

Beloved Dog 361

Chapter 361

We Inspected The Herb Garden

“Mr. Ekenhart. The new herbs are the same as yesterday.”

“It seems that way. In other words, the ones made directly by Mr. Takumi grow quickly and multiply. While we will have to continue to observe the ones that increased yesterday, the newly grown ones seem to grow at a slower pace and multiply less...”

“I suppose the speed and amount change depending on whether they were made with Weed Cultivation directly.”

The ones I made directly would die after a day.

While the others would increase about 1.5 times which was still pretty good. So the herbs that I made could continue to multiply then.

Though, I didn't know if the cycle would continue forever...

In any case, to put it simply, if I grew 10 Ramogi, they would double to 20 in a day, and then would be 30 by the second day.

So we could make quite a lot in a short time.

And if we got the timing right with picking them, then we might get as much as 50 in three days.

And of course, I could continue to use Weed Cultivation in the meantime.

“Well, you could say that the initial goal had been met then.”

“Yes. I suppose we will still have to see if the quality is the same, though.”

“Indeed. That can come later.”

There was actually one other thing that I wondered about.

It was if I could also use Weed Cultivation to change their state.

But I thought that it was quite likely.

According to Isabelle, part of the ability of Weed Cultivation was being able to grow plants anywhere at any time.

While there were limitations with the plants, if I could do it anywhere, then I should be able to change the state of a plant, even if I didn’t make it with Weed Cultivation.

But I would have to test it later.

As we wanted to check the quality, we should continue to see what would happen if we continue to grow them.

“Well, let us return to the house then.”

“Yes. Ah, sorry. If you see that they start wilting, just leave them like that. I want to see what will happen.”

“Certainly.”

“And don’t worry too much about it.”

“Yes, of course.”

As the butlers might panic again if the herbs died, I assured them that it was perfectly fine.

Now we could find out if the same thing would happen to the new herbs.

It was important that the butlers didn't see any outcome as a failure.

I didn't want them to be anxious in the morning and feel like they have to apologize.

And so we left the herbs to them, and I returned to the house with Mr. Ekenhart, and we went to the dining hall.

As we were quite late, Leo and Liza were probably getting hungry and impatient.

"Hmm... Mr. Takumi, I still can't say that I feel the effect strongly...but I feel slightly better."

"You do?"

After dinner, we all drank the medicinal wine together.

Of course, Leo, Sherry, Liza and Tilura drank grape juice instead.

Liza had taken a liking to it, and was just as excited as she was for dessert.

I smiled and nodded at her while answering Mr. Ekenhart.

"Yes, Mr. Takumi. I do feel better when waking up in the morning. Though...perhaps I am just imagining it."

"As for me, I am quite sure that my hair has become smoother. It is probably what allowed me to restyle it in a way that is not frightening."

So Ms. Claire felt better when getting up in the morning...I suppose that meant the medicinal wine had helped her sleep better.

That was a similar effect to the herbs I made before. And while it could just be a coincidence, the wine was probably more healthy regardless.

As for Ms. Anne...she was suggesting the wine had a good effect on her hair... But I don't think that should be the case...

Well, perhaps your hair was connected to your health...but I wished she wouldn't blame my wine for her new hairstyle...

"Well, I think it is a bit early to be feeling any effects... But I am glad to hear that you are all well."

"Yes. Due to my age, I have felt my strength weakening for some time, but I also feel a little better after I started drinking it."

"Hahaha... Indeed..."

Sebastian, who had been standing by, also started to insist that the wine was having a positive effect on him.

...I did not feel it was worth believing though.

Sebastian had been present during the process of making it, and had tasted the herbs. That might have affected his perception.

Also, he was starting to talk like those infomercial people...

The ones who try to trick old people into buying supplements that will cure them...

Obviously, it wasn't the same thing, but it was such an uncanny resemblance that I had to chuckle.

Chapter 362

We Thought Of Ways To Sell The Medicinal Wine

"We still have to see the effects first, but we're thinking about producing it in Range village as well."

“Indeed. Well, I doubt people would buy it immediately...”

“Really? I think it could sell immediately, once people know it’s effective?”

Mr. Ekenhart was thinking about making the medicinal wine in Range village as well.

But unlike the other wine, the color and taste were not particularly great.

“Well, I think it won’t sell quickly, because the effects are not felt quickly.”

“I see. It would be easier to sell if the customer could tell it was effective immediately. In that case, we will have to think about how we sell it.”

“Indeed. We can’t just put it on store shelves... We need to get people to drink it. People who can feel the effects and spread the word.”

“Yes. And then more people will buy it.”

Since I had been thinking about infomercials, perhaps we should do something similar.

Have people test it and advertise.

However, this was no guarantee that it would sell well.

“However, there is still the possibility that people won’t buy it.”

“Why do you say that?”

“Well, it’s a drink that makes you healthy. So it is not the most obvious change. Besides, people would find it hard to believe if you told them that someone drank wine and became healthy...”

Especially if the person who drank it was already healthy to begin with.

It would at least be more convincing if someone who was not well, though not quite sick either, drank it.

However, if there was someone like that, then it would be much better to not rely on medicinal wine, and take the herbs or some other medicine instead.

Besides, we still didn't know to what degree it improved your health.

It was possible that the effects would be very subtle.

"Hmm. It is difficult then. We will have to discuss the matter carefully. But we will have an answer for it by the time we start making it in Range village."

"Yes. Well...we could always just sell a small amount for a low price."

"Hmm. In other words, do not make too much... That could make it seem more valuable."

"Exactly. Though, we will have to think about how much... But if the quantity is low, then people might think it is more effective."

Humans were weak to things that were in limited quantities... Or at least, that had been the case in Japan. So it could prove to be true here.

Of course, I did not want to deceive anyone, so we would only do it after we knew that it was effective.

"First, instead of focusing on profits, we should focus on gaining the trust of customers. Once everyone believes in the product, then we can produce more and know that it will sell."

"Care more about future profits than present ones. Not many people think like that. But I am glad that you do. Yes, once we are sure of what we have, we shall do as you suggest. Not just for me, but it could benefit future generations of this house as well."

This was no surprise, as the duke was one of the most successful of the nobles when it came to business.

Ms. Claire listened to the conversation with a serious, thoughtful expression. As for Ms. Anne, she looked like she didn't understand what we were talking about.

It was the same with Liza and Tilura.

Well, none of this would come to anything if the medicinal wine wasn't effective.

"Mr. Takumi, you swing the katana like this. You are not pushing like with a sword, but pulling."

"Yes!"

After dinner and tea, I went out into the garden with Tilura and Mr. Ekenhart, and it was time for our training.

Mr. Ekenhart was now teaching me how to swing.

Even if I couldn't take the katana outside, there may be an occasion to use it. That's what he said, anyway.

...I sincerely hoped that was not the case.

Liza, Leo and Sherry stood by the side and watched us.

It was probably terribly boring to watch, but Liza looked amused.

Or was she just entertained by seeing how I was struggling?

As the blade was curved, I did know that it was best to pull for cutting. But its weight was so different that it was hard to adjust...

“Phew... Hah...”

“Good. That should be enough for today.”

“Yes, thank you.”

“Thank you, father!”

As the training was quite different from usual, my muscles were quite sore.

And so I immediately ate some recovery herbs as I caught my breath.

As I had only used an ordinary sword up until now, I realize that changing weapons really took a toll on your body.

That being said, they were still similar weapons. So this was probably quite mild, all things considered.

I was amazed at people who could use weapons that were completely different. Like a sword and spear...

Chapter 363

I Checked The Employer List

“Mr. Takumi. I would like some of those herbs today as well...”

Said Mr. Ekenhart, after I had caught my breath.

Did he mean the herbs that help you sleep?

Otherwise, it would have seemed like a dangerous request. And so I chuckled and started to take them out of my bag.

“Still, you shouldn’t rely on them too much.”

“I understand that... But I just have trouble getting up in the morning. And this way, Claire will stop complaining about it.”

“Well, it’s true that she will probably prefer it if you came down for breakfast in the morning...”

I warned Mr. Ekenhart a little as I gave him the sleeping herbs.

Apparently, one of his reasons for wanting them was so that he could wake up for breakfast and avoid Ms. Claire being cross with him.

He was weak when it came to his daughter, so I was sympathetic.

“Once I get the feel for waking up early, I will try to do it without relying on the herbs.”

“...I’m not sure it’s a matter of getting a feel...”

It was true that it would take some effort, but he was making it sound like it was part of his sword training.

Of course, there had been many times when I was so tired and found it hard to get up, so I understood him.

In any case, I hoped that things would work out for him, and we separated

“I’ll leave her to you then, Ms. Lyra and Ms. Gelda.”

“Yes, Mr. Takumi.”

“Certainly.”

“Go on Liza. It’s for your bath.”

“...Oh, okay.”

We returned to our room, and then I told Liza to go with Ms. Lyra and Ms. Gelda, who had been waiting by the door.

While Liza hesitated for a moment, it was not as if she disliked the two maids or taking a bath. And so she went off with them willingly.

She just still felt a little anxious about leaving me and Leo. But I was sure that she would be perfectly fine soon enough.

“In the meantime...”

“Wuff?”

“I’m talking about the documents that Sebastian left with me. I need to look through that list.”

“Wuff!”

And so I sat down at my desk in order to read through the list.

Leo had looked at me questioningly, and so I explained it to her as I picked up the pile of papers.

For some reason, she barked enthusiastically and began to look over my shoulder as if it was her job as well.

...Uh, Leo? Can you even understand this? Also, this is kind of uncomfortable.

“Leo, wait a second. ...All right. That’s better.”

“Wuff.”

As I was hunched over while Leo looked over my shoulder, I straightened my back first and then moved the chair so it was in front of Leo.

“Hmm... Most of them are people who work here. ...Obviously, I can’t hire all of them, but I would like some of them...”

“Wuff-wuff.”

If they worked in this house, then they would be used to me and Leo.

I wouldn’t have to explain anything about Weed Cultivation, which would make things easier.

Even Leo was barking in agreement.

“And over here, we have people who live in Ractos...I see. ...Now that I think about it, how are we supposed to handle the Weed Cultivation matter?”

“Wuff?”

I was now looking at the section with names that I did not recognize.

These were people who lived in Ractos or surrounding villages, and their ages and experience varied.

There were men and women. Some were currently working other jobs and some were quite elderly.

And as I looked through them, I wondered how much I was expected to explain.

Leo seemed to be wondering about this as well.

While I’m sure they had been carefully selected, so there wouldn’t be anyone suspicious. I wasn’t sure if we were allowed to tell them everything...

It seemed like it would be best if word about me coming from another world did not spread. Of course, most people probably wouldn't even believe it.

Though, being associated with the duke would probably make it more credible.

In any case, I had already been told to not talk about my Gift too much. So I was not sure if I should tell them.

Though, since we would be making fields of herbs, they might have to know part of it...

"I'll have to talk about it with Sebastian tomorrow. Sorry, Leo. ...Uh..."

"Wuff."

After that, I took out a blank sheet in order to make some notes.

I also wrote down whatever questions that I would want to ask about the information provided.

After all, there were so many people, so I had to write it all down or I would forget.

...At my old job, I had been rebuked by my superiors so many times... Because they would not take notes and then they would blame it all on their subordinates when they forgot something.

"I don't want to be like them... There. Now, let's continue, Leo."

"Wuff."

After finishing writing everything down, we continued to look at the list.

I was starting to feel nervous again about hiring multiple people, but Leo's presence helped me calm down a little.

Perhaps that was why she was looking at the list with me? Well, it was probably just her curiosity.

In any case, thanks, Leo...

“Hmm... Uh, this... Could it be?”

“Wuff?”

I discovered it just as I started to read the final page.

Each page had about three people on it, and contained various information on them, just like a resume.

And on the bottom of the last page, I saw a name that was quite familiar to me.

I thought it was a mistake at first, and so I rubbed my eyes. Even Leo tilted her head as if puzzled.

Chapter 364

I Taught Liza to Knock

“...No, it’s not a mistake... What is she thinking? Is her name even allowed to be here?”

“Wuff-wuff.”

“I don’t think it’s as simple as it being a good opportunity... Well, I will have to ask Sebastain. No, maybe I should ask her directly?”

The name that was written there was Claire Liebert.

She was the daughter of the duke. So it did not make sense for me to become her employer.

I didn’t know what led to her name being added, but I would have plenty of questions to ask tomorrow.

Leo barked behind me. It seemed like she thought it was a good idea.

“Haah... But why... Could it be...”

“Wuff?”

This morning, Ms. Claire had looked fairly strange when she saw me accept the list.

Perhaps she was expecting me to comment on this.

In any case, Mr. Ekenhart had in turn been watching Ms. Claire with amusement. So it’s possible that they all knew.

“I will have to ask all of them then.”

“Wuff.”

“I’m back!”

“Lady Liza. You have to knock when entering a room.”

After I had finished writing all my notes, the door burst open and Liza stormed into the room.

She had returned from her bath, so her hair was damp and steam was rising from her head.

Ms. Lyra followed after her.

It was good that she was full of energy, but it’s true that one should knock before entering someone’s room.

Though, it did show how much trust she had in us.

“Indeed, Liza. It is important to knock when entering a room.”

“It is?”

“Aye, it is. You wouldn’t want to give someone a shock, would you?”

“...Oh, okay. I’ll knock next time then!”

“That’s a good girl.”

“Hehe.”

It was best to tell them of such things when they were young.

Liza nodded understandingly and promised to knock next time.

I patted her on the ears and she laughed happily. She really did remind me of a cat sometimes...

Well, she knew nothing about knocking or manners in general, so it was no wonder.

I wasn’t even one to care about manners that much, but I had to teach her the bare minimum I suppose.

...Besides, it might be a good time for me to learn as well.

“Thank you, Ms. Lyra.”

“Not at all. She was very well behaved once again.”

“I see. Good for you, Liza.”

“Ehehe. Sister Lyra and Sister Gelda are very nice, so I like them!”

“Hohoho. Thank you, Lady Liza.”

She really had become fond of Ms. Gelda and Ms. Lyra then.

And Ms. Lyra seemed very pleased to hear it.

Now that I thought about it, Ms. Lyra had also come from the orphanage... She had even known Milina.

That was probably why she was so good with taking care of younger children.

And it was not hard to see why children would like her.

“Well, good night, Mr. Takumi.”

“Yes, thank you. Good night.”

“Good night, Sister Lyra!”

“Wuff.”

“Yes. Hehe.”

Ms. Lyra bowed and then left the room.

“Well, it’s my turn to go and take a bath then.”

“See you later!”

“Wuff.”

I got up from my chair and stretched before picking up a change of clothes.

I had been sitting for some time, so my limbs felt a bit stiff.

And so I left Liza with Leo and headed for the bathing room.

...I guess Leo was not going to accompany me if I didn't make her.

But I was just glad that she didn't hate it as much as before.

After my bath, I returned to the room and picked up Liza, who had fallen asleep next to Leo, and placed her on the bed without waking her. And then I went to sleep.

I just hoped she would not have sad dreams this time.

—

“Hehe...”

“...Hmmm?”

I woke up to the sounds of someone chuckling nearby.

My eyes opened and I looked to the side and saw that Liza was laughing as she slept.

So she had a pleasant dream after all.

“...Wuff.”

“Good morning, Leo.”

“Wuff-wuff.”

Leo was already awake, and she had her head resting on the side of the bed.

She opened her mouth wide and let out a yawn.

I suppose she woke up early in order to look at Liza?

“Mmm...hmm?”

“Good morning, Liza.”

“...Good...morning...papa...mama...”

“Wuff.”

When I sat up, Liza opened her eyes.

There were no traces of tears as she rubbed her eyes this time. She then got up and greeted us.

Leo wagged her tail and barked in reply.

Relieved that she was smiling, I then got out of bed in order to prepare for the day.

Chapter 365

Telling Ms. Anne About ‘Weed Cultivation’

“Good morning, Mr. Takumi, Leo and Liza.”

“Morning, Tilura. You look well today.”

“Wuff-wuff.”

“Good morning sister Tilura!”

“Yes, I feel great! You seem well too, Liza!”

“Yes!”

Just as I was starting to prepare for the day, Tilura came to the room.

She was cheerful as always, and Liza was happy to see her.

They really seemed to get along.

“Good morning.”

Tilura helped Liza get ready, and then we went down to the dining hall.

Ms. Claire, Mr. Ekenhart, and Ms. Anne were already waiting at their seat.

Ms. Anne had the same ribbon hair-style as yesterday... She really did not want Liza to be scared of her, I suppose.

The food was promptly served and we all ate.

“Ah, that’s right. I was able to look through the list yesterday.”

“Oh, is that right? Any opinions on it?”

“Yes, was there anyone that you were interested in?”

“!”

“Hmm?”

I decided to bring up the list, as I had some questions to ask.

Mr. Ekenhart immediately looked amused, but Sebastian's expression did not change as they turned to me.

Ms. Claire's hands stopped as she was eating, and I saw her flinch... She was definitely concerned about my reaction then.

Ms. Anne seemed puzzled by this, while Tilura, Liza, Leo and Sherry were only focused on their food and had no interest in our conversation.

"Indeed... I do think that I will hire a few people. But can I ask a few questions first?"

"Yes, please do."

"Well..."

I took out my notes and started to question Sebastian.

Occasionally, Mr. Ekenhart would add something, and my questions would be answered.

As for Ms. Claire, she did not take another bite of her food and seemed to be waiting anxiously...

I did not want to prolong this state she was in, but there was one other thing I had to ask first.

"Also... Yes... I was wondering about that other thing, concerning me."

"You, Mr. Takumi... I suppose you are referring to the method in which the herbs are created."

"Yes. I understand that we do not want it to be known far and wide. But to keep it completely secret..."

"Indeed... Your Grace?"

“Hmm. Well, it’s a good opportunity.”

As my ability was very useful, it had been decided to limit the number of people who knew about it.

But it didn’t seem right to not tell people that I would be working with. Besides, it might lead to a lack of trust.

Well, I was sure that Sebastian and the others didn’t expect that level of secrecy to begin with.

That was why the list contained information about whether a person was tight lipped or liked to spread rumors.

After I asked this question, Sebastian turned to Mr. Ekenhart.

Mr. Ekenhart then chuckled and turned to Ms. Anne.

Ms. Anne…?

“She is with us now. You cannot hide it forever. Besides, it will be easier in the future if she knows.”

“That is true. Are you fine with that, Mr. Takumi?”

“Telling her? If that is your decision, Mr. Ekenhart, then I think it is fine. As long as she is in your charge, then she cannot do anything troublesome.”

“Yes, exactly.”

Apparently, he wanted me to tell Ms. Anne about my ability.

I had not told her about it up until now. I had always kept things vague.

That being said, I might have let it slip, and she could have made some guesses based on things that the others had said.

Only Sebastian would have avoided that.

I suppose it depended on how interested Ms. Anne was whenever we talked about my herbs.

Well, she could not do anything while the duke was monitoring her. And even if she tried, we could easily put a stop to it. So I didn't mind telling her.

Though, I still felt a little anxious due to how unpredictable she could be...

"Anne, do you have a moment?"

"What is it, Your Grace?"

"It's about Mr. Takumi..."

After coughing, Mr. Ekenhart turned to Ms. Anne.

She was quite surprised, as her attention had been fixed on Liza and Sherry, but she quickly composed herself and answered him with a serious expression.

Clearly, she detected that this was important.

Ms. Claire seemed a little annoyed that the conversation was still not about her, but she made a show of being composed as well.

"Mr. Takumi, you say? What could it be... Oh, has he finally agreed to marry me?"

Ms. Anne, you still haven't given up...

"That is not it at all. It is about Mr. Takumi's special ability."

“Oh, that. He has a great deal of knowledge about weeds or something? Oh, and he can be friends with Silver Fenrirs... Yes, that is quite special.”

“...Uh, no, that’s not it.”

Apparently, Ms. Anne hadn’t noticed my Gift at all.

Well, I suppose it meant I had been good at hiding it then. Or she was just stupid.

Perhaps she had been too busy with being scared of Leo, fawning over Sherry, and trying to get Liza to like her. So she wasn’t paying that much attention to me...

Chapter 366

I asked questions about the people I’d be hiring

“I see... So that’s what it is.”

“Mmm. Currently, this is only being disclosed to be people related to this house. And so you must not tell anyone else without Mr. Takumi’s permission.”

“I understand. Indeed, what I heard just now is not something that I can talk about lightly.”

“Yes, that’s right.”

While Ms. Anne would occasionally ask strange questions, we somehow managed to finish explaining to her about my Gift.

She was quite surprised at first, but then she recalled everything she had seen and heard up until now, which seemed to satisfy her.

“Now, it will be much easier to talk about Weed Cultivation in this house. So, Mr. Takumi. You had some questions?”

“Yes. About whether I should tell the workers about my ability.”

“I don’t think it is necessary for you to tell them everything that you can do with your Gift. But perhaps if it is just that you can make some plants grow...”

“You mean, I shouldn’t tell them that it is a Gift?”

“Well, it would make matters more complicated... Besides, some people don’t even know about Gifts.”

Now that we had told Ms. Anne, there was no one in the mansion who did not know about it, so as long as there were no guests, then we didn’t have to be careful about what we said.

Still, having to hide it from people I hired would be troublesome.

“If people do not know what a Gift is in the first place, it would be much simpler to explain it by saying you simply had a strange ability.”

“I suppose that would be simpler... But would they believe it?”

“Well, you have the backing of this house. So they will have to believe it. Besides, we wouldn’t hire anyone who would be that suspicious to begin with.”

“Mr. Takumi. In the information on the list, it should say whether or not the person has knowledge about medicine and herbs.”

“Ah, yes. It was written there. Most of the people did not have knowledge at all...”

But what did that have to do with whether or not I told them?

As we were going to be growing herbs and might have to make medicine as well, it seemed like it would be preferable for them to have some knowledge about it.

“If they are too knowledgeable about herbs, or are pharmacists, then they might start rebelling against you, Mr. Takumi.”

“Rebel?”

“Yes. You have an ability to grow herbs and then change them into a potent state.”

Normally, you would have to wait for the herbs to grow. And then you picked them and let them dry. It was a long process.

But I had the useful ability of being able to do it all quickly.

I had assumed that it was a useless ability at first, due to the name. Which was rather embarrassing to me now.

“You will understand, as you are studying as well, but a physician cannot learn everything in a single day. And yet someone who has little knowledge like you is able to grow herbs, and process them without trouble. How do you think they will feel, considering all of the hard work and effort they have gone through?”

“Uh... I suppose it wouldn't be surprising if they felt resentful.”

They might wonder what it was they had been spending so much time on.

If you were at school or work, and you worked hard to see results, only to see someone do better than you in spite of not putting any effort into it, then you would feel some jealousy.

Though, when I was in school, I was too busy thinking about my part-time job or Leo. And once I started working full time, there was so much to do that I didn't even have time to think.

“And so we decided to hire people with less knowledge. Besides, the actual work will involve the management of the herbs. So it is not necessary for them to know so much. The exception is the concoction of the medicine... But for now, it will only be simple ones, so it should not be impossible for them to do it.”

“I see. If all they are doing is managing, gathering and storing, then they don't need extensive knowledge.”

Even the concocting was just mixing and drying. It took more physical strength than brains.

If there was one thing they had to learn, it was how to pick the herbs. But that was quite easy.

In the future, we might want to grow herbs and plants that require more knowledge. But I myself had a lot to learn before that happened.

“Also... We are searching for someone who knows about farming, and can inspect the condition of fields.”

“The condition?”

“Yes. While your herbs grow and increase at an alarming speed... We want to know what effect it has on the land. Currently, we are also keeping an eye on the soil, and there have been reports of small changes.”

“What kind of changes?”

“Well, I am not quite sure. I had someone a little more knowledgeable inspect it, and so I will tell you once I know more.”

Chapter 367

I Asked About Ms. Claire

Indeed... There was the matter of the soil as well... I had not been thinking about that.

I was only thinking about how they would grow, and the speed.

It was quite obvious now that I thought about it. The nutrients within the soil were not infinite.

Otherwise, there would be no need to use fertilizer.

The land had to be cultivated, and through adding nutrients that plants needed, the crops would be able to grow... Such things had to be considered.

There were also pests. It would be important to have someone who was knowledgeable about growing plants.

I didn't want a situation where I grew too many herbs, and ended up making all of the land around Range village unfertile.

I would not know what to say to Mr. Hannes if that happened.

And so I was grateful towards Sebastian and the others when it came to such matters.

Though, without the help of the duke's house, this whole plan would not have even been put into action.

In any case, I was quite satisfied now. And so it was time for the final question.

Ms. Claire also looked like she was tired of waiting.

"Uhh, this is the last one but... Why is Ms. Claire on the list?"

"I"

I asked and Ms. Claire straightened her posture with a look of total alertness.

"About that..."

"Well, it is no wonder that you would question it."

Sebastian turned to Ms. Claire, and Mr. Ekenhart nodded with an amused expression.

Ms. Clarie now looked a little apologetic.

“Lady Claire, so this is what you have been planning?”

“Uh... Well, I had no choice really. If Mr. Takumi is in Range village, he will be away from me. So if I go as an employee...”

“...I’m not in any position to be hiring a highborn lady... Am I?”

Ms. Claire seemed even more uncomfortable now that Ms. Anne was staring at her.

Indeed, if I went to Range village, we would be quite far apart, which would mean we wouldn’t be able to see each other.

Uh...I suppose it would be a little sad.

But regardless, I still thought that I wouldn’t be able to hire someone who was the duke’s daughter.

Or any noble for that matter.

But as I wasn’t sure, I turned to Mr. Ekenhart.

Though, he was the kind of person who would allow anything if it was amusing...

And both he and Sebastian seemed like they wanted me and Ms. Claire to...

“Well, it would normally be out of the question. Impossible... I don’t know. It could go either way.”

“...It could?”

“Mmm. Claire is my daughter and part of the Leibert family. But she isn’t the master yet. So to be precise, she is not a noble. Because the title is only given to the head of the house...of course, many people think of the whole family as being nobles. So even if it is incorrect, other people see anyone directly related as nobles.”

“I will one day inherit my fathers title and become a countess. But until then, I am technically a commoner. Lady Claire is the same.”

Mr. Ekenhart explained that it was unusual but not impossible.

According to his explanation, which Ms. Anne added to, only the head of the house was a noble. But as most people saw the entire family as nobles, others general treated Ms. Claire and Ms. Anne that way.

Well, I suppose it was because they weren’t going to be rude towards someone who was the future head of their house.

Besides, if you did something to hurt their family, then the head of the house would probably retaliate in some way.

And so with all of that considered, it was probably easier for most people to just look at the whole family as being nobles.

This mindset had become so common, that people forgot that it wasn’t technically the case, I suppose.

Regardless of the facts, it still seemed too much to call them commoners.

“So that is why others see Claire as a noble. In terms of the law, there should not be a problem. Even though it would still...look strange.”

“I see...”

When we had gone to Ractos, Ms. Claire had been treated as a noble.

Because of this, it would normally be unthinkable to hire her.

Though, that had also been the time when we encountered Nick. And it had occurred to me that for someone who antagonized a noble, they were rather lenient with him.

I had not been in this world for very long, and knew little about their society. And I had not really questioned it...

The way that people think and the laws were different depending on where you were.

And so I had just accepted it.

But after hearing this explanation, I realized that it was probably because Ms. Claire was technically a commoner, so he didn't receive a more severe punishment.

...Though, Mr. Ekenhart might have been angry enough to insure a harsh punishment. He was not at the mansion and didn't know.

Well, perhaps just by being part of the duke's family, it was still treated a little differently.

In other words, they had just been arrested as brutes who were attacking commoners.

Though, aside from Nick, they also had other charges against them, and so they were probably being judged harshly now.

When I thought about it like that, Sebastian had also been bluffing a little when he threatened him at Mr. Kalis's store.

If he ran away or damaged the herbs, then he would be... Well, it would surely not be the case.

Chapter 368

I Suggested Joint Management

"Hiring her is not the problem. It is what people will think. It is possible that it could hurt the reputation of this house.

"...Because she was hired by a commoner?"

“That is one reason. While the people of Range village and the other people you hire will know... We could make up an excuse for others.”

“An excuse?”

“Mmm. Like say that she is just visiting. Besides, since it is this house that will be selling the products, you could say that she is monitoring.”

“So you will hide the fact that she is hired.”

“Yes. While we have a responsibility to report to the royal family with the truth, it doesn’t have to be the case with others.”

“I see...”

According to Mr. Ekenhart, since we would be working in Range village, there would not be many witnesses to see her and know the truth.

Rumors might still spread, but Sebastian could do something about that.

I was relieved to know that if I did hire her, it would not cause any trouble for their house.

Well, maybe there would still be some.

But in any case, I thought that Ms. Claire should do what she wants, if there is no problem.

“That being said...she would have to return to the mansion every few days. I have left this house and the surrounding lands to Claire’s care. And she cannot do everything in Range village.”

Mr. Ekenhart seemed quite positive about the idea now.

I see... Since she had duties in the mansion, she could not stay in Range village the whole time.

Besides, it would probably affect the servants if she was absent for so long.

I thought about such things and looked at Ms. Claire. She seemed a little uncomfortable.

She had looked relieved a moment ago when Mr. Ekenhart said it was technically fine, and then she looked excited again to see what my decision would be.

I felt bad for making her wait so long and go through those different emotions.

But judging by how Mr. Ekenhart looked amused, it was possible that he was drawing it out on purpose.

Sebastian was usually the one to explain everything, but he was taking the reins now... But maybe it was because we were talking about nobles.

Sebastian looked a little disappointed by this, but I ignored him.

“Besides, I would rather have her hired by someone I trust, than a complete stranger. If there is any problem, I will deal with it myself.”

Mr. Ekenhart continued.

“Very well. If there is no problem, and everyone is satisfied with it, then that’s what we will do.”

“Really!?”

I decided to end Ms. Claire’s suffering before Mr. Ekenhart could continue talking.

She suddenly sprang up at these words and smiled happily in my direction.

“However...”

“What? Is there something else?”

“Do you have conditions, Mr. Takumi?”

“I don’t know if I’d call it conditions, but... I want this business of growing the herb fields to be a collaboration with Ms. Claire. I suppose...it just seems a little absurd for me to hire her.”

“Collaboration?”

“Oh?”

Perhaps I was being stubborn, but I just could imagine it happening that way.

It was also because I felt like I was greatly indebted to her.

And I already felt anxious enough about having to hire other people.

“I’m still not used to the idea of hiring people. So I was hoping you could give me some advice so that we could be partners instead.”

“Hmm. I see. That is an interesting idea.”

“...Your Grace. That would solve a multitude of problems.”

“Indeed. If they were partners, she would actually be in Range village as a monitor. And no one will say anything if she isn’t being employed.”

“Partners... Mr. Takumi and me as partners... It does seem a little early...but not a bad idea...”

I honestly told them how I felt.

Ms. Claire ordered servants and was well educated, so I expected her to be able to help me when it came to dealing with my employees.

There was so much that I didn't know yet. But with her...it should be much easier.

In fact, I would probably end up relying on her for most things.

Mr. Ekenhart and Sebastian looked at each other, and after talking, smiled.

I see. So it would help with their reputation if she wasn't working under me.

That showed that there would have been problems after all... Even if Mr. Ekenhart said it was fine and that he would deal with everything.

As for Ms. Claire, for some reason, she was blushing and muttering to herself.

It seemed like she was surprised by this suggestion, but I couldn't hear what she was saying.

It made me think I had accidentally said something strange again.

Chapter 369

I Decided To Go Shopping

"In that case, I shall also go as a partner! Surely having someone like me there will make the venture even more of a success!"

While Mr. Ekenhart and Sebastian discussed it, Ms. Anne suddenly got to her feet and made this declaration.

...What the hell was she talking about?

And what had been going on in her mind...

"No, Anneliese. You are not the head of your house yet, and cannot make such decisions. Count Barsler...your father, is still on shaky ground. Who knows what will happen to him? I cannot let you act in such a situation."

Mr. Ekenhart suddenly became very serious as he calmly told her that it was completely impossible.

Of course, it was... This wasn't her land, and she wasn't even lord of her own house yet.

Besides, Count Barsler and Ms. Anne's fate was not even decided. Even I knew that this was ridiculous.

This was still her reeducation period. She had more important things to be thinking about.

"Yes, that should do it."

"Wuff."

Now that Ms. Anne's ridiculous proposition was promptly dismissed, there was a need to talk about the matter with Ms. Claire in more detail.

Also, we would have to go to Ractos, and so I went to my room in order to prepare.

Since I had already given some herbs to Nick yesterday, there was no need to use Weed Cultivation today.

The reason I was going to Ractos was Liza.

Though she had spent a few days in the mansion, she did not have enough clothes.

It was no wonder, as we had found her in the slums.

When I asked her about it, she said she had no belongings in the place where she had lived. The place did not even have a roof.

Up until now, she had worn some of Tilura's old clothes. But there was a problem.

Because Tilura was human while Liza was beastkin.

Even if the size was similar, Liza had a tail.

And so we wanted to buy some clothes in Ractos that she could wear in spite of having a tail.

It wasn't just clothes, but there were other things she needed as well.

Just as I had to go shipping after coming to this mansion.

Thankfully, I was being paid for my herbs, so I had plenty of money.

This time I would be able to buy things without having to borrow money.

...It would look pretty terrible for a father to borrow money to buy something for his daughter.

"Papa. Let's go!"

"Wuff! Wuff!"

"Yes, yes. But calm down a little, okay?"

Liza was riding on Leo and telling me to hurry up as they waited near the door.

Even Leo was impatient with me.

She was just as excited, because going to town meant that she would be able to run.

"That should do it. Alright, let's go."

"Go!"

“Wuff!”

I made sure that I had money and any necessities.

And then we left the room and headed for the entrance hall.

Aside from me, Liza and Leo, Ms. Claire and Ms. Lyra would also be going to Ractos.

After all, I needed someone to help with choosing clothes for Liza.

Also, someone had to stay with Leo as she waited outside.

Ms. Claire and Ms. Lyra were also prepared and waiting for us at the entrance hall.

As Ms. Claire was going, we would also need guards... Sebastian would not have allowed it otherwise.

Nicholas had an ordinary sword like Johanna, instead of a katana.

Obviously, he could not take it with him to town.

As for the one Mr. Ekenhart had given to me, I kept it safely in my room.

“Sorry to keep you waiting, Ms. Claire.”

“Now at all, we just arrived.”

And then we quickly went outside.

As always, the servants saw us off.

Liza seemed a little surprised by them, but then she realized what they were doing and so she waved back at them.

Some of the servants smiled and waved back. It was clear that they were fond of her.

“Surely Mr. Ekenhart or Ms. Anne won’t follow us secretly.”

“Indeed. Well, Sebastian will keep an eye on my father. As for Anne... She does not really like to go outside.”

“Haha. Well, if Sebastian is watching him, we have no reason to fear.”

When I had decided to go to Ractos with Liza, Mr. Ekenhart had been the first one who wanted to accompany us.

I suppose he had really enjoyed our last trip.

However, Ms. Claire and Sebastian put a stop to such ambitions, and ensured that he would not be able to slip away this time.

Chapter 370

We Went to Ractos with Liza

I felt a little bad for Mr. Ekenhart, as he left looking quite disappointed about not being able to go to Ractos.

Ms. Claire would be going instead.

I still remember seeing her raise her fist in triumph at this.

I suppose she was happy, as she had not been able to go to town in a while?

As for Ms. Anne, she stayed in her room, claiming that there was an emergency situation regarding her hair rolls.

Ms. Claire said she did not like to go outside very much, so it was no wonder she spent so much time on her hair.

And Tilura had her studies, so she also had to stay home with Sherry.

Sherry wasn't interested in the town to begin with, and seemed to think she could spend her time playing with Tilura. Well, she would soon be disappointed, I think.

"Now then, Mr. Takumi. Let us go."

"Yes. Leo?"

"Wuff."

"Yay. I ride on mama as she runs!"

Ms. Claire and Lyra would ride in a carriage driven by Johanna. I nodded at them and then called out to Leo.

Leo nodded and Liza raised her hands in the air with excitement.

"Liza, it's dangerous. You have to hold onto Leo's fur, alright?"

"Okay!"

Liza lowered her hands and grabbed onto Leo's fur, just as she started to run.

Nicholas then followed the carriage on his horse.

"It's around here, isn't it? Where mama made that delicious water."

"Indeed. It was around here."

“Wuff-wuff.”

As Liza had become thirsty on the way, Leo had used magic to make some clean water for her.

There were only plants and trees on the side of the road, nothing distinctive. So it showed that Liza had a really good memory.

I suppose it was because she usually drank muddy water. So the event had left a big impression on her.

“Mama, if I get thirsty again, will you make that water?”

“Wuff? Wuff-wuff.”

“No, no. You don’t have to do it now. Just when she is thirsty.”

“Wuff. Wuff!”

Leo has started to slow down, thinking Liza wanted it now. And so I told her to continue running.

Leo looked a little disappointed as she nodded, and then she picked up the pace.

I suppose she really wanted to use magic and show it to Liza...

“That water sure was delicious...”

“That much? But you have that grape juice and tea at the mansion?”

“Yes. I’m happy that there are so many delicious things there! But that water was still the best!”

“Wuff! Wuff-wuff!”

As it was the first clean water she had drunk, she was not able to forget it.

Especially since it had been after her grandfather died, and she was being attacked.

So it was understandable that other delicious things were not as special for her.

Leo was happy that the water she made was appreciated so much, and she barked cheerfully.

“Welcome, Lady Claire and Mr. Takumi.”

“It’s been awhile. But we are happy to be back.”

“Mr. Halton.”

“Wow, there are so many clothes!”

The first place we went to after reaching Ractos was Mr. Halton’s clothes shop.

It was also the first store that Ms. Claire had taken me. And they had tailored the clothes I wore when first meeting Mr. Ekenhart.

When we went inside, we were greeted by Mr. Halton, who had not changed at all.

As we talked to him, Liza scanned the items in the store with wide eyes.

I suppose she was interested in clothes then?

As for Leo, Ms. Lyra and Johanna were staying with her outside.

“Oh, a beastkin...”

“Did you say something?”

“No, nothing. Be they beastkin or human, anyone who wears clothes is welcome here.”

Mr. Halton said with a smile as he looked at Liza.

I had been a little tense at first, due to what I had heard at the orphanage.

Mr. Halton was quite old, but while he had likely heard the various rumors about beastkin, it seemed that he was not prejudiced against them.

I suppose it could have to do with Ms. Claire’s presence as well. And he was educated enough to not believe such rumors.

Besides, we were customers as well.

“Today, we want you to make some clothes for this child.”

“Ms. Claire. We don’t have to have them made if there is already something that fits...”

“Mr. Takumi. I doubt there will be any clothes that fit her just right? She is a beastkin with a tail, after all.”

“That is true. And we do not sell clothes that fit beastkin children here. Either the clothes will have to be altered or made from scratch.”

“Ah, that’s right.”

Well, there was no point in selling clothes that hardly anyone would buy. It wasn’t good for business.

“In that case, we will take her measurements.”

“Yes, thank you.”

“It cannot be helped, I suppose. But if the alterations can be done quickly, I would like to buy some clothes today before leaving.”

“Indeed... As long as we know what to alter, we could have it ready in a few hours.”

“Then that’s what we’ll do.”

“Certainly.”