to the back.

Hmm... Ms. Claire didn't seem all that different from yesterday... Hmm. But I suppose she did look to be in a good mood... I wonder why...

As I thought this, my eyes wandered to Ms. Claire's head.

She was wearing the hair ornament that I had given her.

Perhaps that was why she was in a good mood?

I had bought it on a whim(of course, I had not forgotten that I borrowed money from Sebastian), but both Ms. Claire and Tilura wore them and were very happy. I was glad to see it.

“Now, let us eat.”

“Yes.”

“Wou!”

For breakfast, we had the same soup and salad as yesterday, as well as two types of bread.

One was two slices of bread with some ham and melted cheese in between.

The other had a fried egg on top.

Uh, I think these were called croque monsieur and croque madame?

But I thought that they were relatively recent dishes, and wouldn't have existed in medieval times.

Well, this was another world where they had magic and Gifts, so while their culture was at a similar level, it didn't mean that everything was like the medieval era.

"The food looks as delicious as yesterday."

"Yes. I think that Helena was very happy about the compliment yesterday, and woke up extra early this morning."

"Is that so?"

"She said that it was difficult to get the cheese just right. This bread...is called croque, I believe."

So Helena had been working hard from early in the morning.

I could tell just by looking at the bread that it was going to taste delicious.

And when I glanced over to Ms. Claire and Tilura's plates, I saw that their bread wasn't as thick as mine.

It looked like part of the bread had been carved out in order to put the toppings on.

I suppose she adjusted everyone's dish to match their preferences. She really had everything thought out.

When I looked over to Leo, I saw that she had an especially large croque. And it was topped with thinly sliced sausages.

...Thank you for going through the trouble, Ms. Helena.

"Wuff!"

Leo looked like she could not wait any longer, and she bit into the croque first.

The croque monsieur, which was the one without egg, had a nice crunch to it, and it was overflowing with cheese.

The thick sauce spread delightfully through my mouth.

Humans really did become happy when they ate delicious food.

“It’s good isn’t it? Leo?”

“Wuff!”

Tilura said with a smile. And Leo wagged her tail as she replied.

Ms. Claire also seemed to be enjoying her food...yes, great food made everyone happy.

Even though it was a lot of food for breakfast, I was able to eat all of it.

Then the maids poured us some tea and we rested.

“Wuff. Wuff.”

“That tickles, Leo!”

Leo and Tilura were playing next to the chair that I was sitting on.

Leo. You really shouldn’t lick Tilura’s face so soon after you drink your milk.

“Hehehe. Tilura’s completely attached now.”

“Yes. Leo has always liked playing with children, so she seems very happy to be with Tilura.”

“Hehehe.”

Ms. Claire and I watched them and chuckled.

Ah, that's right.

I recalled what I had been thinking about before going to sleep.

"By the way, Ms. Claire."

"Yes, what is it?"

"Do you think that I could use the back garden for a short while?"

"The back garden? Are you going to play there with Leo?"

"No, it's just that now that I know that I have a Gift, I would like to test some things out."

"Testing... Can I ask you what kind of tests?"

Ms. Claire seemed very curious about what I was going to do.

"Yes. Since I have 'Weed Cultivation,' I want to find out what kinds of plants I can cultivate. I just hope that there is something useful among them."

"I see. Then of course, I don't mind. That garden hasn't been used for a long time until Tilura and Leo played in it yesterday."

"Thank you. ...Also, Sebastian."

Now that I had Ms. Claire's permission, I turned to Sebastian.

"Yes, how can I be of service?"

“Um...would you happen to have samples or books about medicinal plants that are detailed and with pictures?”

“Medicinal plants... Indeed... We have no samples, but we do have educational books stored. As there is no pharmacist here now, we keep them in case we require that knowledge.”

“That’s how I found out that Ramogi would be effective for Tilura’s illness.”

“I see. Can I see this book? I want to use it for reference when trying Weed Cultivation.”

“Very well.”

So saying, Sebastian called Gelda and had her fetch the book about medicinal plants.

Chapter 38

I Tried using ‘Weed Cultivation’

“Still, medicinal plants through Weed Cultivation...”

“Is there something wrong, Sebastian?”

“No, I was just thinking about how great a help it would be if medicinal plants could be acquired so easily.”

“You need them here?”

“Yes. We currently have none in storage in this house. Ramogi is not supposed to be so difficult to acquire...but we didn’t even have that. So if you could make some, we would be able to use it if there is a need.”

I see. They had to store some for medicine.

Yes, you would be very anxious if you had no medicine to be used if someone suddenly became ill.

Even I always made sure that I had cold medicine in stock.

Because I would get in trouble at work if I took a day off just because of a cold...

“Well, I still don’t know what kinds of medicinal plants I can make. But I will look at the book and see what I can do.”

“Thank you.”

“Mr. Takumi, can I watch too?”

“Yes. I don’t think there is anything dangerous about it.”

Right...?

I was just going to see if I could make plants grow. That’s all.

“Then I will watch as you use Weed Cultivation, Mr. Takumi.”

Ms. Claire looked at me as if she expected to see something great.

Now I was getting a little nervous.

After all, there was no guarantee that I would be able to use it well.

But then again, I had been able to make the Ramogi without even trying.

For a while after that, I enjoyed my cup of black tea and watched Leo and Tilura play. The time passed calmly as we rested there.

“Here is the book on medicinal plants.”

Once we had finished resting, Ms. Gelda gave me the book, and so I went out into the back garden along with Leo, Ms. Claire, and Sebastian.

As for Tilura...ah, she was riding on Leo's back.

I suppose she must have really enjoyed the ride yesterday?

Once we were in the back garden, I stood a short distance away from the others and then opened the book.

“Hmm... There really are a lot of plants here...”

I could feel the eyes of the others on me.

Ms. Claire seemed very serious, while Sebastian was perhaps more expectant. But regardless, their looks were piercing...

...It made me a little uncomfortable...

“Alright, I'll do this one.”

I chose a medicinal plant from the book that was called Loe.

It was effective against scrapes and burns. The leaves were thick and had hard thorns around them.

The insides of the leaves were like jelly, and could even be eaten. It said that the leaves should be cut open and placed over the wound in order to heal it.

“...Wait, is this aloe?”

I remembered when I was a child, an old woman who lived nearby would put aloe on any scrapes I would get after falling.

The jelly-like leaves and thorns were similar. So I suppose it really was aloe.

It was easy to imagine a plant if you already knew what it looked like.

And so I closed the book and held it in my right hand, and then I brought up an image of aloe...Aloe, in my head as I placed my left hand on the ground.

"I will use it now..."

"...Yes."

"...Please do."

"Wuff."

"I'm so excited."

Now their expectant gazes grew even more intense...

While I was nervous, I was careful to not let it affect my concentration. And then I focused on the image of the Aloe.

Uh...I wonder if I should say something...

"Weed Cultivation."

While it was a little embarrassing, I just said the name of the Gift.

The gazes of the others turned to painful grimaces.

I'm sure they didn't mean to be rude.

A few seconds after the name...I felt something pushing up out of the ground against my hand.

Had I succeeded?

When I pulled my left hand away, a green plant began to sprout from the ground.

“Oh!”

“Ah!”

“Wow!”

“Wuff!”

The others looked at the ground that I had been touching, and they raised their voices in amazement.

As I watched the plant grow, leaves and thorns started to come out. And after a while, it stopped growing.

I looked exactly like the plant I had imagined. An aloe.

So, I really had succeeded

“Is that...Loe?”

“Judging by the leaves and thorns, there is no doubt about it.”

“That's right. I imagined the characteristics that were written in the book and then used Weed Cultivation.”

“That’s amazing, Mr. Takumi!”

“Wuff! Wuff!”

Ms. Claire and Sebastian were astonished, while Tilura and Leo sounded overjoyed.

“Mr. Takumi...you were able to make...Loe.”

“It is incredible...”

“Yes, it worked. But, uh...is there something that I don’t know?”

Aloe...no, Loe, was a common enough plant in Japan.

And so I don’t know why they were so surprised...

“...Mr. Takumi. Do you mean to say that you made it without knowing what type of plant it was?”

“Uh... I read the description in the book. And it just so happened that there is a similar plant in my world. And so it was easy to visualize.”

“...I see... Lady Claire?”

“...Yes... Sebastian, please explain to him what Loe is.”

“Certainly.”

And so began Sebastian’s lesson on Loe.

While he was still surprised about seeing it grow, I could still tell that he was relishing the joy of being able to explain something to someone.

He really liked doing it...

“About Loe... Mr. Takumi, do you know about its effect?”

“Well, the book said that it can heal light wounds and burns...”

“Yes. It is a medicinal plant that heals wounds on your body. Its effect is most wonderful. You cut the leaves open in order to extract the jelly within, and you apply that to the wound.”

“Ah.”

So it was exactly like aloe.

Well, the jelly could be very unpleasant depending on where you applied it.

But when it had been used on me as a child, I felt that it healed faster than any bandaid... But maybe it was just my imagination...

“And the moment it touches the wound, the wound will heal.”

“...The moment it... Wait, so you don’t have to keep it on?”

“Yes. You do not. After all, it will be healed as soon as it is touched by the jelly. While it cannot heal mortal wounds, even deep wounds that are cut to the bone can heal without leaving a scar.”

“...”

...Wasn’t that too effective?

The aloe that I knew had to be covering your skin for quite a while.

Besides, all it did was slightly raise the speed of a human’s natural healing ability. So it should not be able to heal completely so that there is no scar.

So it really was completely different from the aloe that I knew?

...But it looked so similar

To think that this plant that looked like aloe could be so effective...

I was amazed by what Sebastian said as I stared at the Loe that had grown from the ground.

Chapter 39

Loe Was A Very Expensive And Effective Plant

Sebastian looked so happy when he explained things to me.

“Due to its high potency, it is in high demand. However, it is not known where exactly they will grow, and they never grow in great quantities. In other words, they are very rare medicinal plants. And being rare and in high demand results in them being very expensive.”

“Rare...”

In Japan, you could see aloe growing almost anywhere.

They were usually spotted in places that got a lot of sun. And since they could be planted in simple pots, they were common in most households.

However, the effect and rarity of this plant was very different.

Also, perhaps the climate in this world was not very suited for aloes to grow.

“I had been hoping that you would be able to make something for our storages...but I never expected something so valuable...”

“...How valuable are we talking?”

“Indeed... The Loe that you created has over ten leaves. You could build a house off of the profit.”

“...A house...”

It was that valuable...

“So, do you think that I could start a business by selling medicinal plants...”

“Indeed. Even if it’s not Loe, I think that it can be done. At least, if you can make them easily with your Gift, you could start a business without any funds.”

“Mr. Takumi. Are you going to make a business selling medicinal plants?”

“...No. I haven’t decided anything yet. But I know that now that I am in this world, I can’t just allow you and the others to help me. I need to work... That is what I think.”

You could not take advantage of someone’s kindness.

But more importantly, I didn’t think that I would be able to bear the thought of not even working while relying on them.

Perhaps it was because I had been doing nothing but work in my old world... And so it made me uncomfortable to be idle.

Was this what they called a workaholic?

I did intend on taking things easy, but I didn’t want to live without working at all.

Besides, if I could use Weed Cultivation to grow and sell medicinal plants, then I could make money without too much work.

And it might lead to finding other ways to make the most of my ability.

“...Obviously, if you sold only Loe, the price would fall greatly and it could disrupt the market.”

“Yes. ...Mr. Takumi, for now, could we add this Loe to our storage for medicine?”

“Oh, yes. Of course, I don’t mind. That was my intention in the first place.”

“Thank you. Also, if you do decide to use your ability to start a business, then please tell me. I will think of a good way to do it.”

“A good way?”

I had not known about the value of Loe, but perhaps I could give it to them as a way of paying rent for now.

In any case, it seemed like Ms. Claire had some idea when it came to starting a business.

As for me, including my part time jobs and full time work, I had always been far away from anything related to customer service and trade.

And so if Ms. Claire knew the best way to go about it, I would leave everything in her hands.

Besides, I didn’t like the idea of negotiating.

“Earlier, Sebastian said something about disrupting the market. Is this for cases where I make great quantities of them through Weed Cultivation and sell them?”

“Yes. If something used to be rare, then it would cause great confusion if there is suddenly so much of it available.”

“I see.”

Yes, that did make sense.

There was no doubt that all the merchants who had been trading it would become frantic.

Sebastian and Ms. Claire nodded.

“And so I have an idea. We, the Liebert family, will take charge of this business of selling the medicinal plants.”

“The Liebert family. The duke’s house?”

“Yes, that’s right.”

“I see...so that’s what you mean.”

While Sebastian seemed to think this was a good idea, what did it mean to have a Duke’s house take charge?

In the first place, was a duke even allowed to start a business like this?

“The Liebert family already has various businesses, both in and outside of our lands. After all, there are expenses that the taxes we receive as landlords will not cover, such as maintaining the lifestyle of nobles... Most of the tax money goes to the army, which guarantees the safety of these lands. And so we are living off the profits from these businesses.”

“Is that so?”

“Yes. Of course, there are other nobles who do not have businesses. Instead, they raise their taxes and live off of that. It is their choice to conduct or not conduct business, just as it is their choice to raise taxes. That being said, the royal family may intervene, if taxes are raised to the point where the people can barely survive.”

“Well, there are also plenty of nobles who squeeze all they can from their people and fill their coffers, while hiding it cleverly.”

“...I see.”

So the noble landlords could raise taxes as they pleased.

And they could also start businesses.

In other words, they had a choice over how they would maintain their lifestyle as nobles.

As long as you weren't so extreme that the royal family was alerted.

Ms. Claire talked of greedy nobles who filled their coffers. It was hardly a surprise.

"The Liebert family has always tried to keep taxes as low as possible for the benefit of our people. Thankfully, past heads of the family, as well as the current one...my father, and others around him, have had the talent for trade. And so we make more than enough in profits."

Well, they were living in this huge mansion.

So they must be making a lot of money.

Now that I thought about it, perhaps their father was constantly talking about having Ms. Claire and Tilura get married, because it would help with his business.

However, I had never met the man, so I had no way of knowing the truth.

But I had a very bad impression of strategic marriages... Perhaps it was just my prejudice.

Chapter 40

I was told the advantages of having a medicinal plant trade agreement with the Duke's house

"Nobles owning a business. It is like its own brand."

"A brand..."

“When a landed noble owns a business, the people who live on the land will often buy it, because it’s a product from their landlord. Obviously, this would only happen in cases where there is mutual trust. And so a landlord who is loved by the people will have an easier time selling something than the average merchant.”

“Well, the quality of the product will also matter. But people trust that a noble would not sell something of low quality, because that would quickly affect their reputation.”

“In other words, a business that is based on trust between the landlord and the people becomes its own brand?”

“Exactly.”

Brands sold by nobles...would they be like luxury brands?

I suppose that being sold by a trusted noble was part of the brand as well.

Ms. Claire’s family business brought in great profits, so that must mean they had the people’s trust.

“What I am thinking is this. The medicinal herbs that you make, Mr. Takumi, will be sold as a branded product of the Liebert house. By having a duke’s house manage things, people will trust that the product is of good quality. And of course, Mr. Takumi, you will be properly compensated for your work.”

“Hmm.”

“So in order to avoid disrupting the market, this family will handle things while you make the medicinal plants, Mr. Takumi. As it would not be wise for you to just make anything and in great quantities, we will have to organize things with the stores, and then have you cultivate them.”

So they would be sold in stores owned by the duke, and I would get orders for the amount to produce...was that right?

“Of course, if you would rather not rely on us and start your own business, I will not try to stop you. While I mean to pay you properly, it’s possible that you could make more of a profit if you did it all alone.”

“Hmm... Well, that’s not something that I’m concerned about. And I don’t have any desire to be the central figure in the business either.”

From my point of view, receiving the order, producing the amount, and leaving the rest to the family. If I could make enough money to live by doing that, then I had no complaints.

This was still a world where I barely knew right from left. And so it felt wise to leave the actual selling to them.

While it could not be helped that less of the profits would go to me, this was just a power I was suddenly able to use.

It’s not something that I had worked hard to attain. And so I would be making money very easily.

These were very favorable conditions.

“I think that I will leave it to your family, Ms. Claire. ...Besides, I surely do not have the same talent for trade.”

“Very well. That being said, it is just an early idea. My father is still the head of this house. And so we will not be able to add the medicinal plants to our stores without permission, nor can we ask you to cultivate them as an employee.”

“So, Ms. Claire... We won’t be able to do it immediately?”

“Yes. I must speak with my father first. However, I doubt that he won’t give his permission... Though...”

“Huh?”

“...I was just thinking about how troublesome it will be that he will bring up my marriage again when I talk to him...”

“Ah...that’s true...”

She had grumbled about him for a long time yesterday. He must bring it up with her a lot... She said that it had been nearly every day.

Ms. Claire was living away from her father now, and they would be meeting after a long while. And so it was very likely that he would start trying to find her a match once again.

I felt a little sorry for her.

“I’ll think about the terms of the contract and other details before I meet him. Mr. Takumi, you must also think about it very carefully and decide whether to do it or not. ...And I must also think of ways to turn those marriages down...!”

“...Of course.”

She sounded the most determined during the last part...

I would try to avoid bringing the subject up with her from now on.

After that, I looked through the book and tested to see what other plants I could make with Weed Cultivation.

While I was able to make most of the plants in the book, there were also some that I was unsuccessful with.

There was one called ‘Neegi,’ which was like a Japanese green onion.

It even said in the description that it would heal ailments if you wrapped it around your neck.

“What kind of folk medicine is...”

Regardless, I was not able to make it through Weed Cultivation.

When I asked Sebastian, he said that it was commonly sold as food. If it was considered farm produce, then that would explain why I am unable to make it.

It did make me wonder who exactly decides if a plant is part of agriculture or not, but I decided to not think about it too deeply, as there would be no answers.

“...Phew.”

I continued to try to grow different plants until lunch time.

A great variety of plants were now growing in the back garden so that it looked like a little field.

However, out of all of the plants that were there, there was one single plant that was not in the book. And I had no memory of ever seeing such a plant before.

A plant had been made when I had no knowledge of it at all.

“...I thought plants were only supposed to grow after I imagined them?”

What had I been thinking about when making this?

I think...I had been thinking vaguely about how Leo and Tilura were running around and playing in the garden, and how tired I would be if I joined them.

After that, I thought of energy drinks, and wondered if there wasn't something here that would give me energy. And then I touched the ground.

And before I knew it, a single purple leaf with no stem had sprouted from the dirt.

I had then plucked it. But I wouldn't dare use or sell something if I didn't know what effect it would have.

I showed Ms. Claire and Sebastian, but neither knew of the plant either. And so I decided to take it back to my room.

“I’ll put it here for now.”

I placed the unfamiliar plant on the desk in my room, and then I headed to the dining hall.

By now, I knew how to reach it, and did not need Ms. Lyra to show me the way.

For lunch, we had pasta.

It wasn’t the thick, long type of spaghetti often eaten in Japan, as the noodles were flat a few centimeters wide.

Everything that Ms. Helena made was delicious, so this should be no different. It was with such thoughts that I picked up the fork that lay next to my plate.