

Beloved Dog 351

Chapter 351

I Made More Herbs

After telling everyone that Liza was able to communicate with Leo and Sherry, and Tilura had become distracted with her sword training, Mr. Ekenhart, Sebastian and Ms. Claire left the dining hall.

They probably had a lot to discuss regarding Range village.

However, when Ms. Claire was about to leave, she turned to Tilura and said, ‘While your sword training is important, so are your studies. Don’t forget that.’ And so Tilura’s enthusiasm weakened, and she was eventually pulled away by one of the maids.

I felt bad for her, but it was true.

Sherry had also ran after Ms. Claire... I suppose she did not want to be with Tilura while she studied.

Leo’s eyes seemed sharp as she watched Sherry go.

What was she thinking?

When it came to Sherry and Liza, she seemed to take an educational interest in them...

In any case, now that everyone was gone, I went to my room in order to leave the list there, and then I went to the back garden with Leo.

“Papa. Are you going to do magic again? ...Here, mama?”

“Wuff-wuff.”

“That’s right. Because we don’t have enough of them. If I don’t make a certain amount every time, then I will have to do it every day. ...Leo, you look awfully comfortable?”

“Wuff.”

I went to a spot near the temporary herb garden and prepared to use Weed Cultivation.

Liza was riding on Leo’s back, and using her hands to scratch Leo’s neck as they watched us.

Apparently, Leo was telling Liza where to scratch.

“Uhh... Ah, sorry. It’s fine. Please don’t mind us...”

I said to the butler who was observing the herbs, and I moved a short distance away.

That being said, I was also going to leave some of the herbs I made today, so that they could be observed, and so I didn’t want it to be too far. Or it would be more work for the person who had to watch them.

And so I started making the new herbs about three meters away.

Yesterday, I had made a little too much, so I would be careful to not do that today...

“It really is strange. They just grow out of the ground so suddenly.”

“Indeed. I was very surprised when I first saw it. There isn’t even a seed, and yet it grows.”

As Liza petted Leo and watched, her eyes grew wide and her ears twitched.

I was used to seeing it now, but it was probably quite a sight for most people.

Plants growing without seeds... I would not have believed it myself, back when I was in Japan.

“Now, I better pick some of them.”

“I’ll help!”

“Thank you.”

“Wuff...”

I had made enough to send to Ractos and also some for medicine.

Since there was some from yesterday, I would have quite a lot to hand over to Nick, but I was sure that Mr. Kalis would manage it just fine.

Besides, it was better to have some extra in stock.

When I moved towards the herbs in order to pick them, Liza jumped off of Leo and volunteered to help.

While Leo had lowered herself to make it easier, it was still impressive to see her jump like that. But I suppose Liza was just naturally athletic because she was a beastkin.

Leo also sounded a little disappointed now that the scratching was over.

Don’t worry, I will scratch you later as well.

“Well then. Can you pick them like you did yesterday? Ah, not all of them. Only half of them.”

“Oh, okay!”

I had taught Liza and Mr. Ekenhart how to pick the herbs yesterday.

And so I told her to leave half of them, and then we started picking.

In spite of just learning yesterday, she could already do it perfectly. She sure was a fast learner... I thought as we worked.

“Well, let’s go back to the mansion now.”

“Are you going to make more medicine? I can’t wait!”

“You really enjoy it, huh?”

“Yes. Because it requires a lot of strength!”

“I see.”

“Wuff-wuff.”

I swiftly used Weed Cultivation to dry the herbs, and then we returned to the mansion.

Apparently, Liza was looking forward to making the medicine again.

Leo was nodding understandingly at her reason for it... I suppose Liza really enjoyed exercising.

Leo would also feel stressed if she couldn’t go out on walks and move around. So she probably related to how Liza felt.

Perhaps she could not move around much in the slums, as people would pick on her. And she might also be holding back here as well.

Perhaps we could find a way to let her exercise during our sword training with Mr. Ekenhart... It was probably too early for her to learn how to fight, but she could still run around I suppose.

I thought of such things as we entered the house, and searched for Milina, so that I could give her the herbs that would be turned into medicine.

Chapter 352

Milina and Nick met for the first time

“Ah, brother! Hello!”

“Hello, Nick. And there you are, Milina.”

“Yes, master. I thought it was almost time to concoct the medicine, and so I made preparations.”

As we walked through the mansion, Ms. Gelda notified me that Nick had arrived.

He was waiting in the drawing room, and so I went there in order to give him the herbs for Mr. Kalis. And that’s when I saw that Milina was with him as well.

Apparently, she had been expecting me and prepared the pestle and mortar.

“...Who is that?”

“Ah, you haven’t met him yet, Liza. Uh, this is Nick. He delivers my herbs to Ractos.”

“Nice to meet you. I’m Nick!”

“...I am Liza. Nice...to meet you.”

Liza had looked quite happy to see Milina in the drawing room, but she then froze up upon seeing Nick.

Considering everything that had happened, it was no surprise that she was wary around strangers.

While Nick wasn’t as bad as he used to be, he still looked a little intimidating... Even when he smiled.

I was going to introduce Nick, but was a little troubled.

It would take too long to explain how he got here...and so I just said that he was the guy who delivered the herbs.

“Master... While I might not be the best person to say this, I had no idea that you would bring in such a person...”

“Uh, Milina? He isn’t another apprentice of mine, okay?”

“Aye. I’m more of a devoted brother to him!”

“Devoted... I don’t know if I would agree with that...”

I wish they would not say such strange things in front of Liza.

“Brother...apprentice... Well, I suppose that puts me above you then!”

“Uh, I don’t think it’s a contest...”

“So you’re his apprentice... Which would make you like an older sister!”

Apparently, Milina felt that she was above a younger brother. Nick agreed. But I didn’t see how any of this was important.

Besides, I had hired Nick first... And he was also older than her.

In fact, Nick was probably older than me... Though I had never asked about his age.

“Nick, I thought that was Ms. Lyra?”

“Mr. Takumi and Mr. Nick, please don’t call me that.”

“Oh, Ms. Lyra!? Since when were you...”

“I came just now. Gelda told me that you arrived, so I have brought Mr. Takumi’s herbs. Here they are.”

Previously, when Nick was here, I had seen him talking with Ms. Lyra. And he had called her ‘older sister.’

I had no idea why he called her that. Regardless, while we were talking, Ms. Lyra suddenly appeared from behind.

I hadn’t sensed her presence at all...

But in spite of my surprise, she answered calmly and handed me the bag of herbs.

“Th-thank you.”

“Sister Lyra!”

“Hehe. And how are you, Lady Liza?”

I calmed myself and accepted the bag of herbs and thanked her.

Nick and Milina were also surprised...

Only Leo and Liza looked normal. In fact, Liza seemed to be relieved to see another familiar face, as she then rushed towards her.

I suppose since she had given her a bath yesterday, Liza was now quite fond of her.

Ms. Lyra hugged her gently and patted her on the ears.

“Uh, in any case... Nick. Here are the herbs for you to take to Mr. Kalis. ...Though, I heard that you have plenty in stock?”

“Aye, we do. While sales are still good for the herbs, it’s true that we have plenty left. Really, I wish more people would buy your herbs instead of that other stuff!”

“No, no. It’s important that his other products sell as well. Besides, if there are still herbs in stock, that means there are fewer people who need them. We should be happy that not as many people are sick or injured.”

“That’s true, master!”

As Liza and Ms. Lyra looked like they were having fun, I handed the herbs to Nick.

I also asked him about how much stock he had left, and it turned out that they still had quite a lot.

And while that may not sound good for business, it was not a bad thing for the residents of the town.

Besides, it wasn’t just herbs that they sold. And Mr. Kalis would not be able to continue his business if he only sold herbs...

It wasn’t a herb store.

Milina was very happy when I said this.

...Indeed, she felt strongly about helping people, and that’s why she wanted to learn about medicine.

Though, it felt awkward to have both Milina and Nick treat me with such respect.

Considering how life had been before coming here, I just could not get used to it...

Chapter 353

I Used Magic for Concocting

“Hah... While I feel a little tired, I suppose we should start.”

“Yes! After hearing about how you think, I feel much more passionate now!”

“Uh, it was not exactly a rousing speech...”

“Medicine! Medicine!”

“Wuff-wuff!”

After talking to Nick and handing him the herbs, it was time to start concocting the medicine.

As Mr. Kalis had plenty of stock, I would likely not see Nick for a few days now.

I confirmed that with him before he left.

And then we started putting the herbs into the bowls.

Liza and Leo were excited and humming with anticipation.

Was it really so fun to do?

I had heard Liza’s reason...but I suppose that Leo also liked to use magic.

Judging by her reaction when I had asked her before about the different kinds of magic she could use, it seemed quite likely.

“You’re not going to use magic, papa?”

“Hmm? Indeed... Maybe if I can use some of the magic I learned yesterday.”

“Yay! We can see your magic then!”

“You are going to use magic, master?”

“Maybe. I suppose that it would be good for practice.”

“Wuff? Wuff-wuff!”

Just as we were about to start crushing the herbs, Liza looked at me with a puzzled expression.

Leo was getting ready to use her wind magic in order to help us, and it seemed like Liza was wondering why I wasn’t doing it as well.

Yesterday, Ms. Claire had taught me some magic to create a wind.

And since Liza had been watching us, she knew that I could use magic that would help with making the medicine.

And so I told Milina that I would use magic, and then I moved next to Leo and was about to do it, when Leo said something.

She said that since she was going to do it, my magic was not needed here.

As if I was trying to steal her job or take this opportunity for her to look good in front of Liza...

“Leo. Why don’t you do the wind in Liza’s direction then? And I will help Milina. It’s so I can practice, so don’t mind me. Besides, wouldn’t it be easier to do it in one direction than over a wide area?”

“Wuff... Wuff-wuff. Wuff.”

Uh, doing it over a wide area is actually no trouble whatsoever. However, if you must practice...

Leo sighed as she moved towards Liza. And so I decided to use my magic to help Milina.

“So mama is going to help me. Thank you!”

“Wuff!”

“Thank you, master.”

“Well, I’m not used to doing it, so I might not be able to adjust it much... But just tell me if it is too strong.”

“Of course.”

While Leo was nodding confidently, I was a little anxious.

After all, I had only just learned how to do it.

And while I shouldn’t have a problem with activating it, I didn’t know if it would go well.

In any case, Milina was looking at me with expectation, and so I had to do my best.

Besides, I was also trying to improve with magic for my own sake, so this practice was important.

“Wooo...wou.”

“Aha! That’s too strong, mama!”

“Wuff-fuf. Wou.”

“Yes, that’s perfect, mama!”

Leo activated her magic first and created a wind.

However, she might have been a little too enthusiastic, as the wind was very strong.

Liza had let go of the pestle and covered her ears as she protested. And so Leo quickly made the wind weaker.

So she was able to adjust the strength even after activating it... That was impressive.

Well, I had never tried adjusting magic after activating it, so I wasn't sure if I could do it.

But for now, I decided to focus on making it weak so that I could help Milina.

Uh, extend my hand over the mortal and gather the magic energy like yesterday...

“Wind Elemental Air.”

“Wow... That's great, master!”

“Haha. It does seem to be the perfect strength.”

After focusing on it, I activated the magic.

A gentle breeze then blew from my hand and towards Milina.

She seemed very amazed but continued to move her hands.

Good, now things should go smoothly.

“Hah...hah... Are you almost finished?”

“A little...more... Please keep it going, master.”

“Hah...hah...tsk.”

After using the magic for some time after, I found myself panting as I sent air towards Milina.

She was looking at me with a worried expression as she ground the herbs, but I wasn't able to answer.

While activating the magic was simple enough, I didn't realize how difficult it was to maintain it.

We were just about to finish the second batch, but it would probably be best to take a break before doing the rest...

So this was what it was like to use magic for an extended period of time...

While it didn't feel like my body was running low on magic energy, I was starting to feel out of breath, and I was sweating like I did during sword training.

Even if it wasn't magic that used a lot of energy, perhaps maintaining it was similar to exercising.

I see...this was the effect magic energy had on the body then...

In this world, magic energy and the body seem to be closely related... Even Sebastian had said something about how the herbs affected magic energy.

Now that I felt this, there were things that I didn't think about before that I understood a little now.

So...it was a good experience, I guess?

Chapter 354

Continuous magic was difficult

"I did it!"

"Wuff!"

On the other side of the table, after getting help from Leo, Liza had finished her second batch of medicine, and threw her hands up with joy.

Unlike Milina, she was able to mix it with the pestle without resting, and was still full of energy afterwards.

Leo was the same. She had been using magic for just as long as me, but showed no signs of being tired.

I suppose that was the difference between humans and Silver Fenrirs... Or maybe it was just me?

“Master...please...continue for a little longer!”

“Hah...got it...”

“...Good. That should do it. It’s ready!”

“Hah... Finally...”

Milina looked quite tired after continuously mixing the medicine, and I wasn’t much different.

If anything, I probably looked like I was more exhausted than her.

Finally, Milina mixed it firmly for the last time, and declared that it was finished.

At the same time, I stopped the magic and put my hands on the table and let out a sigh.

While my muscles didn’t feel sore in the same way that I did after training, I was still out of breath and sweating. It was similar to how I feel after running.

Also, it had been mentally draining.

So even if I was satisfied at having been able to activate it, it would definitely take some practice to be able to hold it for a long time...

“Phew. Thank you, master.”

“Hah... You did well, Milina.”

“Good work, papa. ... You’re sweating a lot!”

“Wuff-wuff. Wuff.”

“Haha. Yes, I am. It was my first time using magic for this long. I didn’t realize that it would be so tiring.”

As I rested and caught my breath, Liza approached me and was surprised to see how tired I was.

Leo looked exasperated, as if to say that this was why I should have just left it to her.

Well, you should have told me if you knew it was going to be like this...

But I suppose Leo wouldn’t have thought to warn me, since it was so easy for her.

“...Should I have not told you to do it, papa?”

“Not at all. I learned something new about magic today, thanks to you.”

“Really?”

“Yes, really.”

“Oh...okay.”

Liza looked a little worried when she saw me, but I assured her that I was fine, and thanked her.

There was no need at all for her to feel bad about it.

And so I smiled and nodded at her, and she finally looked relieved.

“Mr. Takumi. I’ve prepared some tea, so please rest for a while.”

“Ah, Ms. Lyra. Thank you. Liza, Milina. Let’s take a break then.”

“Yes!”

“Wuff.”

After we were finished with the medicine, Ms. Lyra brought some tea for us.

This was perfect, since I had sweated and was now thirsty.

And so I thanked Ms. Lyra and told the others to rest.

They nodded and we all sat at the table.

While Milina was obviously tired, Liza and Leo were still full of energy... Was this because they were young...?

But I wasn’t that old yet...

I thought of such things as I took my seat, and then Ms. Lyra brought me a towel.

“Mr. Takumi, you are sweating. ...Excuse me.”

“Huh? Oh...uh...”

I had thought that she was just going to hand it to me, but instead, she started wiping my face with it.

As it was so sudden, I could not avoid it, and the soft towel covered my face.

Milina and Leo were looking at me with amusement, though Liza seemed more puzzled than anything.

“...Sorry, Mr. Takumi. But you were just so sweaty...”

“No... Uh, thank you.”

After wiping my face to my neck thoroughly, Ms. Lyra stepped away as if remembering herself, and suddenly looked embarrassed.

While it was a little embarrassing, it had felt nice, and so I thank her.

“Little Liza! I thought about it all night! How about this!?”

“!”

Suddenly, the doors burst loudly open, and Ms. Anne shouted as she stormed in.

Everyone froze in surprise as she entered.

Except for Leo...who must have sensed her presence. But Liza’s tail was standing up straight and her ears were held down as if she were afraid. Leo glared at Ms. Anne when she saw this.

Liza...she must have been both surprised and scared...

I would have to be careful about making loud sounds.

“Hah...”

“Ms. Anne... And Ms. Claire?”

As Ms. Anne stood there, with her arms spread out and a triumphant smile on her face, Ms. Claire appeared behind her. She sighed and held her head as if she had a headache.

It was understandable, as barging into rooms and shouting was not very well-mannered of Ms. Anne.

“What do you think? Now little Liza will not be afraid of me!”

She said proudly.

And so I looked at Ms. Anne closely to see what had changed.

There were two things.

Ms. Anne’s hair... The tips of her hair rolls, that is to say, the tips of her drills, looked very strange now.

Ms. Anne... I don’t know about this...

Chapter 355

Ms. Anne Was in a Strange State

“Uh... Ms. Anne?”

“What is it, Mr. Takumi?””

“What is that?”

“This? Surely Liza will not be scared if it is like this? Now I will be able to touch her ears and tail!”

“Hah...”

Milina and Ms. Lyra were horrified as they looked at the transformed Ms. Anne.

However, it seemed that she did not understand their reaction, as she continued to look very proud as she answered my question.

I now realized why she had shut herself in her room for so long. I suppose she really wanted to touch Liza’s ears.

But as Ms. Anne stood there, as if nothing at all was wrong, Ms. Claire touched her temples and sighed.

I understood her perfectly.

“Now, Liza! You do not have to worry about being stabbed anymore! There is no need to be afraid!”

Ms. Anne said as she began to walk towards Liza.

As for Ms. Anne’s hair rolls, they were no longer sharp at the tips, as they had been tied into bows.

While it must have taken some skill to do that, I wondered why she didn’t just change her hairstyle completely.

...Hmm. And I had thought that Ms. Anne wasn’t this stupid.

Had I been wrong?

What if she was actually... No, it would be rude to think about it.

She is just someone who thinks differently from most... Yes, that is what it was.

But it helped explain why the people investigating the count had trouble knowing what to do with her, and had left her in Mr. Ekenhart's care.

"Wow, amazing...!"

"It is, isn't it?"

"Can I touch it!?"

"Yes, of course. But you will have to let me touch your ears too."

"Oh, okay!"

"Uh, are you sure, Liza?"

"Hmm. As long as she doesn't do it so it hurts...then it's fine!"

Surprisingly, Liza seemed to like the new hairstyle, and all fear was gone and replaced with awe.

Children really were amused by the strangest things...

Even Leo, who had been glaring at her at first, looked surprised now at Liza's reaction.

"Uhh... In that case, Ms. Anne. When touching Liza's ears..."

If Liza didn't mind, then there was no need to stop her.

In spite of the odd direction, she had changed the shape of her rolls for Liza's sake. And so I suppose...I should respect her effort?

"Gently, gently. If you yank them too hard, they will unravel."

“Okay...gently...”

“Now, this one.”

Ms. Anna and Liza were facing each other as they sat in their chairs.

I stood behind Liza, while Ms. Claire, Ms. Lyra and Milina watched us from a distance.

For some reason, everyone seemed quite nervous...

Only Leo was lying down and relaxed, clearly feeling that there was no reason for alarm.

So, Ms. Anne's hair would unravel if you pulled them too hard...

And while Liza gently touched Ms. Anne's hair rolls, Ms. Anne stretched out her hand towards Liza's ears.

“Ahahaha! So soft.”

“Isn't it? I have the best hair, after all. Your ears aren't bad either.”

I could hear the others sighing with relief at this. Why had they been so nervous...? It's not like these two had been fighting before. But I suppose it was difficult to know what would happen when it came to Ms. Anne.

I had known that she was troubled about being feared, but I didn't expect it to come to this.

And so it was no wonder that they felt a little anxious as they watched. But I wasn't sure why Milina was there with them, as she had only come to the mansion recently.

“Hah. I am quite satisfied now. Liza, I hope you will allow me to pat you on the head in the future?”

“Yes, okay. And can I touch your hair?”

“Of course. It would not be very fair for me to keep this all to myself. I hope you understand what a great honor it is to be able to touch such wonderful hair?”

“Yes!”

“...It seems like Liza has become quite used to Anne.”

“Indeed. But I think that she’s always had a friendly personality. She is just cautious around people she is meeting for the first time, due to some bad experiences.”

And so for a while, Ms. Anne and Liza touched each other’s hair and ears and laughed.

There was no sign of the awkwardness from yesterday, they had broken the ice and seemed quite close now.

Well, Ms. Anne wasn’t a bad person, when she wasn’t thinking about terrible things... So, I suppose it was fine?

Chapter 356

Today’s Training Was Different

After Ms. Anne and Liza had finally become comfortable with each other, Milina and I worked together to finish the last of the medicine.

Liza also helped, and Ms. Anne would watch and cheer her on.

Though, as Leo was also close by, she still kept her distance...

As for Ms. Claire, she was relieved to see that Liza was doing well, and so she went back to speak with Mr. Ekenhart.

I suppose she had also wanted to monitor Ms. Anne, who had not been seen for a while.

Even though she thought of doing strange things, at least she was not hurting anyone. We were all relieved.

After the medicine was completed, we all rested again and drank some tea. And then it was announced that lunch was ready, and so we moved to the dining hall.

I asked Ms. Lyra and Milina to take the medicine to the kitchens for Ms. Helena.

And yet by the time that we arrived in the dining hall, Ms. Lyra was already waiting there... Were there secret passages that I wasn't aware of?

"The food was delicious again."

"Yes. We must be grateful of Ms. Helena. Liza really enjoys the meals."

After everyone had gathered, and we finished eating lunch, we drank some tea and rested with Mr. Ekenhart.

Liza had eaten everything with a big smile, and then the dessert was served, and she would feed some to Leo and eat some herself.

Sweet food was still new to her, and just like Ms. Claire, Tilura and Ms. Anne, she liked it very much.

Ms. Anne still had her hair tied in bows, and she watched Liza eat with great interest.

Sebastian had been quite surprised when he saw Ms. Anne's hair, but Mr. Ekenhart barely even noticed the difference.

After all, he didn't care much about his own hair or beard.

Or maybe he was too busy thinking about other things.

"Now, it is time for Mr. Takumi and Tilura's training. Today, it will not be magic, but swords."

“Indeed. As for magic, Ms. Claire was able to teach me some of the basics yesterday. So I would like to go back to swords today.”

“Mmm. About that. There is something I have been thinking about for some time, after seeing the way that you move... I wanted to do it yesterday, before we decided to focus on magic.”

“Really? What is it?”

While I was still continuing my mental training, Mr. Ekenhart would not be here forever, and I wanted to train with him directly while I could.

Mr. Ekenhart nodded at my enthusiasm and explained that he had an idea.

I hoped it wasn't something like before, where I would be thrown into actual combat...

“Yes... I will tell you the details once we are outside.”

“Father. I hope you are not thinking about anything strange?”

“Indeed, I am thinking of nothing of that sort! At least for now. ...There is one thing that I will have to discuss with Sebastian later.”

Ms. Claire was just as suspicious as I was of her father.

But Mr. Ekenhart averted his eyes and denied it. However, while Ms. Claire didn't hear the next thing he muttered under his breath, I did hear it.

Regardless, Ms. Claire did not look very convinced.

Something he had to discuss with Sebastian...

I didn't know what he was talking about, but it couldn't be too bad if it went through Sebastian... At least, I hoped so.

After all, Sebastian would sometimes do things for the fun of it... And he had also been involved the time I was made to fight in the store.

Well, I was getting anxious now.

However, was Tilura involved as well?

But Tilura was still young, and surely they wouldn't put her in any danger. Besides, she was his daughter, so he couldn't be reckless.

I told myself this, even if I was still a little nervous about it.

"Well, in any case... It concerns your training, Mr. Takumi. ...Sebastian."

"Yes."

"Bring that thing I mentioned...and the spare. Also, call Nicholas."

"Certainly."

"Nicholas?"

As Mr. Ekenharted sweated under Ms. Claire's glaring eyes, he called out to Sebastian.

Sebastian bowed at his request and then left the room. What was that?

And to call Nicholas... The guards had never been involved with our training before.

They were surely busy with their own duties, and had no time to be teaching an amateur like me.

"Well, he has a little to do with this too, one could say. He will be fine as an example."

“Example... What are you going to do?”

“You will find out when we go out into the garden. It is nothing strange, like Claire is thinking. Just think of it as a way of exploring your potential, Mr. Takumi.”

“I see. Very well.”

I didn't know how Nicholas was related to this, but if it would help me become stronger, then I would go along with it.

After all, I did feel that I had improved after being in an actual battle, and perhaps it would help with my mental training as well.

Of course, I wasn't too focused on becoming strong. But I had to fight orcs in Range village once... And so I wanted to train so that at the very least, people would not have to worry about me.

Hi. Thanks for reading. Just wanted to let you know that future chapters will be posted on Tiger Translations again after this chapter, so please don't be alarmed.

Chapter 357

A Familiar Weapon

“Your Grace, sorry to keep you waiting.”

“Mm.”

After tea time was finished, Mr. Ekenhart, Tilura and I went out into the back garden in order to train.

Leo came as well, while Liza and Sherry rode on her back.

Furthermore, there was Ms. Claire, who probably wanted to monitor her father, and Ms. Anne who seemed to be merely interested.

A table was prepared for those who just wanted to watch us.

A few minutes later, Sebastian also arrived with three of the guards, that included Nicholas.

Aside from Nicholas, the others were the guards that had accompanied Mr. Ekenhart when he came to visit.

...They were all wielding weapons that I thought looked familiar, but I was not sure.

Nicholas had two on his belt, and the others had one, which they held with two hands.

Somehow, it seemed like they were holding expensive treasures, as they were very careful.

“Thank you. Now, give one to me, and one to Mr. Takumi.”

“Yes... Here.”

“Thank you. ...Mr. Ekenhart, what is this?”

Mr. Ekenhart took one and then instructed them to give one to me.

In this world...I had seen quite a few western-looking swords, but this one was quite different.

Though, it was something I had seen in images and videos plenty of times before coming here.

Because it was a weapon from Japan.

Usually, they were seen as works of art, and even in their sheaths, they were narrower than the sword I normally used.

Its length was...about seventy or eighty centimeters, and the entire thing was about a meter.

So it was overall small and lighter than the short sword I had now.

“You look a little surprised? This is called a katana. Though there are other names depending on the length and shape. Interesting, isn’t it?”

“Ah...yes, it is.”

Mr. Ekenhart thought that I was surprised because I was seeing it for the first time, but it wasn’t the case.

I was surprised because it was familiar to me.

Well, at this point, I was much more familiar with my short sword, but it was still something I knew well.

Everyone in Japan would have seen it once.

“Though, there are not many of these made. But perhaps these would suit you better.”

“Do you think so?”

“Yes. While you have not seen you fight much, I have seen you during the mental exercises. When you are attacked by an enemy, you don’t just block it with your sword, but you try to dodge it with your whole body.”

“Uhh...I suppose. I think I hesitate to block it, because I am worried that the sword might break.”

During the mental exercises, when I imagine that an enemy is attacking...especially if it is an orc, then I generally try to dodge it.

The reason was that I knew that orcs were stronger, and I also didn’t want to damage my weapon...

In fact, this had actually happened to me while fighting an orc.

After that experience, I only blocked attacks when I had to, and would otherwise try to dodge it.

And Mr. Ekenhart had noticed this while watching me.

“Well, when swords hit each other, there are always going to be cases when one of them breaks... That’s how swords work. Ideally, you would break your opponent’s sword and deal a lethal blow.”

“As for that...it seems like it would require a lot of strength.”

“Indeed. It is not something that can be solved in a day.”

Breaking an opponent’s sword... Just how much strength would that take? The sword would also have to be heavy and durable.

A few days or even months of training would not be enough to gain that much arm strength.

And that was even when I had herbs.

“The sword that you have been using up until now was made for a brute force style. And so it is very durable and heavy. But this sword...this katana, was made differently. It is very thin, light and sharp. Instead of blocking attacks, you can focus on dodging and cutting the enemy.”

I understood what Mr. Ekenhart was saying.

As swords were supposed to be durable, they used a lot of metal and were quite thick.

That made them heavier and slower to use.

You would still be able to block a little with the katana, but it was more brittle and would break easily. I had seen it happen many times on tv.

Though, it shouldn’t be possible for someone to grab and snap it in their hands.

The difference was that a normal sword would get chipped if you hit a rock, but a katana would shatter.

That being said, it was still metal, so it wouldn't be too weak.

You just had to be a little more careful, which did match my style.

“That being said, you will not be able to make good use of it immediately either. Aside from dodging, the swinging is also different.”

So saying, Mr. Ekenhart unsheathed the katana that he was holding. I understood why they were seen as works of art. It was definitely a beautiful blade.

Chapter 358

Katana Demonstration

“In any case, you should watch it being used first. And after testing both swords, you can decide which one you wish to train with. Nicholas.”

“Yes!”

So saying, Mr. Ekenhart called Nicholas.

Nicholas then came forward and unsheathed the swords on his hip.

One was about the same length as mine, and the other was shorter.

He was a dual wielder...

Apparently, he was going to face Nicholas in order for me to see the differences in fighting style between the two types of swords.

While I had seen such swords being used in period dramas, this was the first time seeing them in person.

“Now then... Remember that this is just a test.”

“I know. I’ll be careful so that he is not terribly injured.”

“I will fight as if this was practice, Your Grace.”

Mr. Ekenhart and Nicholas then faced each other and raised their weapons.

Sebastian then stood between them, and they took a few steps back.

Mr. Ekenhart held his katana straight in front of him.

It was the same way that he held his usual sword.

As for Nicholas, the blade in his right hand was held above his head, while the other shorter one was held in front of his stomach.

I suppose he was going to swing down with his right hand, and then slash with his left after the first attack was dodged or blocked?

Unless something unexpected happened, anyway.

But this was a demonstration, so they probably wouldn’t do anything too surprising.

“Now...begin!”

Sebastian shouted after moving away, and then Nicholas charged towards Mr. Ekenhart.

Mr. Ekenhart just held his sword and watched him calmly.

“!”

“Hah...mmph!”

“Ggg!”

“Stop!”

“...”

It ended in an instant.

Just as I had expected, Nicholas had swung down with his right hand. Mr. Ekenhart then swiftly moved back and dodged the attack.

Nicholas seemed to have expected him to move to the side or block it, and so he had to take a step forward in order to slash with his other blade.

As the blade in his left hand was shorter, the time it took for him to close the gap would be the deciding factor.

Just as Nicholas has started to move forward, Mr. Ekenhard started to swing upwards as he moved forward.

Now the gap had been bridged again, Mr. Ekenhart swung down over Nicholas, just as he tried to slash at him.

The blade hit hard into Nicholas’s left shoulder, but it was the blunt side of the blade. Still, it was enough to stop him.

Nicholas could not move due to the pain, and he fell to his knees as Sebastian stopped the fight.

Tilura and I were too surprised to say anything.

“Are you alright, Nicholas?”

“Yes. While there is pain, my bones are not broken.”

“I see. Well, Sebastian would have been very angry if I wounded you.”

Then Mr. Ekenhart offered a hand to Nicholas.

Nicholas accepted it as he got back to his feet. His face was a grimace because of the pain, but he confirmed that he could move his arm just fine.

It had all happened so fast, that I couldn't see it clearly. But I suppose Mr. Ekenhart had turned the blade at the last moment.

Otherwise, Nicholas would have been gravely wounded...

“You still have a long way to go, Nicholas. While your strategy was good, you didn't think about what to do if I dodged it.”

“...But no one else can move with that speed, Your Grace. Of course, there is still room for me to improve...”

“Well, Leo is actually much faster.”

“We should not be compared to a Silver Fenrir...this is about battles against humans...”

“Wuff?”

As he helped him up, Mr. Ekenhart told Nicholas what he had done wrong.

But as Nicholas said, there was likely no one else who could move at that speed.

It was not as if Nicholas's movement had been slow. I had barely been able to follow him myself.

Even if he wasn't good at gathering herbs, he knew how to wield a weapon.

Leo seemed to have heard her name come up in their conversation, as she was now looking at them questioningly.

It was just an example Leo, you don't actually have to do anything, okay?

I glanced over to Liza and the others as well. Ms. Claire was her usual self, but Ms. Anne had a surprised expression.

I suppose it was because Ms. Claire had seen them fight before.

Liza was petting Leo's neck, and did not seem very interested in the new swords.

"Well, there it is. That is how you use these blades, Mr. Takumi."

"Um...I'm sure that was a wonderful example, but... I don't really understand."

"Neither do I!"

Mr. Ekenhart then turned to me and Tilura as if he had just given us a thorough lesson. But to be honest, I didn't really learn anything.

I could not move at the same speed as them.

Not only was it over so suddenly, but it was clearly a battle between very skilled people. As beginners, it was not reasonable for us to understand everything after just that...

Chapter 359

Katana Training

"Hmm, you think so? But I was moving rather slowly..."

“Your Grace, I think you must teach them the basics of the katana first. Perhaps they do not even understand the difference.”

Mr. Ekenhart was puzzled at our reaction.

And so Sebastian explained it to him, while Tilura and I nodded in agreement.

“I see... Very well. In that case, we’ll start with the grip. Unlike with swords...”

He finally decided to teach us the basics, so we could actually feel the difference for ourselves.

Of course, the gripping and swinging was not all that different. However, whereas a short sword was usually used to push while cutting, a katana was pulled while cutting.

That was why the blade was curved.

Also, what we were being taught was not the same swordsmanship taught in Japan, but the kind that was developed in this world, and so it actually suited me quite well.

I didn’t know if it was because of where I’m from, or that the katanas in this world just happened to be a good fit for me, but by the time the sun was starting to set, even Mr. Ekenhart was impressed with how I was able to swing it.

Though, I was still not able to move in the way that they had during the test battle.

I suppose it was because I had the groundwork, after training so much with the other sword.

If I hadn’t trained at all, it would have taken a lot longer.

As for Tilura, while she tried using it a little, she did not take to it at all. And returned to her usual sword immediately after.

Mr. Ekenhart seemed a little shocked that Tilura had no intention of learning to use a sword that he had mastered.

Apparently, Mr. Ekenhart was actually better with the katana, and that was what he used in more serious fights.

“Still, I am surprised that these exist in this world.”

“Hmm? So you knew about them, Mr. Takumi? Well, you did seem a little surprised earlier.”

After the training was finished, I sheathed the katana again and wiped the sweat on my face with a towel.

Not just this mansion, but Ractos and Range village were all built in a western style.

And the culture was also similar as well, so I didn’t think there would be a katana here.

All of the swords I had seen in Ractos were also western.

“Yes. In the world that I came from...it was more common. Though, by the time I was born, they had fallen out of use...”

“I see... So they do not even use such a wonderful blade...”

Well, we had guns now.

And while I wouldn’t say that blades were never used as weapons, most of the time it was just knives.

In the first place, there were laws that meant you couldn’t have guns and swords without special permission.

“I was just surprised because I hadn’t seen a sword like that since coming to this world.”

“I see. Hmm... In that case... Sebastian?”

“Yes. Lady Claire and Lady Anne have gone back into the house. I will tell Lady Tilura. As for Leo and Liza...”

“You can let Mr. Takumi handle that. Mr. Takumi, could you tell Liza and Leo to go back into the house?”

“Uh, of course...”

I didn’t know what was going to happen, but Mr. Ekenhart had called Sebastian as if he had an idea.

And so I did as he said and had Leo and Liza return to the house where they would wait in the dining hall until it was dinner time.

Liza looked a little worried, but Leo pulled her away by the sleeve... Liza seemed to find it amusing to be held up by the sleeve, and she started to laugh.

And then Tilura returned to the house with Sebastian.

As for the butlers who were watching the herbs, they also moved some distance away so that they could not hear anything.

What was so important about what we were going to discuss?

Surely nothing concerning the swords was that important...

“Regarding these blades, not a lot is known about them. If you are the head of a noble family, then some knowledge is passed down to you. But I cannot tell you about it.”

Well, it certainly did sound important.

Even the heads of noble houses did not know much, and could not share what little they had.

“So, it is kept a secret then?”

“Yes, that is right. I feel bad for saying this after showing them to you, but it concerns the royal family and the kingdom.”

“I see... So I suppose they are made in this country then?”

“Well, that much is obvious. The swords are made in the capital and nearby areas. The blacksmiths that make them then sell them to the royal family and nobles.”

Hmm. I had wondered if they were made in some eastern country and then they were imported, but they were actually made in this kingdom.

In that case, either someone with the skill came here, or they developed it on their own.

The latter seemed unlikely, but perhaps there was some reason for it.

In any case, if he could not talk about it, then there was no point in asking.

After all, knowing too much could put a target on my back, or put Mr. Ekenhart in an awkward position.

Chapter 360

I Talked With Mr. Ekenhart

“Does Ms. Claire and the others know about it? It seemed like Sebastian did.”

“Claire knows about the swords, though not in detail. But neither does Nicholas, and he uses one. It is the same with Sebastian. Also, they know not to talk about it with others.”

I suppose only the head of the house was allowed to know more about them then.

Sebastian was the butler who was closest to Mr. Ekenhart, but even he did not know much more than Ms. Claire.

“But why does Nicholas have one if it is something that is supposed to be secret?”

I could understand why Mr. Ekenhart had one, but it seemed odd that one the guards should as well.

“Because I gave it to him. Their existence is not what is secret. Besides...it is not a very good one, and so it is allowed. As long as you are working for a noble.”

“I see...”

Now that I think about it, the sword that Nicholas had been holding was a little different from Mr. Ekenhart’s.

Though...I could not really explain what it was.

There was a difference in the way that the blade reflected the light, and the hilt and sheath were less decorated.

I suppose as a noble, Mr. Ekenhart’s one was decorated that way.

In any case, this meant that Nicholas’s two swords were slightly inferior in quality.

Though, he talked and acted like a warrior, so it suited him.

“But wouldn’t that mean that I couldn’t use one? I am no soldier...”

“Mmm... It’s just that I thought it would be a better fit for you... And I think there is someone in the royal family who would agree.”

“And who is that?”

“I cannot tell you just yet... Regardless, I think you should at least continue to train with it. Though, obviously, you cannot take it out with you to town, where others might see it.”

“Ah, I understand. I will continue to use my other sword when leaving the mansion then.”

I wasn't a soldier, and was only learning to use a sword for self defense purposes, and that was not enough of a connection to the duke to be permitted to wield a katana.

Mr. Ekenhart seemed a little awkward, but said something about how he thought someone in the royal family would approve.

Who was he talking about?

Regardless, I promised that I would not use it when leaving the mansion.

I did not want to do anything to negatively affect his position.

After all, I was very indebted to him.

Besides, I was satisfied with my old sword. And so even if this new one felt nice in my hands, it didn't mean I had to change it right away.

“Thank you. I will see to it that you are given permission eventually. And I can also talk to them about you... And maybe I can tell you more as well. I hope you don't mind?”

“If you trust them, then it should be fine.”

“Yes, there is no need to worry about that. I think they will take a liking to you for different reasons when it was me. And there shouldn't be any problem with getting permission for the sword.”

“Ah...”

Mr. Ekenhart was confident that this person would take a liking to me after he explained everything.

I didn't know what this person was like, but I decided to just leave it all to Mr. Ekenhart.

Knowing him, there was a part of me that felt a little anxious...but he was still the master of the house.

“I will leave it to you, Mr. Ekenhart. But can you tell me something about this person?”

“Hmm... Well, they might be a little strange, but not malicious. I cannot really tell you much. But they are one of the reasons that I started to trust you.”

Mr. Ekenhart sounded awkward when he talked.

Also, I wondered what he meant when saying they were one of the reasons that he trusted me?

But I suppose he couldn't talk about it... Perhaps it had something to do with the Gift?

In any case, he would tell me about it eventually, so I didn't need to know about it for now.

After all, they say that curiosity killed the cat, so it was best to not pry.

That was enough about the swords. But I did have one other question before we returned to the house.

“I understand. By the way...we are in the middle of growing the herbs over there...”

“Yes, they seem to have grown even more. We should ask the people who have been watching them.”

“Yes.”

And so we moved our attention to the herbs as we walked over to the garden.

As it was starting to get dark, we could not see it as clearly as earlier, but you could still see that the herbs had grown.

It wasn't as dramatic a change as yesterday, but it was still abnormal.

"How are Mr. Takumi's herbs?"

"Your Grace. We have been watching them closely, and they continue to grow at an alarming rate."

Mr. Ekenhart started talking to the butlers who were watching the herbs.

As the butler said, the herbs had already grown enough to be picked.

"Hmm. In that case... What about the new herbs that were made?"

"They are over there. The new herbs have grown even faster. As you can see, they have not only grown larger, but have multiplied."

"It sure looks that way."

A short distance away, there was another patch of land where I had made some new herbs with Weed Cultivation.

Just like yesterday, they had multiplied to nearly double the amount.

Hmm...?