

Beloved Dog 401

Chapter 401

The culprit who threw the stone was caught

Mr. Ekenhart seemed to be hesitant. I suppose that he did not like the idea of being chased by Leo...

Even though he was used to her now, it was a different matter when Leo was barking and chasing after him.

But Tilura, Sherry, and Liza were there. And since I wasn't scared by a barking Leo...I would run in the front then.

And so we all took our positions and started running as part of our training.

...I had thought that I wouldn't be scared, but Leo was so big, that it was a little intimidating when she barked...

Especially when she was behind you.

It was no wonder that Mr. Ekenhart was hesitant.

"Mr. Takumi, do you have a moment?"

"Hah... Yes. What is it?"

After we had finished our running, I trained with Mr. Ekenhart and Tilura. And while I was catching my breath, Sebastian came to the garden and approached me.

Was it almost dinner time...? No, it was too early.

"We have visitors from Ractos."

“From Ractos? Is it Nick?”

“No... It is guards, and the person who was arrested. The incident with Lady Liza...”

“Ah... They caught him already?”

“Yes. Your Grace, please don’t go just yet.”

Sebastian had lowered his voice a little and told me that it was related to Liza.

It had only happened yesterday, but they had already caught the culprit... That was fast.

Well, there were a lot of witnesses, and they knew he was from the slums.

In any case, Sebastian then had to stop Mr. Ekenhart, who was about to run off.

“Well... You are talking about the person who threw the stone, aren’t you. Then I must go.”

“It would be for Mr. Takumi to go first and settle things.”

“...Hmm. Very well. She is your daughter, after all.”

Well, I had decided to take care of her, and she called me papa. So I could not deny it...

Though, it felt strange, since I wasn’t even married.

In any case, I then followed Sebastian to the place where the guards were waiting.

Leo, Sherry, Liza, and Tilura stayed in the garden.

I didn’t know how things would play out, but this was the person who had thrown the rock at Liza... And so I felt uncomfortable about talking to the person directly.

Regardless, it must be done.

Tilura could watch Liza...and Leo and Sherry.

...Sherry had run so much that she couldn't move anymore... I had not expected her to run this much.

Was she alright...? Well, Ms. Lyra was looking after them, so it should be fine.

“Outside?”

“Yes. The guards would be one thing, but they have the culprit with them as well. They are not guests, and so they were not let inside...”

“I see. Very well.”

Apparently, the guards and the arrested person were outside.

Well, I suppose they didn't want to let a criminal inside of the duke's house.

It wasn't due to any ideas of class, but just because of how they viewed crime.

And so I stepped out of the front door and went outside.

“Sorry to keep you waiting.”

“Aye! We have brought the person that we were searching for!”

“Hmm. This is the person?”

“Aye. Step forward.”

“Hey! Let go of me!”

After stepping out of the door, Sebastian led us to the front gate.

There were two armored men standing there, as well as a short young man who had his hands tied...no, he was a boy.

When Sebastian called out to them, the guards bowed and pushed the boy forward.

Behind them, the two guards were watching him closely in case he did anything suspicious.

The boy glared at us while standing between the two soldiers.

Well, he hadn't changed much since the last time I saw him.

He had unevenly trimmed hair, and his clothes and face were dirty.

He seemed to be around fifteen...?

And there was still a youthfulness in his face. But I wasn't completely sure about his age. He seemed like he could be in highschool.

However, his hands were tied, and he was shaking a little. So he likely knew that he was going to be punished.

“Mr. Takumi.”

“Yes, I understand. Uh... So, what is your name?”

“...”

“Apparently, his name is Mark.”

“...Thank you.”

Mr. Ekenhart urged me, and so I took a step forward and spoke to the boy.

I wasn't really sure what to say, and so I asked what his name was.

However, he just glared at me and did not reply.

But when I turned to the guard questioningly, he answered for him.

“Uh, Mark. Do you understand why you are here?”

“...”

“Answer his question!”

“...Because I threw the rock... Obviously.”

“Yes, that is right. You threw a rock at an innocent girl.”

He required a little prodding from the guards before he answered me.

...I really wasn't used to this kind of thing.

Still, I continued to question him.

Chapter 402

I talked to Mark, who had thrown the rock

“You hurt a girl by throwing that rock. Not only that...but Leo, the Silver Fenrir that we were with, became angry because of that. Things could have turned very bad if no one came in to stop it.”

“I don’t care about that. I just saw a monster that needed to be driven out.”

“A monster... Indeed, Silver Fenrirs are monsters, but...”

Mark was probably talking about Liza.

“No! The monster is that child who was there! The ears and tail... Beastkin are monsters! They have to be driven out of town!”

Good, he took the bait.

I wasn’t trying to provoke him, but this was the best way to make him talk honestly. It would allow me to draw out more information.

“Hmm. Monsters. But she hasn’t hurt anyone. Don’t you understand how it is wrong to attack someone like that?”

“You are allowed to throw stones at monsters! They have to be defeated before they start hurting people!”

“Hmm... So you have a sense of justice? But why do you see someone as a monster just because of their tail and ears?”

Besides, there were familiars in this world. So it didn’t make sense to think of all monsters as bad.

While Leo was not my familiar, she never harmed anyone. And Sherry lived leisurely as a familiar.

Maybe a little too leisurely, but unlike orcs or trolls, she did not attack people without reason.

I didn’t know much about other monsters, but it seemed wrong to see all of them as dangerous.

Besides, the other residents of the town didn’t see them as dangerous, so it should be safe...

“All monsters are evil! That’s what I heard!”

“...From who?”

“...”

Mr. Ekenhart, Sebastian and the guards seemed like they didn’t know who he was talking about, as they were shaking their heads.

“Um... Who is saying that? Is this person saying that monsters are enemies to humans?”

“...I can’t tell you. If I do, I won’t be able to stay in the town. But I was told that beastkin are monsters and should not be allowed to live...”

“Hmm...”

So he is not allowed to say... Perhaps there was some hidden figure behind all of this.

I immediately thought of a boss for a criminal organization.

As for not being able to stay in town, it seemed less about being punished and driven out...but about being erased...

Well, it would not be surprising for such a person or organization to exist in the slums.

“So you really cannot tell me? Um... Even just a small hint...”

“If I go against that person, then I won’t have a place in the slums, let alone the town. And so I cannot say. Besides, they fed us and gave us a place to live. And so they must be right!”

“...Hmm...”

So this person was taking care of children who had nowhere to go?

I didn't know what motive this person had, but it was probably a way of acquiring convenient pawns...

Well, that was just a possibility. But perhaps they were good.

"Mr. Takumi, do you mind if I try?"

"Sebastian? ...Yes."

While I tried to learn more about this person, Mark was very stubborn. And so while I wondered what to do, Sebastian suddenly approached me.

Perhaps he had thought of something?

And so I stepped to the side.

"Mark, is it? Could it be that you are talking about someone who is called Deam?"

"!"

The moment that the name was spoken, Mark's facial expression changed.

He was a mixture of franticness and fear, and was shaking visibly.

"Hmm, it looks like I was right..."

"Don't say anything! If it became known that information leaked from me..."

"Hoho. It is fine. I have no reason to spread the information. Besides... This is the duke's house. And so this Deam cannot do anything here."

“...The du-duke’s house...?”

“Oh, you did not know?”

Mark looked scared as Sebastian grinned confidently.

Nick had reacted that way as well. That expression was scary.

Was Sebastian laughing to reassure him, or to show him the reality of the situation...

Well, even if someone had some influence in the slums, it was completely different here.

Especially with Leo here. This Deam could not do anything in this mansion.

Mark’s face went pale at the mention of the duke.

Apparently, he did not know what this place was... The guards had just brought him here without telling him anything.

Well, if he did know, he probably would not have thrown a rock at Liza to begin with.

Chapter 403

I asked about the man called Deam

I waited for a moment and observed Mark, who seemed to have different things going on in his head.

He finally understood that his actions had been against the duke’s house.

Well, he would have likely not done such a reckless thing if he knew.

Unless he hated the duke as well, but it did not seem to be the case.

While Liza was not from the duke's family, I was a guest at the house, and Ms. Claire had been with us when it happened... So it would be seen as an attack on the duke.

Still, why didn't the guards explain this to him on the way here?

"Now, while some of this may be hard to believe, do you understand what has happened?"

"...Ye-yes..."

Said Sebastian.

He shook and answered in a fading voice.

Unlike a moment before, he was no longer glaring at us.

Now that he knew who he was dealing with, he realized that resisting would just put him in a more dangerous situation.

"So, I hope you will be more cooperative now..."

"...I understand."

And so Mark was questioned about this person called Deam.

While he had been hesitant at first, he seemed to feel that things would get worse for him if he kept his silence, and so he agreed to talk.

Sebastian and the guards also explained about Deam as well.

Apparently, he was exactly the kind of person who I had been thinking about.

He was a criminal boss who operated in different slums, including the one in Ractos.

However, due to Mr. Ekenhart's governance, they had not gained much power here yet.

While Deam's subordinates could be found in every town, they were still not that big in number.

They were not so big an organization that they would catch the eye of the country or nobles, and were just a gathering of criminals.

They did not draw much attention yet, as they were not known to kill people, but it did happen sometimes.

But the problem here was that they were teaching youngsters like Mark that beastkin were dangerous monsters.

Apparently, he had not felt like that when Liza was first rescued by her grandfather.

However, once her grandfather started to show a strong dislike for what Deam was doing, he was targeted as an enemy.

In order to unify the residents of the slums, create a common enemy... That was what Sebastian had predicted.

While he was still alive, Liza's grandfather was able to protect her. As someone who had traveled the world he knew how to defend himself.

Apparently, this Deam person did not fight much himself, and mainly just gave out orders.

While Liza's grandfather used magic tools to fight.

But as soon as he died of an illness, Deam had given them the order to target Liza.

By choosing a weak target, he meant to make his position within the slums very clear.

And then he had lied to Mark and the other children, and made them his subordinates.

Deam had taught them that Liza was a beastkin and monster.

Monsters had to be driven out of the slums.

And so hurting Liza was a good thing.

However, if they started killing, then the guards would take action, and it would attract too much attention.

It seemed strange for a criminal organization to hesitate over killing one girl...but thanks to that, Liza was safe.

Though, they would likely just choose a different target if Liza was not there.

So it wasn't that Deam didn't want Liza dead, but that it would hurt their position with the guards.

I suppose that was the result of Mr. Ekenhart properly governing his lands.

After listening to Mark and Sebastian, I had a general idea of the situation.

"So, Mark. You threw the rock because you were ordered to by Deam... Is that right?"

"...Ye-yes. I didn't...know that she was related to the duke..."

"Well, that much is obvious. However, it is wrong to throw rocks at people, regardless of their connection to the duke."

"But...Deam said that beastkin are monsters..."

"Beastkin are not monsters. They are not very different from us. Have you ever left Ractos?"

"...I have not. I was born and raised here."

“In that case, you might not know that there is a beastkin country to the north. Do you think that monsters could build their own country?”

“...No.”

“Right? While we were at war with them a long time ago... That is in the past. And they are our neighbors now. And so I will say it again. Beastkin are not monsters. They are equal to humans and are our neighbors.”

Chapter 404

Mr. Ekenhart decided how to deal with Mark

I nodded while listening to Sebastian speak with Mark.

While I had never seen it, the beastkin had built the country that they live in.

The orcs and trolls that I knew would not be capable of doing such a thing. And while beastkin looked a little different, they were mostly very similar to humans.

“Now, since we know what the situation is... What should we do with him?”

Sebastian said as he turned to Mr. Ekenhart.

Even if this Deam had been giving orders, it didn't change the fact that Mark had thrown the rock.

Besides, that had resulted in Leo getting angry and creating a scene.

In some ways, I was more sympathetic than I was with Nick, but unlike that time, Liza had actually been hurt, and the people of Ractos had seen what Leo was like when she was angry.

With Nick, he was now working at Mr. Kalis's store after apologizing to the people he had troubled.

“Mr. Takumi. Do you have any suggestions?”

“You want me to decide?”

“No, but your opinion will be taken into account. It would be best for me to decide here.”

“I see. Very well... In that case, I would make him understand about beastkin and apologize to Liza. And swear that he will never do anything like that again...”

“Hmm...”

Unlike the time with Nick, they could not let me handle it entirely.

Well, back then, it had mostly been my own herbs that were damaged.

Mr. Ekenhart listened to me and closed his eyes, deep in thought.

And then after some time, he opened his eyes again.

“I will keep Mark here for now. You can tell the people in Ractos that he was punished severely.”

“Yes.”

“You, Mr. Ekenhart?”

The two guards nodded.

“Yes. I will assign someone to escort him back to the main house. And there, he will be dealt with severely.”

“Understood!”

“To the main house...? And severely...”

“Hehehe. He will wish he had just been punched a few times...”

“Ahh!”

“Hah...”

The corner of Mr. Ekenhart’s mouth raised as he laughed evilly, causing Mark to let out a short scream.

Sebastian was sighing as he shook his head...like he had given up.

“Well, I will explain it to you later, Mr. Takumi. Now, take him away!”

“Aye! Excuse me!”

At Mr. Ekenhart’s command, the guards picked up Mark and dragged him away.

He must have had an idea of what was going to happen to him, as Mark shuddered anxiously as they headed out of the gates.

“So, what are you going to do? I wasn’t able to have him apologize to Liza...”

“And I apologize for that, Mr. Takumi. However, I think it is too early for that. Even if you did make him apologize now, it would only be due to the pressure of this house and Deam.”

“Well...that is true.”

He had obeyed Deam for all of this time, and so even if we explained that he was wrong about beastkin, he would likely not believe us completely.

He might apologize if the duke gave the order, but it would not be sincere.

And he might still believe the lies that Deam had told him.

“Mr. Takumi. This is the master’s bad habit.”

“Bad habit?”

“Yes. It had been hiding recently, due to you and Lady Tilura, but...”

“Do not say that, Sebastian. Surely it is a good thing, ultimately?”

“...Well, perhaps.”

“What do you mean to do?”

As I talked with Mr. Ekenhart, Sebastian approached with an exasperated expression.

What did he mean...bad habit?

Well, judging by what I had seen of Mr. Ekenhart up until now, it was not too strange that he had some bad habits...

“I mean to train him back at the main house. Of course, knowledge is also important, so he will have to study. Especially about the beastkin.”

“Training... Like how Tilura and I have been training?”

“That...is when I’m holding back.”

“Mr. Takumi. His Grace finds great pleasure in training people. He is very special.”

“You are very unjust, Sebastian. It is because of me that all of the guards here are so competent.”

“...It’s true that they are all serious workers. Whenever His Grace finds someone with potential, he attempts to train them thoroughly.”

Apparently, Mr. Ekenhart was going to train Mark.

Indeed, he had been living in the slums, and showed quite a fighting spirit even after being arrested.

I didn't know if that meant he had potential, but given what he had experienced up until now, he could probably survive in harsh environments.

"But how is that a punishment?"

"Well, that is just something to say on the surface. It would look bad if they were not punished harshly. Some people in Ractos might even think that he was executed."

"And after he caused such a scene, there will not be any opposition."

"Hmm. Hehe... Though, Mark himself may eventually wish that he was executed..."

Mr. Ekenhart said with a smile.

How strict did he intend to be...

Mr. Ekenhart was already training me and Tilura... Would it really be that different?

Chapter 405

The training would be very severe

"How will it be different compared to Tilura and my training?"

"The main purpose of your training is self-defense. And it is not a punishment. In order to make someone a guard who can protect others, their training must be more severe."

"...I see."

"If you are interested, Mr. Takumi... You should ask Philip or Nicholas."

It was true that protecting someone else was a different matter, and probably required very different training.

Well, not that I would know.

Just then, Sebastian suggested that I speak with Phillip or Nicholas about it.

I suppose it was possible that they had been trained by Mr. Ekenhart...

Indeed, they were capable guards, and Nicholas could use a katana, which was a rare sword.

“Yes, though they may not want to talk about it...”

“How bad was it...Mr. Ekenhart...”

“Haha. They were on the brink of death, that is all.”

The brink of death... Surely that is going too far?

It was a good thing that Tilura and I were only training to defend ourselves...

“Well, we can leave Mark to His Grace’s care. He already decided it, so there is no point in trying to stop him now.”

“You understand me well, Sebastian.”

“Because it’s happened plenty of times already... Regardless, the real problem is Deam.”

“Mmm.”

The sun had mostly set, and it was getting dark now. But Sebastian and Mr. Ekenhart continued to talk.

I suppose they did not want to go to the dining hall, where the others could hear.

I also didn't want Liza to hear more about it.

"Can't you just have him arrested, Mr. Ekenhart?"

"Yes, if I made a move, it would be easy enough. But..."

"The effects it would have..."

"Mmm. While not a lot, he does have some influence in the slums. And so it would be best to not make too bold a move."

"At worst, his arrest could cause uprisings, not only here, but in other towns."

Apparently, it would be quite difficult to capture this person.

"But there is no doubt that they are up to no good. Even when ignoring the incident with Liza. I had wanted to chip away at his power slowly, but..."

"That's why the day after Liza was brought back, the guards of Ractos were contacted and made to investigate."

"...Sebastian, that was supposed to be a secret."

Mr. Ekenhart said as he looked away, somewhat embarrassed.

Was this related to how he had been speaking to the guards before we left?

"Hoho. It is not as if you were doing something wrong. Besides, surely it is best that Mr. Takumi knows? Otherwise, he and Leo might decide to take things into their own hands and..."

“No, I wouldn’t do that... I think.”

“Well, Mr. Takumi is very fond of her. And so is everyone in the mansion. But Leo were to act, she might destroy the whole town. She almost did it recently.”

Indeed, even if I was angry that this Deam had given the order for people to throw rocks at Liza... I wouldn’t then use Leo to destroy the town.

“Well, in any case... Deam. Even if we wanted to do something, we do not know where he is currently.”

“Really? I thought he was in the Ractos slums.”

“That is true. However, he changes location every day. As people from the slums are among his subordinates, he is able to move while remaining hidden from the guards. Though, if I put all of my people on it at once, they might...”

“But then it will be obvious that you are involved. And that information will spread to the other towns...”

“Hmmm...”

In other words, he needed to do it in a way that didn’t expose his involvement...

Leo and I lived in the mansion, and were seen in town with the duke’s people.

However, I wasn’t an employee...even though there was a contract. I just gave them herbs.

As the herbs were made with Weed Cultivation, not many people knew about them.

So even if people knew that I worked with the duke’s store, they shouldn’t know that I was deeply involved with the house.

Especially not people who lived in the slums.

Well, there were some stores we had visited multiple times. But I doubted that they would be leaking information.

If they did, then Ms. Claire or Mr. Ekenhart may not visit them as customers anymore.

And being connected to the store was a much bigger advantage than being connected to the slums.

Besides, none of the people we had bought from looked like they would become involved in criminal activity...

Chapter 406

Mr. Ekenhart and Sebastian made fun of me

“Mr. Takumi. Are you thinking of something strange?”

“N-no...nothing really...”

“I hope you will continue to not be thinking about destroying Ractos?”

“Yes, I will not think of such a thing. I am very fond of Ractos.”

After seeing me deep in thought, Mr. Ekenhart suddenly looked frantic.

However, Ractos was the first town I went to in this world.

And in general, the people did not fear or try to avoid Leo.

They were definitely curious, but it could not be helped, as Leo was so big.

While there had been incidents, like with the herbs and illness, the people were overall very friendly.

I felt that this was due to the duke not being oppressive in governing his people.

In any case, I would not destroy a town that I liked.

And I wouldn't let Leo do it, even if she could.

"Considering the possibility of good Leo destroying Ractos, it would be much easier to catch Deam and settle this matter."

"Indeed. Since they should be few in number, as long as we prepare carefully, it should not be difficult to suppress him. Though, there may be civilian casualties..."

"But that is still better than the whole town."

"Yes."

"Hey, hey. I already said that we won't be doing that. You shouldn't think about such morbid things."

If such a thing did happen, it would have a serious impact on the duke's house, and put me and Leo in danger as well.

We would be worse villains than Deam ever was.

Dangerous enemies of the kingdom.

"Well, who knows? People retaliate in surprising ways when their own are targeted. And if Mr. Takumi becomes angry, good Leo will as well. And then no one will be able to stop them."

"For instance, if Lady Claire or Tilura were threatened by someone. The duke would easily move an army if necessary."

"Well, if that happened, I would also do what I can to fight against the enemy, but... Something like that won't happen, will it? So it will be fine."

“...One would hope.”

It was with such thoughts that we returned to the mansion.

This was because Ms. Gelda had come to tell us that dinner was ready.

“Well then...”

“Yes, thank you. Liza, go and get cleaned, okay?”

“Yes, okay!”

“Wuff-wuff!”

After dinner, I lightly explained everything to Ms. Claire and the others, and then I trained and returned to my room.

I didn't want to talk about it in detail where Liza could hear, and so I was quite vague. But she had likely spoken to Sebastian about it later.

I then watched as Ms. Lyra took Liza away to be bathed.

While Mr. Ekenhart and I had been talking with Mark, Liza had spent her time rolling in the mud with Leo, Tilura and Sherry. And so she was completely filthy.

Apparently, they wanted Sherry to practice rolling.

And Leo was monitoring them.

As Sherry was a fenrir, I didn't know if such training was necessary. But it seemed like she was having fun.

Now that Liza was no longer holding back, she was able to play in the mud with Tilura. That made me happy.

Besides, she could easily wash it off. Though, it meant more work for the maids.

They had wiped off most of it before dinner, but it wasn't everything. Besides, they were sweating as well, and so I told Liza that she must go and take a bath.

Well, not that she was gone, it was time to talk to Leo about Mark.

She had been glancing at me occasionally during dinner, as if she had questions...which was unusual. Leo was usually so engrossed in her food.

"Wuff."

"Yes, yes. I will tell you. Uh..."

Leo had turned to me and barked as if to urge me on.

And so I started to explain to her about Mark and Deam.

Do I have to tell Leo everything... I did wonder. But she was my buddy who I had come to this world with.

And so it was best to share as much information as possible.

Besides, if I wanted to do the thing I had thought of during dinner, then I would require Leo's cooperation.

"And so the villain of the whole thing...the person who gave the order, is this person called Deam. Well, he probably didn't tell him to throw the rock directly. I will not say that Mark is innocent, but... Well, we will just have to leave that Mr. Ekenhart."

"Wuff. ...Wuff?"

“Haha. Good one, Leo. So you knew what I was thinking about?”

“Wuff!”

After listening to the explanation, Leo nodded and then tilted her head as if to say, ‘But that’s not all, is it?’

As we had known each other for such a long time, she knew what I was thinking.

That was very perceptive. Though, I hoped that she didn’t actually know everything that was going on in my mind.

Chapter 407

I decided to cooperate with Leo and act

“As for this Deam person, even Mr. Ekenhart cannot solve the problem immediately. Though he is looking into it. So it may just be a matter of time.”

“Wuff-wuff.”

“Still, we cannot take Liza to town easily until he is caught, right? And I want her to be able to have fun there without worrying about being pelted with rocks. She should be able to play with the children at the orphanage, and buy things that she wants, and eat at the food stalls.”

“Wuff!”

“But if Deam is still there, then she might be targeted again. ...Not to mention, it is not as if the people will change immediately. It will take some time. And so...”

“Wuff. Wuff-wuff? ...Wou!”

And so we talked about making things safer for Liza.

Once Leo heard about Deam, she became quite enthusiastic.

“Even if we can’t do it immediately...I want to do something. Will you help me, Leo?”

“Wuff-wuff. Wuff! Wou?”

“Haha. I see. Thank you.”

Leo barked and agreed to help.

If anything, it sounded like she meant to act, whether I did anything or not.

But if I just left it to Leo, she might attack Ractos... So it was best that she helped me.

The old me...before I came to this world, might not have done anything.

It was through experiencing different things and meeting people here, that I had started to change.

“I’m back, papa!”

“Welcome back, Liza. Did you get clean?”

“Wuff-wuff.”

“Yes. Sister Lyra helped me!”

“I see. That’s good. Thank you, Ms. Lyra. By the way...there was one thing that I wanted to ask you.”

“Yes, what is it? ...Though, I think I might know what it is.”

“You do?”

“You seemed to be thinking about something during dinner. And judging by what you spoke of earlier...”

“I suppose I am easy to read. In any case, could you take care of Liza tonight?”

“Papa? What happened?”

Apparently, Ms. Lyra knew what I was thinking about.

Leo knew as well. Was I really that easy to read?

Well, Leo and I had known each other for a long time. And as a servant, Ms. Lyra was very observant of others...I think.

Regardless, Liza then turned to me anxiously.

“It’s nothing, Liza. There is just something that I need to do now. I’ll be back soon.”

“...Really?”

“Yes, really. I would never lead you here and go somewhere else, alright?”

“Okay... I believe you.”

Liza seemed to have sensed something by looking at me.

But when I looked her in the eye and explained it, she nodded and said that she trusted me.

“Very well. If Lady Liza is fine with it, I shall take care of her in your absence.”

“I’m sorry to ask you, after you had to stay up late last night as well...”

“No, I was given extra time to rest. Well, Lady Liza. I hope you don’t mind staying with me again?”

“I like Sister Lyra, because she is nice!”

Liza was quite fond of Ms. Lyra at this point.

And so she looked quite happy as she nodded in agreement.

She liked Ms. Claire and Ms. Anne as well...but she spent much more time with Ms. Lyra.

“Thank you, Lady Liza. Well, Mr. Takumi, I’m sure you have preparations to make, so I think we should move to a different room.”

“Yes, thank you.”

“Wuff.”

As Ms. Lyra left the room with Liza, Leo and I thanked her and bowed.

“Now...”

“Wuff...”

Since it was just Leo and me left, I started to prepare.

Leo also got up as if she were going to do something. But unlike me, she had nothing to carry.

I suppose she was just too anxious to wait quietly.

And so I ignored Leo as she paced back and forth, and I finished with my preparations.

“...I should take this, just in case.”

While packing, I picked up the katana that Mr. Ekenhart had given to me.

I doubted I would be in any danger with Leo there... But I thought back on Range village and the orcs, and decided to take it with me anyway.

I would use it if my usual sword happened to break.

It was night time and dark, so hardly anyone would see it... Though, I might have to apologize to Mr. Ekenhart later.

“Alright, Leo... Are you ready?”

“Wou!”

Once I was finished, I called out to Leo, and we left the room.

Now, we will deal with the root of the problem of Liza’s troubles...!”

Chapter 408

Sebastian Knew

“Mr. Takumi, good Leo. Where are you headed at this late hour...?”

“Wuff?”

Leo and I moved through the mansion and reached the entrance hall. But then we were stopped by a familiar voice.

Leo turned to see who it was.

I too turned to look, and saw that in the brightly lit center of the hall, stood a solitary Sebastian.

“Is something the matter, Sebastian?”

“That is what I should be asking you, Mr. Takumi. ...Well, I cannot say that I have no idea what you mean to do.”

“...Ms. Lyra said something like that to me before. Am I really easy to read?”

“Hohoho. It is part of our job, being observant of our masters and guests. Though, you are definitely in the easy category.”

“Hmm...”

“Wuff-wuff.”

Apparently, even Sebastian had an idea of what I meant to do.

I suppose it showed on my face?

Even Leo was barking as if she was laughing. And I felt a little annoyed.

“Ever since you spoke to Mark, it seemed like there was something inside that you were trying your hardest to hold back. ...It was all I could do to change the subject.

“Ah, so you knew from then...”

Sebastian was probably talking about when they started joking about how we would destroy Ractos.

After hearing about Deam from Mark and Sebastian, and how he had targeted a young beastkin, so many negative emotions had welled up within me.

Part of it was because I had rescued and now guarded Liza, but I also could not forgive someone who would hurt an innocent child.

I had been trying to play it cool...but it seems like the others knew about it.

As Sebastian said, the servants were very observant of us, and Mr. Ekenhart had a lot of experience...

Though, I hoped that at least Ms. Claire and Ms. Anne hadn't noticed.

"Please do not do anything reckless."

"You're not going to stop me?"

"I doubt it would do any good. If anything, I feel bad that we have not been able to act first..."

Currently, Liza was the only one here who had been harmed, and due to how difficult it would be to arrest with force, it could not be helped.

Such a thing would affect a lot of people, and could cause damage. And the duke's house could not go out in full force for Liza alone.

"While I won't stop you, how do you intend to enter Ractos, Mr. Takumi?"

"Uh, well... I've been there several times, and the guards recognize me. So I don't see how that will be a problem?"

"If you go now, everyone will be asleep by the time you arrive. The gates will be closed."

"Ah, that's true..."

Unlike Japan, there were monsters in this world.

I didn't know if they became active during the night, but it was no surprise that the gates would be closed when no one was going in or out.

"Surely you aren't thinking of using Leo to jump over the walls?"

“No, I wasn’t thinking about that... But could you do that, Leo?”

“Wuff? Wou!”

“...I see.”

After denying it, I turned to ask Leo, who thought about it for a moment and then barked, ‘I can do it!’

The wall surrounding Ractos wasn’t quite ten meters tall, but was still very high.

And Leo could jump over it...I would like to see that one day.

“Hohoho. If you did such a thing, the guards would arrest you as an intruder. Though, I’m sure that good Leo could outrun or...trample over them... But I think that would affect your goal?”

“Yes...exactly.”

Sebastian said with a smile, and I nodded.

Indeed, jumping over the walls would probably result in arrest.

“So... Just show this to the guard who is on watch duty. If you knock on the gate, then a small window should open up. Just show them this and they will open the door.”

So saying, Sebastian walked up to me and handed me an object that was about the size of his palm.

“Is this...a crest?”

“Yes. I believe that Lady Claire showed it to you before... It is the same thing. This will prove that you are sent from the the duke’s house.”

“...Because you don’t want people to know?”

“Yes. While such things will surely be revealed later, right now, it would be best to not make the connection between you and the duke too clear.”

“I understand... And I will be carefull.”

Chapter 409

Everyone knew

Sebastian had handed me metal crest that depicted a Silver Fenrir, much like the one that Ms. Claire had shown me before.

It would show that the duke vouched for the person who held it.

Sebastian also had a warning, which made sense.

And so I would not go around flashing it to everyone in the town.

“Also, this...”

“What is that?”

Sebastian then handed me a folded piece of paper.

“It contains a few locations where Deam has been sighted. So you may want to start with those areas. However...he is constantly on the move. There is no guarantee you will find him there.”

“I see... I will need to move quickly then.”

“Yes. Perhaps he moves between locations every day. So it would be best to check them all at once. Though, this information could be out of date...”

“Thanks. I’m sure it will help. And it is better than nothing.”

“Hoho. Well...I will leave it to you to find out how accurate it is.”

“Yes.”

“Wuff.”

I had originally been thinking about searching over several days, but this alone should save me some time.

At worst, I would just have to rely on Leo's sense of smell... But Leo didn't know Deam's scent.

...I really should plan better.

Being spontaneous could be a good thing, but I needed to be a little more thoughtful...

“Also... His Grace has given you his permission to use the katana.”

Said Sebastian as he glanced at my belt.

So even Mr. Ekenhart knew what I was going to do.

...I really wasn't suited to any covert actions or secrets.

“I understand. Well, I don't think I will actually have to use it.”

“Indeed. I hope that you will be careful. And I pray that you will not destroy Ractos.”

“Haha. I told you that I won't do that. Well, then...”

“Yes, we await your safe return. Lady Claire will be quite impatient as well.”

“Ah... I see. I will be very careful then.”

I touched the sword at my belt and then nodded to Sebastian.

When he mentioned Ms. Claire, he had glanced behind him to the corner of the hall.

And when I turned to look, I saw a familiar figure hiding behind a pillar.

She probably thought that I couldn't see her, but about half of her face was visible... She was not very good at hiding.

I thought with a smile, and then answered Sebastian in an extra loud voice before exiting from the door.

...Perhaps she avoided meeting me, because she wouldn't be able to hold back the urge to try and stop me from going...

She worried more than the others, after all.

She was the kind of person who was more concerned with others in danger, then in being in danger herself.

“Ah, that's right...”

“Wuff?”

Just as I was leaving, I remembered something and stopped.

“Sebastian. Could you prepare some sausages for when we get back? I think that Leo will be hungry.”

“Wuff!? Wuff-wuff!”

“Certainly. I will prepare as much as we can...”

“Haha. Well, not too much. I don’t want her to overeat either...”

“Wuff-wuff.”

Leo wagged her tail happily as she listened to us.

While that was nice, her tail would slam into my side, and it hurt a little. So I wanted her to calm down.

Well, since Leo would be working hard tonight, it was only right to reward her this much.

With that in mind, and taking note of the person nodding behind the pillar, I smiled and left.

Sebastian bowed deeply as he saw me off.

Okay Leo, you can stop wagging your tail so much...

“Alright, Leo. You can run a little faster now. We want to be quick, so the others won’t worry. Besides, there is the sausages...”

“Wou!”

Leo answered enthusiastically.

Was it because of the sausages, or the people waiting... I hoped that the sausages weren’t her only motivation.

In any case, after leaving the mansion, I immediately climbed onto Leo’s back and we headed towards Ractos.

I put away the crest and the map so that I wouldn’t drop them.

Leo was running at a speed that was slightly slower than when we had rushed to Range village.

However, I still had to hold on, or it would be dangerous.

She would not run this fast when carrying Tilura or Liza.

“So everyone knew after all. Well, perhaps Sebastian went around and told them...”

“Hah-hah...wuff?”

I muttered to myself, and then Leo reacted.

I was surprised she could hear me through all of the win. I suppose Leo’s ears were special.

And as I talked to Leo, I felt grateful towards the people of the mansion for not trying to stop me.

Chapter 410

It Started Raining

While riding on Leo, I thought about what had happened.

The gate would usually have been closed, but it was open.

In general, regardless of the time of day, the gates were kept closed unless they were expecting a visitor.

It was one of the duke’s houses, after all.

Not only that, but there were usually two or three guards posted there, but I had not seen anyone.

Perhaps Sebastian had told them, or they already knew... They left the gate open and moved elsewhere.

I felt gratitude for the extent they went to.

What we were going to do now could be dangerous.

Aside from that, there was also the risk of people finding out about the duke's involvement.

And yet they had sent me out.

Well, we were far away from the town, so perhaps there was no need to be so cautious...

What I wanted to do, was hurry up and find Deam, capture him, and make sure that no one realizes that the duke is moving behind the scenes.

That was what I hoped, anyway.

"Hahahahah...wuff... Wuff-wuff?"

"Hmm? Ah, that's right. It is kind of difficult to see... Wait one moment."

I suddenly heard Leo barking.

Apparently, she was concerned about how dark it was.

You only needed to move in a straight line to reach Ractos, so we didn't need to worry about crashing into anything. But I suppose it was still dangerous to not be able to see up ahead.

Perhaps Leo didn't like that she was running but couldn't see the scenery...

And so I unsheathed the sword on my belt.

Then I raised it into the air and focused.

“Light Elemental Shine.”

“Wuff!”

Leo barked as if she too were chanting, and then the magic was activated.

The magic energy entered the sword and caused the blade to glow.

...Ms. Claire had taught it to me, and it was already proving to be useful.

“While it does not shine too far, it is better than nothing.”

“Wuff-wuff.”

It was blinding if looked at directly, and more than bright enough when it was so dark that you could barely even see the moon.

And like that, we continued our journey to Ractos.

Now that we had light, Leo seemed to be in a much better mood.

“I can’t see the moon... That can happen sometimes.”

The moon in this world was not like the one in my old world. It was more of a bluish, silvery color... Some might say it was just blue.

And as I looked up at the sky, I felt a drop of water fall on my face.

...Water?

“Is it...rain?”

“Wuff...”

And the drops of water continued to fall and increase in number.

I had not been rained on since I came to this world.

Perhaps it was due to the climate, but it did not rain much around the mansion.

And even if it did rain, it was usually during the night.

“...Seems to be getting stronger? Leo. Are you alright?”

“Wuff-wuff. Wou!”

“As long as it’s not hot water? ...Well, as long as you are enjoying it...”

It was raining hard enough that she would be drenched soon.

Since she was running faster than a horse, I worried that the rain would get into her eyes...
Apparently that was not a problem.

...But I could barely keep my eyes open.

As for the sword, it continued to shine even in the rain.

Had I been holding a torch instead, it would have been extinguished immediately.

It was one of those moments where I was thankful that I could use magic.

“We’ll have to take a bath and warm up when we get back...”

“Wuff!?”

“Leo. You’re soaking wet. And there is a lot of dust in the air, so you’ll have to be cleaned.”

“Wuff...”

I hadn’t brought a raincoat or umbrella.

They probably wouldn’t be much use when moving at this speed anyway.

Now that the rain was getting stronger, we were both drenched.

And Leo was covered in fur, which was all matted down now. She actually looked smaller than usual.

There was a lot to do, and I did not want to catch a cold or get sick. And so I told Leo that we would take a bath later, and she did not look pleased.

Even if she didn’t hate it as much as she did before, she had not been cured entirely.

Leo wasn’t as excited to be running in the rain after that, but I was able to persuade her as we continued on our way.

And I wondered. Was this rain a warning about the danger of what we were doing? Or was it a blessing, that would conceal our presence...