

Beloved Dog 341

Chapter 341

Ms. Lyra Gave Liza A Bath

“Alright, Liza. Leo and I will go ahead to our room, okay?”

“...But, could you stay with me until we get there, papa?”

“Hmm. Very well. Since it’s your first time.”

“Wuff.”

“Hehe. I suppose she does not want to part from you two.”

I had been about to take Leo back to the room, when Liza tugged at my sleeve and I stopped.

Apparently, she was anxious about us leaving so soon.

And so we decided to accompany them to the bathing area.

Ms. Lyra watched this and chuckled.

“Papa. I took a bath!”

“Yes, welcome back. Thank you, Ms. Lyra.”

“Wuff-wuff.”

“Not at all. She was very well behaved, and so it was not difficult at all.”

After leaving Liza and Ms. Lyra at the entrance of the bathing room, Leo and I had returned to the room to rest. And then a while later, the doors burst open and Liza returned.

She ran straight to Leo, throwing her arms around her and burying herself in the fur.

I was sure to thank Ms. Lyra for bringing her back.

According to Ms. Lyra, Liza did not act rowdy and was very quiet.

Perhaps she had taken a bath as well, as her hair looked a little damp as ran her fingers through it and smiled.

The straight, long black hair was different from Ms. Claire, but reminded me of home for a brief moment.

“What is it, papa?”

“Nothing. Nothing at all.”

“Really?”

“Wuff...”

Upon seeing me pause, Liza asked me what was wrong, but I assured her that it was nothing.

I was not about to say such a thing to Ms. Lyra right now.

...Though, Leo seemed like she understood.

“Well! I suppose it’s my turn now. Liza, you stay here with Leo.”

“Uh, okay.”

“Wuff.”

And so I got off of the bed and headed to the door.

Liza and Leo nodded in reply.

I suppose it would be fine if Leo didn’t bathe today.

“Will you be needing any help, Mr. Takumi?”

“Huh!? ...Uh, no. I can go alone!”

“...Indeed? Very well.”

When I was about to leave, Ms. Lyra called out to me.

And I couldn’t help but think about it for just a second.

Of course, I could not do that... I was a man, after all.

Besides, I would feel very uncomfortable.

A bathing room was a place where you could relax. The last thing I wanted was to feel nervous there.

Ms. Lyra nodded with a slightly disappointed look.

Had she wanted to help so much? Well, I pushed it out of my mind and rushed to the bathing room.

Leo let out an audible sigh as I left, but I ignored her.

Hmph... Leo, next time I might just ask Ms. Lyra to wash you.

Yes, very thoroughly, including your face... Damn it.

“Phew... That was refreshing... Oh.”

“Wou...”

After washing up and soaking in the tub for some time, I returned to my room.

But I stopped talking as I entered the room.

Without moving, Leo turned her eyes towards me and murmured...as if to tell me to be quiet.

“ZZZZ...”

“Oh, she’s sleeping?”

“Wuff.”

When returning to the room, Liza had thrown her arms around Leo and buried her face in the fur. Apparently, she had then fallen asleep like that.

Her hair and tail had looked damp earlier, but it was dry now. And since Leo was quite warm, there was likely little chance that she would catch a cold.

Leo and I whispered to each other as we watched her.

While Leo often had sharp eyes, she looked incredibly gentle when looking at Liza.

“Still, I don’t know if she should sleep like this... But then again, I feel bad about waking her up.”

“Wuff?”

While she looked comfortable there, it would be better for her to sleep on the bed.

Even if there were no health problems, if this became a habit, then she might not be able to sleep without Leo.

But Leo looked puzzled as I mused over this.

“Well, she might start seeing you as a pillow. It’s better to sleep properly on a bed.”

“Wou...”

When I explained this, Leo agreed a little begrudgingly.

It was fine once in a while... Every now and then, Leo would also sleep with half of her body on the bed, and I would use her as a pillow.

However, she was still getting used to the mansion and her surroundings, so it was different.

What to do... Well, it was fine for just this day. Maybe I will talk to her about it tomorrow.

“...Mmm...papa?”

Just as I had made the decision to leave her there, Liza opened her eyes slightly.

Apparently, she must have sensed that Leo and I were looking at her.

Perhaps beastkin were more sensitive to such things, just like Leo was.

She had also woken up this morning when Tilura and I were looking at her.

Even if she was comfortable with Leo, she was still not familiar with this place. So perhaps she was more cautious than even she realized.

Chapter 342

Liza Woke Up

“Sorry, did we wake you?”

“...Mmm...no. Sorry for sleeping first. I was going to wait for you to come back...”

“Haha, it’s fine. After all, you’re still not used to everything. It’s no wonder that you’re tired. Besides, you even helped with the medicine.”

“Yes, I did my best. Papa...did it turn out well?”

“Of course. You were a great help.”

“Wuff-wuff.”

Lisa must have seen us when her eyes were half open.

And so she rubbed her eyes and sat up, even though she still looked sleepy.

While I didn’t want her to stay up if she was tired, it was nice to have someone waiting for you.

Was this what it was like to be a father...?

Apparently, aside from her interest in the medicine, Liza had also wanted to make herself useful.

Leo nodded with a gentle expression.

“Well, you must still be tired. Why not go to sleep in the bed?”

“...No. I want to talk to papa and mama a little longer.”

“You aren’t sleepy?”

“I’m fine after sleeping a little.”

“I see. Well, why don’t you get on the bed then? That way, you can sleep any time while you talk.”

“Okay.”

She nodded and then moved away from Leo to sit on the bed.

It really did seem like she didn’t want to sleep yet.

Perhaps she saw being asleep as being away from me and Leo.

I wonder if it was related to losing her grandfather...

She might also have bad dreams... Or maybe I am overthinking it.

I suppose that unless Leo and I appeared in her dreams, it would be like we were separated.

That was a childish way of thinking.

“So, what do you want to talk about?”

“Anything is fine. I just want to talk with you and mama.”

“Really? In that case...”

If talking with us was that fun, then I would humor her, even if it meant less sleep.

Of course, I’m sure Leo wouldn’t let it go for too long.

Regardless, this was a good opportunity to discuss certain things.

Like what Ms. Claire had asked me about.

“Uhh... Do you know about the beastkin rules, Liza?”

“Hmm... I don’t!”

Apparently, she did not know about the beastkin rules that Sebastian and Ms. Claire had talked about.

She had been abandoned in the slums shortly after being born, so I guess there was no one to teach her.

Even if the grandfather who raised her wasn’t prejudiced, he probably didn’t know enough about them.

“I see. To put it simply, there are rules that beastkin are supposed to follow. And they get mad if you break them. Though, this isn’t the beastkin country, so I suppose it doesn’t matter.”

“I see. What makes them angry?”

“Well... Like following people that you don’t know well.”

“Grandfather told me that. Strangers will try to hurt me. So I should stay away.”

“Yes, that’s right. You never know what people are like, so it can be dangerous.”

Though, now that I thought about it, Mr. Ekenhart had appeared suddenly and helped her. And then we took her to the orphanage.

In a way, she had gone with us, in spite of us being strangers.

“Uh... I guess you sort of did that when you followed us... Perhaps it was too sudden.”

“I was surprised that anyone who isn’t grandfather would help me... But I know that you and mama are kind!”

“I see. Well, good then.”

While Liza had been scared of Leo at first, that was because of her appearance. And it was right after she was attacked, so it could not be helped.

Still, Liza seemed to have sharp senses or some kind of beastkin ability. And she felt that Leo and I were good people.

Regardless, what was the point of these rules anyway?

It seemed like she was perfectly capable of observing her surroundings and making decisions...

Well, maybe Liza was just special, and other beastkin were different.

Perhaps being raised in the slums had made her more cautious of her surroundings.

In any case, there wasn’t much I could say, as I didn’t know the beastkin very well.

“Also... How do you feel about people touching your ears or tail?”

“Hmm. If it’s you and mama. But I don’t like it when there are lots of people doing it... Some people pull really hard.”

“Wuff!”

“I see. Now, calm down Leo. I’m sure you understand what that’s like.”

“Wou...”

I suppose it reminded her of the times she was bullied.

After all...the ears and tail was what stuck out the most, and outed you as a beastkin.

Upon hearing Liza say this, Leo had stood up as if angry, and so I had to tell her to calm down.

It looked like she was ready to charge into the slums in order to find the culprit... That would cause chaos in the city.

I was upset too, but not as much as Leo.

I suppose I had expected as much.

Leo did not look satisfied, but sat back down anyway.

“There, there. So I suppose you don’t care to have your ears or tail touched?”

I asked while I stretched out a hand to Leo and petted her gently.

If that was the case, I would have to tell Ms. Claire. And everyone would be more careful when interacting with her.

Chapter 343

How to pet the ears and tail

“No, not always. Uhh... How do you say it... It tickles...”

“Wuff. Wuff-wuff.”

“Yes, that. Mama is right. It’s sensitive.”

“I see. So it hurts when people tug on it or it can also tickle...?”

Liza was muttering something as she tried to find the words.

As if to help her, Leo barked a few times, and Liza nodded in agreement.

Perhaps it was like paws?

And then I realized it.

Liza had been able to understand Leo without me interpreting for her.

“Liza. Are you...able to understand Leo?”

“Uh, yes. I can. The same as you, papa.”

“Well, that’s true, but... Hmm...”

I suppose this was another feature of being a beastkin.

As I had spent so much time with Leo, I could understand her gestures and tone.

As for Ms. Claire and the others, it seemed like they were getting better at understanding her as well. But it still wasn’t clear.

But Liza seemed like she understood Leo’s words clearly.

Was it that her ears were special? Or was there some other reason. I did not know.

“That’s why you chose Leo...”

“Yes. Mama talks to me, and she is kind and funny!”

“Wuff? Wuff...”

After being saved, Liza had been scared at first, but became close with Leo soon after.

I thought that she recovered quickly because she was young... But apparently, it had more to do with being able to talk to each other.

Still, Leo being funny... What had Leo said to her then? I hadn't heard, as I was busy talking with Mr. Ekenhart.

However, Leo seemed a little offended at being called funny.

Perhaps she was just desperate, because Liza was afraid of her... Even I had been amused seeing her like that.

In any case, I would tell the others about this tomorrow.

I didn't know how much they knew about beastkin, but I doubted that they knew about this.

“In any case... How do you feel about other people touching your ears or tail?”

“Hmm... I don't mind, because the people here won't be rough... Yes, I don't mind!”

“Well, you really don't have too...”

It was clear that she was observant of her surroundings.

I didn't know if it was because she was raised in the slums or because she was a beastkin, but she understood that the people here meant her no harm.

That being said, I didn't want Liza to do anything unless she wanted to.

“Let's see... How about if I touch your ears, and you can tell me if it tickles?”

“Okay, that’s fine. Uh...go ahead.”

“Thank you. Well then...”

“Wuff-wuff!”

In order to figure out how to do it in a way that would not annoy her, I decided to test it.

Liza nodded and lowered her head with a smile.

And so I stretched out my towards her ear, and then Leo barked.

“Leo. Are you telling me how to do it?”

“Wuff!”

Apparently, Leo was going to teach me how to do it properly.

Well, Leo had similar ears and tail, so it made sense.

“Wuff. Wuff-wou.”

“Uhh. Gently and then like a pat on the head...”

And so I followed Leo and used my right hand to gently pat her on the head with my palm.

Obviously, this meant touching the ears, as they protruded from her head.

“Ah. It’s slightly different from Leo’s fur.”

“Wuff? Wuff-wuff!”

“Haha. Yes, I’ll pat you on the head later, Leo.”

“Wuff. Wuff!? Wuff!”

“Huh!?”

“Ahaha! That tickles, papa!”

“Oh, sorry, sorry.”

Liza’s ears were brown and fluffy.

Leo looked slightly jealous all of a sudden, and so I had to reassure her.

I chuckled at this, but it interfered with my concentration, and Leo barked in order to warn me.

While Liza was laughing, it had apparently tickled, and she puffed out her cheeks in annoyance.

I apologized, realizing that I had patted the part inside the ears.

Human ears were also quite sensitive, so I understood the feeling. And perhaps beastkin were even more sensitive.

“Wuff! Wuff-wuff.”

“I know, I’ll be careful. Now, for the base of the ears...”

“Hah...”

After Leo barked at me again, she told me to pat near the base of the ears as if it was a massage.

And when I did, Liza let out a sigh.

Hmm. As her ears were always moving, perhaps they became sore, just like shoulders.

Hmm... I had thought that Liza was like a fox, judging the look of her ears or tail...but maybe she was more like a cat?

Well, I had no idea about such things.

“Wuff. Wuff-wuff.”

“Alright. Now for the tail.”

As she was used to having her ears touched, I then reached for the tail.

Liza’s tail was big and fluffy, just like a fox’s.

In fact...it was probably big enough for Sherry to hide in.

Chapter 344

Petting the tail

“Wuff! Wuff-wuff.”

“Hmm. Gently pet along the fur or like you are brushing it.”

“Ahaha! That tickles!”

“Wuff!”

“Like this? Okay.”

And so I slowly brushed my hand outwards along the tail.

However, it might have been too light, as Liza started laughing.

Now that I think about it, when brushing Leo's fur, she seemed to prefer it if you did it a little strongly.

But then again, it would hurt if you tugged too hard as well... However, my experience with Leo helped me understand.

I was careful to not go too down low as I petted and brushed the tail.

While there were no bones inside, it could still become stiff, like a person's shoulders.

I suppose it was because it moved so much with her emotions.

Maybe I could as Ms. Lyra or something to give her tail massages later.

"Hmm...zzz..."

In the meantime, Liza seemed to have fallen asleep.

Well, she had been sleeping just a moment ago, and it was getting late...so it was no surprise.

Perhaps she was just pretending that she wasn't that tired, because of Leo and me.

"Well, she looks comfortable, at least. I guess we should go to sleep too."

"Wou."

I whispered to Leo as I put a blanket over Liza.

Just like yesterday, Leo curled up at the corner of the bed, so that Liza would not fall off.

I too went into the other side of the bed and fell asleep.

I wonder if Liza would have moved to where Leo is again tomorrow? I wondered as my consciousness faded.

—

“...Grandfather...zzz...

“There, there. Don’t worry. You’re not alone.”

“Wuff...”

The following morning, I woke to feel that there was something heavy on my arm. Apparently, it was Liza, who had grabbed onto my right arm while I was sleeping.

That was fine in itself, but while she was supposed to be asleep, it looked like tears were coming out of her eyes.

I was surprised at first, but then I realized that she was having a dream about her grandfather.

Perhaps she was dreaming about their separation...the moment that he had died.

I raised my head and saw that Leo was looking at me. And then I turned my eyes back to Liza.

And then I gently wiped away the tears with my left hand and patted her on the head in order to comfort her.

Leo also barked in a worried voice.

During the day, Leo and I were around, and she had played with Tilura and Sherry, and seemed happy... But I suppose she pretended to be braver than she was.

After all, she had been abandoned in the slums, and then lost her grandfather, and then was picked on.

I would have to assure her that from now on, she would not be lonely, and that there would be plenty of fun things in her life.

“Mmm...Huh? Papa?”

“Did you wake up?””

“Yes... Hahhh...”

“Hahaha. Well, you slept a little late, so you’re probably tired. Why don’t you sleep a little longer?”

“No, no. I’ll get up. I’ll be with you and maama today!”

“I see. Well, let’s get up then.”

After deciding to do my best to ensure that she would not feel sad, Liza woke up.

She rubbed at her eyes, and yawned loudly.

It seemed like she was still sleepy, but wanted to get up anyway.

And so she let go of my arm and jumped down from the bed.

“Wuff! Wuff!”

“Aha! I’m fine, mama!

“Wuff!”

Leo immediately moved her face towards her and licked Liza's face.

Liza replied cheerfully and Leo looked relieved.

I suppose Leo was worried, but also wanted to wipe away the tears as well.

...Hmm. Liza should probably wash her face before breakfast.

Even if there were no tears, her face would now be sticky.

Not that Leo was particularly dirty, but it would be good for her to learn to wash her face in the morning as a habit.

Back in Japan, Leo had sometimes woke me up in the morning by licking my face...

Though, it wasn't because of any concern she had for me. She just wanted me to feed her.

Chapter 345

Changes in the Herb Field

"Wuff. Wuff."

"Ahaha. You're licking too much, mama."

"Yes, not too much, Leo. ...Liza, you're going to have to wash your face thoroughly later."

"Mr. Takumi. Leo... Are you awake?"

"Tilura? Yes, you can come in."

"Okay! Good morning!"

Leo must have been very happy that Liza was fine, as she continued to lick her face.

While Liza was laughing, she would have to wash it off later...

As I was watching them, I heard Tilura's voice coming from outside.

I suppose she didn't knock, because she could hear Liza laughing, and knew that we were already awake.

And so I invited Tilura into the room.

She was always so energetic in the morning, which I suppose was normal for someone her age.

Even Liza, who had looked sleepy a moment ago, was wide awake and cheerful now.

"Good morning, Tilura."

"Wuff."

"Sister Tilura! Good morning!"

"Liza! ...Your face!"

"Ahaha. Because Leo licked her. Tilura, can you help Liza wash up?"

"Very well. Let's go, Liza!"

"Wuff-wuff."

"Yes. You come too, mama."

Tilura entered the room immediately and noticed that Liza's face was wet.

And so I watched the three leave, and started my own preparations for the morning.

“Mr. Takumi! Are you awake!?”

“Ah! Ye-yes... Ouch...”

While I was shaving, I suddenly heard a frantic voice coming from behind the door.

It was not a very familiar voice, and while I answered, I realized that I had cut myself while shaving.

Blood was dripping... Well, that was a failure.

“Excuse me. ...I am really sorry to disturb you in the morning.”

“...But what is it? It sounds urgent?”

It was one of the butlers I had seen in the mansion a few times.

Usually, it was Sebastian who came to talk to me. I wonder what it could be?

“Y-yes. It is true. Mr. Takumi, it’s about the herbs in the garden... They have died.”

“What? Died...?”

“Yes. I know this might sound like an excuse...but it was very dark during the night, and we could not see well. And when we went to look in the morning, they had wilted.”

Apparently, it was one of the butlers who had been watching the herbs.

Obviously, they could not see well during the night, and had no idea that they had wilted.

As light was needed for photosynthesis, I thought it might affect them, and so I had told them to avoid using magic light.

I wanted to see what would happen under natural circumstances.

In any case, the butler was now apologizing about my herbs dying.

While it wasn't the outcome I had expected, it wasn't a problem in itself.

We were still conducting research, and I could easily make more with Weed Cultivation.

Still, the fact that they grew so quickly, multiplied and now died... It must all be related to Weed Cultivation somehow.

"Uhh, please calm down. As they were made under special circumstances, it is not strange for them to die. It's not your fault, so don't worry."

"Yes...I'm very sorry."

"So, did all of them wilt?"

"No. Only the ones that grew big yesterday. The sprouts remained and continue to grow."

"I see..."

First, I tried to calm down the apologizing butler and make him tell me the situation with the herbs.

According to him, it was only the first herbs that died. And the new ones were fine.

Did the new sprouts take all of the nutrients?

No, if that was the case, then the others should have died off too.

What could this mean...?

“In any case, I will go and have a look.”

“Yes.”

“...What happened?”

“Wuff?”

“What is it, papa?”

Just as I was about to leave the room with the butler, Liza and the others returned.

I had been in such a rush that I was going to leave without saying anything.

...I had even forgotten about the pain of cutting my jaw.

In any case, I told the others about what had happened, and we all headed to the garden.

Leo alone seemed to be quite hungry, and so she was a little disappointed... Don't worry, I just have to take a short look, and then you can go eat.

“Mr. Takumi.”

“Sebastian. So you were already here.”

“Yes, I was just informed a moment ago, and came right away.”

When we went out into the garden, I saw that Sebastian was waiting for us.

As there had been another butler as well, he must have gone to call Sebastian.

Chapter 346

The Herbs Made With Weed Cultivation

“Indeed...they have died.”

“I regret that we couldn’t manage them better, Mr. Takumi.”

“No, you don’t have to apologize, Sebastian. These were not made by any ordinary method, after all. It’s to be expected.”

As we looked at the herbs, I saw that the ones that had grown large were now completely brown. They were wilted and lying limply on the ground.

But around them, the new sprouts were still growing. In fact, they seemed like they were ready to be picked.

Upon seeing this, Sebastian and the butlers apologized once again.

However, I didn’t feel that they were to blame.

“Well, I can easily make more. So please don’t worry about it.”

“Of course. Thank you.”

“In any case, as for the reason... I wonder what happened?”

“...According to the butlers who were observing them, nothing. Even if it was quite dark, surely they would have noticed if there was a dramatic change.”

“Indeed.”

Only the color must have changed as they wilted, so they would not have been able to see it.

If there was another reason, like a wild animal, then they would have noticed it.

So that was not the case... Besides, the guards would have noticed if there was a wild animal or monster so close to the mansion.

“Then what reason could there be...”

“I do not know... Still, it is curious that the new sprouts continued to be healthy. Only the first ones you made died...”

“Yes... Surely if the new ones took all of the nutrients, then some of the other herbs would have died as well. But only the ones that I made myself were affected.”

“It seems that way. So it has to do with Weed Cultivation then?”

“I cannot say for sure, but there seems to be no other explanation.”

I talked with Sebastian as we looked at the herbs.

Leo, Tilura, and Liza did not seem very interested, and they began to play a short distance away.

Well, that was fine.

“Maybe...it could be that...”

“Have you thought of something?”

“I’m not certain. But I have a theory... As they grew so quickly with Weed Cultivation, your herbs lived out their lives...”

“Grew so quickly...”

“Yes. After all, everything has a lifespan. Your herbs grow quickly, so that they can be harvested immediately. But if they are not picked, they might continue to grow until they die...”

“Well, that does seem likely enough.”

With plants, they might die after their flowers have bloomed or after bearing fruit.

Some trees live for hundreds of years, but still, they would get old and sick and die eventually.

So even if the speed of growth had slowed down a little, if they continued to age through the night...then it would make sense that they would be dead in the morning.

They were already fully grown yesterday, and were in the perfect condition to be picked.

That being said, it was still possible that there were other problems. Like the soil or environment. So I couldn't be sure yet.

Though, since both the herbs that had been watered and the herbs that hadn't were the same now, Sebastian was probably on the right track.

“And what about the new herbs then...?”

“There is no mistake that they grew quickly, so they might also die quickly. However, since they didn't grow quite as fast as your herbs, they might last a little longer as well.”

“I see. In that case, we should continue to watch these.”

“Even if they will wilt?”

“Yes. After all, this is just a test to see if it's possible to grow them normally. By seeing this process, I should be able to learn something that will help with raising herbs.”

“...Indeed. As it is the first time, it would be best to observe the whole cycle.”

“Exactly. And so the next time you call me, calm down a little, alright?”

“Yes, of course.”

I wanted to know how long these new herbs would last.

Besides, they might also multiply again.

After talking about it with Sebastian, it was decided that we would leave them like this for now.

I also didn’t forget to add a few words to the butler who had called me.

...The pain in my jaw reminded me that I had cut myself.

“Mr. Takumi... I heard that the herbs have wilted?”

“Yes, they have. Uh...”

I had left the herbs to the butlers and returned to the mansion with Sebastian.

And as we were on our way to the dining hall, we bumped into Ms. Claire.

Apparently, she had heard the news, and was on her way to the garden.

And so I told about what had happened as we headed to the dining hall together.

Ms. Claire was quite relieved to see that I was not distressed over the matter.

Perhaps it was because I had made them, and they had gone to waste.

While that was unfortunate, it didn’t really matter.

I could easily make some more, and I was prepared for an outcome like this anyway.

I wished the butlers wouldn't apologize so much, and that everyone would worry about it less.

Chapter 347

Mr. Ekenhart was left alone

"Claire... So you were with Mr. Takumi. Did you all wake up late?"

"...Father?"

"The master...is already up?"

"Ah, good morning, Mr. Ekenhart."

When we entered the dining hall, Mr. Ekenhart was sitting there by himself and looking rather lonely.

However, he looked rather smug upon seeing us... I suppose he thought that we had all woken up late this morning.

Mr. Ekenhart was likely down here this early, because he had been able to sleep well after eating the herbs. But Ms. Claire and Sebastian did not know about it, so they were surprised.

Though, I didn't think they needed to be that surprised... But I suppose it was because of how he was for so long.

"So, what happened?"

"Your Grace, I didn't inform you because I thought you were still sleeping. The truth is..."

And so I left the explaining to Sebastian, and we all took our usual seats at the table.

"Hmm. So it was just the herbs that Mr. Takumi made... And not that you were all sleeping."

Once he knew this, Mr. Ekenhart could no longer look very smug.

Besides, even if I would, I didn't know why he would think that Ms. Claire would sleep late.

That was one thing they didn't share, in spite of being family.

"By the way, what happened to Ms. Anne?"

"Apparently, Lady Anneliese was up late last night, and so she is still sleeping."

As I wondered about Ms. Anne, one of the maids told me.

It was one of the maids that had been assigned to her, so that was why she knew about it.

"Up late..."

"Anne... I hope she wasn't thinking about anything strange..."

Both Ms. Claire and I had been wondering about the same thing.

As she had a history of thinking about terrible things, the idea of her staying up late filled us with some unease.

Well, she was not with the count anymore, and there was no one here for her to command. So I doubted she could do any harm to anyone...

"Mr. Takumi, can you please take a look at this?"

"This?"

After eating breakfast, I tasted some of the medicinal wine and waited. And then Sebastian handed me some documents.

“This is a list of personnel you can hire when you go to Range village. While they will be inspected by the duke and Lady Claire, I thought you should have a look through them as well.”

“I doubt I can be of much use....”

“Still. If there is anyone who you are interested in, they will be given priority. Well, this is just some suggestions, so you must let me know if there is someone else you want to hire. Of course, we are also still searching.”

In other words, even if they would strictly inspect anyone who is hired, they still wanted me to look through the list.

After all, I was the one who was going to hire them.

“Very well. I shall give it a look then.”

“Yes, thank you.”

“And do not worry if there is no one who interests you. We plan to continue searching, after all.”

I took the list from Sebastian and promised to look through it.

Mr. Ekenhart said that I could just look through it casually, but I felt differently about it.

As the person who would be their employer, it was rather important.

“Hmm...hmm... Sebastian. What’s this about being tight lipped or being prone to spread rumors?”

I looked through the list while drinking tea.

While I planned to look through it more thoroughly in my room, I wanted to scan through it first.

The list contained names, gender, age, and job history. This was not enough information to get a good grasp on them, but it did give me an idea.

However, there were also short descriptions there, so I asked Sebastian about them.

“They are notes concerning their ability to keep secrets. Whether or not they are likely to leak information... Such things are considered important for nobles who are hiring. And you have the Gift, Mr. Takumi.”

“I see... Indeed.”

Nobles likely had plenty of secrets that they didn't want to be leaked.

Even small companies in Japan had them, so it was no surprise, given that nobles might own several territories.

In some cases, this might be considered more important than their actual ability.

While my Weed Cultivation wasn't a complete secret, it was still better for it to be unknown to the outside.

After all, it was possible that I could be targeted... I was learning to use a sword and magic for self defense, but it would be better to not be targeted at all.

I nodded at Sebastian's explanation as I sipped my tea and continued to look at the rest.

As for Liza, she was with Tilura and Sherry as they lay against Leo's stomach.

If I left them like that, they would probably fall asleep again... Well, it was fine.

More importantly, Ms. Claire was staring at me and seemed a little nervous... Had something happened?

Chapter 348

Some of the people who I could hire were the servants

“Um, Ms. Claire. Is something wrong?”

“N-no...not at all.”

“Are you sure?”

“Heh...hehe...”

As she was staring at me so much, I asked Ms. Claire if there was a reason.

She looked surprised for a second but then turned away.

Upon seeing this, Mr. Ekenhart looked like he was trying to hold back his laughter...

Well, right now, I wanted to focus on this list.

“...Sebastian. I recognize a few of these names.”

When scanning the pages, I noticed that I knew some of the people who were listed.

But they already had work here... What did this mean?

And so I asked Sebastian, who seemed to be waiting.

As for the names I recognized, they were Milina, Ms. Lyra, Ms. Gelda, and Mr. Nicholas.

“More than half of the list is made up of people who work here, Mr. Takumi. We are also searching through surrounding areas, including Ractos. But that list will take a little longer to be ready.”

“Yes, I understand that... But why are there people from this mansion?”

According to Sebastian, it was more than half of the list. So even if I didn't know their names, a lot of the people already worked here.

Well, I had talked to Milina about this already, so it wasn't strange for her to be listed...

But it seemed off for me to hire the other servants as well?

"Obviously...you would not be hiring all of them. That would not do at all. However, when asking them, many answered that they would be glad to help you."

"Ah... And you are fine with that? It could not have been easy to hire them in the first place."

"We do not mind. It will not be too difficult to find replacements. And people come from the orphanage as well."

So, even if I were to hire some of their servants from the list, they would be able to replace them easily enough.

"Besides, while we currently have guests, like you and Lady Anne, as well as the master...once you leave for Range village, and Lady Anne and the master leaves, we will not need as many servants here."

"We wanted to use this opportunity to hire people from the orphanage, or who are looking for work. It would be difficult to do this if you didn't take some off of our hands..."

"Is that right? Very well. So, I can take my pick from here?"

"Everyone on that list has volunteered or given their consent when asked... They are willing to work for you."

According to Sebastian, even if they had a good number of servants now, I would not be here forever.

On top of that, Mr. Ekenhart would eventually return to the main house, and he would likely take Ms. Anne with him, as she was his ward now.

There would then be too many servants in the mansion.

Furthermore, Ms. Claire said that they wanted to take in new people.

The orphanage was currently full, so they probably wanted to get rid of anyone who was old enough to work.

That was probably the reason there were so many servants there in the first place.

I checked with Sebastian one more time, and he assured me that everyone on the list would be happy to work for me.

Well, it did make me feel better.

I did not feel too confident as an employer, but... This was still less stressful than hiring people I didn't know at all.

Besides, since they had been working for the duke, that meant they could be trusted.

Especially people that I knew personally, like Ms. Lyra, Ms. Gelda, and Nicholas.

I still didn't know how many people I had to hire, but now that they were talking about the orphanage, I suppose that might be an option as well.

It wasn't like I could only hire from the mansion, and it would be nice if I could help them as well.

After all, that was how Milina had come to be here.

"In that case, I will give it a closer look once I return to my room."

"You're not going to look at the whole thing now?"

“Well, it’s about people. I want to read through it very carefully. And I will be able to concentrate better in my room.”

“I see... Well, that’s too bad, isn’t? Claire.”

“...Father, what are you on about? I didn’t... If Mr. Takumi wants to read it in his room, then that is what he should do.”

“I see, I see... Hehe. As if you are not itching to tell him...”

“Father!”

“Oh, I will say no more. Now, Mr. Takumi. Just let me know when you’ve made your decision.”

“Uh...yes.”

I put the list down on the table and decided to look through it later.

While I could read it now, Ms. Claire’s staring at me and Mr. Ekenhart’s chuckling was distracting.

Besides, I could just ask Sebastian later if I had any questions.

But when I said I would read it later, Mr. Ekenhart started teasing Ms. Claire for some reason.

She looked a little frantic, and he was highly amused.

Ms. Claire was quite angry over this, causing Mr. Ekenhart to retreat and turn towards me instead.

I wasn’t sure what they were talking about, and I doubted they would tell me. So I pushed it out of my mind for now.

...Besides, I didn’t want Ms. Claire’s anger to be directed towards me next.

I told them that Liza could talk with Leo

“Papa. Are you finished talking?”

“Aye, I’m finished. You were good to wait there quietly.”

“Ehehe...”

She must have sensed that we were finished talking, as Liza got up and moved away from Leo and walked towards me.

And while I doubted she understood anything, she did not look bored and had waited quietly. And so I patted her head and praised her.

Thanks to Leo’s advice, Liza didn’t mind being patted and laughed happily.

“...Mr. Takumi. So you are able to do that now?”

“Well, Liza did not know about any beastkin rules. And so as long as people aren’t rudely yanking on her tail, it should be fine. Right?”

“Yes. As long as it’s gentle!”

“Though, you have to do it right...”

Upon seeing me pat Liza on the head, Ms. Claire asked me about the request she made yesterday.

I suppose she wanted to pat Liza on the head as well...

In any case, she and the maids seemed to brighten up when I told them it would be fine.

Ms. Claire let out a sigh of relief.

And so I explained to them what Leo had told me.

And I also asked if one of the maids could occasionally massage her tail when it gets sore.

“Ah, that’s right. There is something else...”

“What is it?”

I remembered that there was something else concerning Liza that I wanted to tell them.

“About Liza. Apparently, she can communicate with Leo. She can understand what she is saying very clearly.”

“Little Liza...”

“Hmm... Is it because she is a beastkin?”

“That seems to be the case. I have heard that some beastkin can talk with beast-type monsters.”

Ms. Claire looked quite surprised, but Mr. Ekenhart and Sebastian were nodding as if it made sense to them.

“So...it’s just some, and not all of them?”

“Well, I do not know the details about that. There are hardly any beastkin in these territories. And so I cannot confirm anything. However, I heard that through talking with monsters, they are able to make them their familiars.”

“I suppose since they can talk to them, it’s much easier to make them familiars than it is for humans. Of course, only if they are beast-types. Of course, it is just a rumor, and one of the reasons that some people fear beastkin.”

As there was not much information, nothing could be confirmed yet. But at least we knew that Liza was not unique in her ability to talk with beasts.

Being able to talk with monsters also meant that it was easier to coexist.

However, this made some humans think that beastkin were like monsters, which added to their fear.

It was not surprising that such negative rumors would be spread during war time, but it was sad that Liza was still being persecuted because of it.

“Sherry, come over here.”

“Kyau? Kyau!”

“And you too, Liza.”

“What is it, sister Claire?”

After hearing what Mr. Ekenhart and Sebastian had said, Ms. Claire then called Sherry over.

Sherry looked quite sleepy, but she immediately reacted and raised her head when she heard Ms. Claire’s voice. And after looking puzzled for a moment, she tottered over to Ms. Claire.

And then after picking Sherry up and placing her on her lap, she gestured for Liza to come over as well.

Liza’s tail wagged slowly as she walked towards Ms. Claire. *freewetnovel.com*

She seemed happy, which showed that she was quite fond of her now.

“Liza. Can you understand what Sherry is saying?”

“Yes, I can.”

“I see. In that case... Sherry?”

“Kyau?”

“What did Sherry say just now?”

“She is asking for food.”

“Kyau.”

Apparently, Ms. Claire wanted to test to see if Liza could understand Sherry.

It seemed obvious enough to me, what Sherry wanted. Still, Ms. Claire asked Liza to tell her what Sherry had said.

Liza answered confidently, and Sherry nodded.

Hmm... I had thought that Sherry was asking about why Ms. Claire had called her... I suppose I was wrong then.

I still have a ways to go...

Besides, didn't Sherry just eat?

“I see. Now, Sherry. Tell me how you feel about me, Mr. Taumi and Liza.”

“Kyau... Kyau! Kyu...kyau!”

Ms. Claire nodded at Liza before turning to Sherry and asking the next question.

Upon hearing the words, Sherry barked once at Ms. Claire, and then she was about to turn to me, but paused once as she looked at Leo.

Then she barked a little weakly and then louder after looking at Liza.

So, what had she said this time...? It sounded like she had called Ms. Claire her master.

But I didn't quite catch what she said about Liza and me.

Chapter 350

Ms. Claire Could Talk With Sherry

"Liza. Did you understand what Sherry said just now?"

"Yes, I did. Uhh... She called you master. And papa is someone she has to obey. And I'm...her junior?"

"Yes. So you do understand. Good for you."

"Hehe..."

When Ms. Claire asked her again, Liza was able to answer her perfectly.

As for saying that she had to obey me... I suppose it was because of Leo. She had glanced at Leo once, and Leo had nodded.

And Liza was her junior... Was this because of the order that they arrived?

Or was it because she saw Liza as being the same as her, because she was beastkin... In any case, Liza was actually older than Sherry.

Ms. Claire must have understood Sherry as well, as she nodded with satisfaction at this and patted Liza on the head.

She did it just as I had told her. I suppose it was because she was used to petting Sherry.

Maybe Ms. Claire was more interested in that, then whether or not Liza could talk with Leo and Sherry?

It seemed she was more pleased by that part, anyway.

“Well, you finally got to pet her ears, Claire. And we have confirmed that she can talk to Sherry and Leo.”

“F-father...”

“Indeed. But it will be quite convenient to have other people who understand what Sherry is saying.”

“Now that I think about it, I didn’t know that you could understand her too, Ms. Claire...?”

“We-well, Mr. Takumi...”

Mr. Ekenhart teased his daughter when he saw how pleased she looked.

And while Ms. Claire moved her hand away in denial, it was not very convincing.

Well, Ms. Claire was always full of curiosity, so it was no surprise.

In any case, Mr. Ekenhart and Sebastian were quite satisfied, now that we knew that Liza could talk with beast type monsters. But Ms. Claire...

In general, Sherry was seen with Tilura and Leo a lot, so I hadn’t even noticed this about her and Ms. Claire.

After all, I could only vaguely understand...

And so when I asked, Ms. Claire blushed a little and then started to explain.

Apparently, after she had named Sherry, and made her a familiar, they started to be able to understand each other.

When bringing her back from the forest, she had only been able to guess based on gestures, so it clearly happened after that.

Sebastian then explained, rather eagerly, that depending on their bond, a master and familiar could know each other's will.

So this suggested that Ms. Claire might have a strong affinity with fenrirs.

However, it would not be like that with all monsters. So it was rather complicated.

In any case, if Sherry wanted to say something now, we wouldn't have to go through Leo or Ms. Claire. Liza was now a third option.

Though, since Liza was with me a lot, it would probably just be better to ask Leo.

"I wish I had such a cute familiar like Sherry..."

Tilura muttered a little sulkily as she hugged Leo.

Previously, when Mr. Ekenhart was teaching us to fight, she had also said that she wanted a familiar. Perhaps she had hoped that this would happen soon...

"Tilura. You want a familiar? What kind?"

"Ummm... A cute one!"

"I see, I see. Well, you will have to become much stronger for that to happen."

"I know! That's why I've been training!"

"Mmm. Good. Familiars don't obey those who are weak. Sherry is an exception, because of Leo... However, you should become stronger and find a familiar that is worthy of you."

“Okay!”

Upon being asked by her father, Tilura had immediately replied that she wanted a cute familiar.

Well, when looking at Sherry and Leo, I could understand why she wanted a cute familiar. But were there such monsters out there?

If she got another fenrir, it would be cute...but if it was a different monster. All I had seen were trolls and orcs. And they were like pigs that walked on two legs.

And while I'm sure that some people might think differently, I doubted that Tilura would find them cute.

Besides, they also had to be quite intelligent, so it would be difficult.

In any case, after hearing Mr. Ekenhart's words, Tilura was now completely focused on her sword training.

She no longer seemed sulky at all, so you could say that Mr. Ekenhart had succeeded in distracting her.

Well, Tilura was not too different from her father and sister... It would be a terrible thing if her curiosity got the better of her, and she went off to the forest alone in order to find a familiar.

As both Ms. Claire and Sebastian looked relieved, I noticed that Mr. Ekenhart seemed to be thinking about something. And then a mischievous smile appeared on his face.

What was he thinking about?

While it was clear that he doted on his daughter, and would not put her in harm's way, this was still the person who had made me fight in the store as part of my training... So it was possible that he might do something similar to her.

...Well, I just hoped he wouldn't do anything that would make Ms. Claire furious at him again.

