

## Beloved Dog 481

Chapter 481

I talked about Liza's situation

"Besides... One of the reasons is that it's always safe when Leo is nearby..."

"Ah, I think it has more to do with you, Mr. Takumi? Liza is always smiling when she is with you."

"Really? Hmm. Well, perhaps."

"Wuff."

"You think so too, Leo?"

"Hehe. There is no doubt of it."

"Hmm What do you mean?"

I looked at Liza and smiled.

Now that I thought about it, aside from the first time I had met her, Liza did smile most of the time that we were together.

If she was that comfortable with me and had so much fun, then I was happy that she called me papa... Leo also barked in agreement.

As Leo, I, and Ms. Claire smiled and talked, Mr. Ekenhart looked puzzled.

I see... While I had explained the situation, Mr. Ekenhart didn't know what Liza had said after having the rock thrown at her in Ractos.

I had felt quite sad listening to her directly talk about bearing what happened to her in the slums...

“You witnessed already, Mr. Ekenhart, but you know how Liza was being attacked in the slums?”

“Hmm, indeed. I went with you to help her. ...Well, in the end, it was good Leo that did everything...”

“But for Liza, it was a daily occurrence. She didn’t know how to leave, and was just trying to survive there after her grandfather died. But no one in the slums was kind to her... Even the children attacked Liza...”

“...Indeed. Even if you want to raise your own position by dominating others, it will be meaningless if you do not grow...”

“Indeed... Well, part of the reason was that Deam told them to, and they did it to survive. But in any case, Liza was all alone after her grandfather died. And it was then that she learned to just bear it.”

“She did not resist?”

“Perhaps she did at first. But it just made things worse.”

I was glad that Liza was asleep while I explained it to Mr. Ekenhart.

After all, I did not want her to remember what had happened in the slums.

I did not want her to feel sad or lonely again.

Well, I know that was impossible, but she should laugh and have fun as much as possible.

“That is...I can imagine that. If you are weaker, then resisting will just make them more angry.”

“Yes. And so she never had a place where she felt safe. She had no house in the slums, and even if she was hungry or thirsty, she had to manage by herself. But also, she had to remain hidden.”

It was not like every single person in the slums were hostile to her.

Apparently, Deam mainly gave the order to children.

There were a lot of people in the slums, and it did not seem like there were many places to hide. As for abandoned buildings, they were used as hideouts by Deam.

Had the adults been following Deam's orders at all, then Liza would have not even survived there.

It didn't matter if she was a beastkin, Liza was too young to be able to endure that much.

Well...they probably also knew that the guards might get involved if they went too far. So that's why they avoided using weapons.

Still, just the thought of it filled me with anger.

"Grrr..."

"...Leo. It's in the past. Calm down, okay? We just need to make sure that she is happy now, okay? Besides, Deam was already arrested."

Next to me, Leo, who had been listening to me, started to bare her teeth and growl.

I understand how you feel, but maybe hold it back a little?

Ms. Claire was one thing, but Mr. Ekenhart looked disturbed...

"Uuuu...wou..."

"No, no. You should have hurt them more? You don't need to think like that. It was enough."

If she had done more, then it was possible that he might die.

I had already cut his stomach with my sword, and Leo had pressed his down on the ground so that he could not move... Surely that had been painful enough.

I thought I had heard his bones creek.

There was no reason to show mercy to such people, but it wasn't our job to punish him either.

I thought that we should leave it to the guards and the relevant institutions.

Thankfully, we were friends with Mr. Ekenhart, who I trusted and relied on.

...Though, there were times when I worried if he was alright, but he was surrounded by capable people, including Sebastian.

"I see... So Liza was never in a place where she felt safe. So that's why she seems so relaxed when she is with you and Leo."

"I think it might be the case. And so that's why Liza doesn't really care if she is in a forest with monsters. She has been in dangerous places before...and with Leo and me here. I think she finally feels safe for the first time after her grandfather died."

"I see... Hmm... Indeed..."

Chapter 482

I kept my promise with the boys

Mr. Ekenhart nodded at my explanation.

He had already known some of the details regarding Liza's situation, but he now knew as much Ms. Claire and me.

It was possible that there was more, and Liza just hadn't told me yes, but there was plenty of time for her to tell us.

Besides, I didn't want her to recall things that she didn't want to.

“Ah, by the way...Mr. Ekenhart. And Ms. Claire, I have a request...”

“Hmm, what?”

“Me too?”

While talking about Liza, I suddenly remembered something.

it was something I should have talked about earlier...I felt bad towards the boys. I had made a promise, after all.

“When capturing Deam, there were other boys like Mark. They were being threatened by Deam and some other men. I believe the boys were arrested as well, but... If you could lighten their punishment...after all, they did cooperate with capturing Deam.”

It wasn't as if they were innocent, but they were also still children.

They were just obeying Deam, and so I didn't think they should receive the same punishment as him.

And so I had promised to speak on their behalf.

“Ah, that. I heard about it in the reports. While they were helping Deam, they didn't necessarily have a choice in some regards. And so we did mean to give them a lighter punishment.”

“Indeed. It is possible that they will grow from here, and live proper lives. Of course, if they cause problems in the future, they will be dealt with more severely. But there is no need to be so hard right now.”

“I see. Thank you.”

I was relieved, now that I had kept my promise. And then Mr. Ekenhart grinned mischievously.

“Well... If they have the courage, perhaps I can also take them away for some training. It would also work as a punishment of sorts...”

“Father. I don’t think you should be making such young boys participate in your training...”

“What? But Mark, the one who threw the stone at Liza, is going to join. Surely he would prefer it if his friends were there?”

“...Phillip told me about it. It is very painful, isn’t it?”

“What? Phillip told you, Mr. Takumi?”

“Yes. And...it seemed like something that he did not want to remember...”

“Hmm. I suppose I didn’t make him strong enough then. I would have thought he would be proud of it.”

“Father, why would anyone be proud of training that was just painful?”

Mr. Ekenhart really did have a wicked side to him.

That training that had traumatized Phillip. He was considering it not just for Mark, but the other boys as well.

Hmm... Perhaps I had sent them into an even worse punishment. I’m sorry.

“In any case, if they really are sorry, why not send them to the orphanage?”

“That is one way. According to the report, they do not have parents. However...”

“Mr. Takumi. The orphanage is full...”

“Ah, that is right...”

If they were in the orphanage, they would be properly educated. However, when we went there with Liza, they told us that it was full.

Though, they probably wouldn't reject everyone, and would try to accommodate people, even if they barely fit...accepting several boys from the slums would be difficult.

Hmm...I see...in that case...

"Do you have an idea, Mr. Takumi?"

Ms. Claire asked, as I had fallen silent for some time.

Was my face so easy to read?

"Uh, well... I do have one idea... But I don't know how realistic it is. In any case, I will tell you once I have gathered my thoughts."

"Not now?"

"I'm sorry... In any case, I will think about it after returning to the mansion. I promise to consult you then. Besides, I will have to ask Sebastian..."

I was thinking about the boys and going to Range village.

And while Ms. Claire looked a little sulky that I didn't tell her, I promised that we would discuss it later.

"Mmm...not me then?"

"Well, it could be you as well, Mr. Ekenhart. But aren't you going to return to your main house?"

"Yes, that is right. ...I will likely not be around when you finally gather your thoughts, Mr. Takumi."

Mr. Ekenhart also looked a little sulky to be left out.

They really were father and daughter... I suppose Tilura would have acted the same way.

Only, Mr. Ekenhart did not look as cute as Ms. Claire.

Chapter 483

The complaints were heard

“...Mr. Takumi wants to confide in me... What is it?”

Ms. Claire was tilting her head with a puzzled expression, but looked a little happy as well.

“That’s enough talk about me. Why are you here, Mr. Ekenhart and Ms. Claire? Were you not able to sleep in the tent?”

“Hmm? I have no reason in particular. I just wanted to talk to you, Mr. Takumi. It wasn’t that I was feeling lonely in the tent...”

“But Phillip is there as well... Though, he is probably sleeping.”

“It is like that with me. Tilura and the others fell asleep, but I felt like talking... Hehe. It is like the last time that we went to the forest.”

So, neither of them had any business with me, and just came out because they wanted to talk.

While Ms. Claire was one thing, Mr. Ekenhart was with Phillip in the tent, and yet felt lonely... I didn’t know how to feel about that.

As for sitting in front of the fire at midnight with Ms. Claire... It was like the last time we came to the forest.

Only this time, Mr. Ekenhart and Liza were here as well.



“Haha, indeed. Though, at that time, you wanted to apologize after Sebastian scolded you.”

“Oh, Mr. Takumi. Please forget about that...”

“What? Such a thing happened? It is not an unusual thing for Sebastian to scold Claire... But she then apologized to Mr. Takumi?”

Amidst the calm atmosphere, I suddenly brought up the past, much to Ms. Claire’s embarrassment.

Mr. Ekenhart was immediately interested.

As I had no choice, I then began to explain the whole story to him in detail.

“Hmm, I see. Indeed, it is not good for those of our house to wield authority in such a way. So Sebastian was right to be angry.”

“Though, I did not actually feel like I was being forced to do anything. ...If anything, it is you, Mr. Ekenhart, who always acts more forcefully.”

“...Really?”

“Even if father doesn’t use his authority as a duke, he can be very forceful...”

“It seems like you are blaming me now... Well, it is true that Sebastian often complains, but...”

So even Sebastian would tell him... Well, he did get in trouble when he went with me to Ractos without a guard.

Besides, when deciding to come to the forest, Sebastian had apparently a lot to say to him.

He had only agreed to it on several conditions. That Leo would accompany us, was one of them.

“Sebastian could...be more agreeable when it comes to things that I have planned.”

“That is because you act so impulsively without thinking about the effects, father. ...Though I am told that as well...”

“Haha. Sebastian is surely thinking about what’s best for you two. I think...”

“Wuff...? Wou.”

Mr. Ekenhart was now complaining about Sebastian.

As for Ms. Claire, while she had complaints about her father as well, she also began to complain about Sebastian.

Mr. Claire’s grievances were about how he didn’t stop her father, back when he was still bringing in marriage proposals.

That seemed like a long time ago.

I chuckled but tried to defend him. And then Leo raised her head and looked towards the tent. But then she lowered her head again and rested it on her front paws.

Had she detected something...? And then I looked in the same direction.

...I see.

Well, I’m sure it would be fine.

“I think that Sebastian should be kinder to me. He is too rigid in the way that he thinks.”

“Indeed. While he is smart, he could be more flexible.”

“...Oh, is that so? I am rigid and not flexible. ...Even though I do my best so that Your Grace and Lady Claire can live comfortably in peace...”

“!?”

“!?”

“...”

As Mr. Ekenhart and Ms. Claire’s conversation heated up, I closed my eyes calmly.

I suppose I was resigned...

While I sat silently, Leo, who was to my right side, seemed indifferent as well.

Though Liza was completely asleep, and the two were talking louder and louder...she did not wake up. I suppose that was how comfortable she was with Ms. Claire.

I wonder if it was more comfortable than sleeping with Leo?

But just as Mr. Ekenhart and Ms. Claire were in agreement, a strangely cool voice rang from behind us.

And while it was cool and calm, there was power in it as well. And even I felt a chill go down my spine.

Mr. Ekenhart and Ms. Claire stopped talking at once, and let out a soundless gasp.

Well, they hadn’t noticed, so...it was no surprise.

Chapter 484

I decided to leave them and go to sleep

“Sebastian!?”

“Sebastian!?”

“It is late. You must be quiet, or you will wake up the others. Unless you do not mind disturbing their sleep, even though it will affect their performance tomorrow.”

Sebastian’s voice was very thorny indeed.

I quickly opened my eyes and looked towards them, they were shaking their head vigorously at Sebastian.

“Well, it is my duty to serve Your Grace and Lady Claire. And so it is not my place to complain. However, to think that you despise me so much...”

“I don’t despise you. It is true.”

“Yes, Sebastian. I am grateful for your services to my father.”

“Mmm. You worked for me even before I was the master of the house. I appreciate your work, Sebastian.”

While Sebastian did not look that angry, Ms. Claire and Mr. Ekenhart were frantic that they had been overheard, and so they tried to explain.

I suppose...Sebastian was playing with them now.

“By the way, Mr. Takumi. It is not time for you to switch places. You could get some sleep, for tomorrow...”

“Huh? Ah, yes. Of course. Yes, I suppose it is that time...”

I looked down at my watch and saw that it was indeed time.

As we had been talking, the time passed by quickly.

“Well then. I shall return to the tent with Liza. ...Ms. Claire. Sorry...”

“Ye-yes.”

“Zzz...”

“Wuff?”

“No, it should be fine. I will carry her. Thanks, Leo.”

When I picked up Liza, I saw that she was fast asleep, and would not wake up easily.

It was probably a combination of being tired, and feeling safe with Ms. Claire.

While Leo had offered to carry her, she was not heavy, so I decided to do it myself.

“So Mr. Takumi is returning to his tent. I suppose I should go as well. I am starting to get sleepy.”

“Yes, father. We will leave it to Sebastian and the others and go to sleep for tomorrow.”

In such times, Mr. Ekenhart and Ms. Claire seemed to think alike.

“I knew that both of you would not want to stay up during the night with me. I shall sit here then, and repent for all the times that I was too intrusive...”

“No, uh. It is not like that, understand?”

“Ye-yes, Sebastian. It is not that I dislike you. In fact, I will stay and watch with you for now.”

“Yes, indeed. Mr. Takumi. We will be here a little longer, so you go back to the tent.”

“Haha...very well.”

From where I was standing, I could see the corner of Sebastian’s face rise into a smile... He surely had got them.

But the other two did not notice.

“...Well, good night.”

“Wou.”

“Yes, good night, Mr. Takumi.”

I pretended that I did not see Sebastian’s expression, and then headed back to the tent while carrying Liza.

“...Nicholas?”

“You must be tired, Mr. Takumi. ...I suppose Mr. Sebastian...will take a little longer.”

“Yes, I think so...”

When I approached the tent, I saw that Nicholas was standing nearby.

As he was paired with Sebastian, he was probably waiting.

Apparently, he saw the situation at the bonfire, as he was chuckling.

Well, it was a quiet night, aside from the shaking of leaves and sounds of the water... So it was no wonder that he was able to hear their conversation.

Regardless, I replied with a laugh and then entered the tent.

Of course, Leo could not go inside of the tent, and so a blanket had been laid out on the ground for her to sleep on.

I put Liza in her sleeping back, and then I slid into my own and closed my eyes.

As I was a little sleep-deprived, I should be able to sleep quickly.

I doubted it would be the same for Mr. Ekenhart and Ms. Claire, as they seemed to be still talking with Sebastian quietly.

If they are too tired, I could give them herbs tomorrow...

I wonder how many hours of sleep they will get...? It was with such thoughts that I fell into a deep sleep.

---

“Kya! Sherry! You’re splashing too much!”

“Kyau! Kyau!”

“Wuff-wuff!”

“...Hmm?”

I awoke to the sounds of voices outside of the tent.

For a second, I was confused that I wasn’t in my usual room, but then I remembered that we were sleeping in the forest, and I got out of my sleeping bag.

When I looked to the side, I saw that Liza’s sleeping bag was empty. So she had already gotten up.

After all, I had heard her voice just now...

## Chapter 485

Liza saw me getting ready

“...I wonder when Mr. Ekenhart went to sleep? His snoring is quite loud.”

On the other side of the tent, Mr. Ekenhart was sleeping loudly.

He was unlikely to get up for some time.

In any case, I left him and stepped out of the tent.

Apparently, it was just me and him. As Phillip’s sleeping bag was empty.

“Ah, papa! You’re up?”

“Aye, I am. Morning, Liza.”

“Yes, good morning!”

“Wou.”

“Kyau!”

“Good morning, Mr. Takumi.”

“Good morning, Ms. Lyra.”

Liza called out from the river as soon as she saw me.

And so I walked over to her, and then greeted the others.

Sherry was playing in the shallow part of the river, and Liza was with her.



As you did not need to swim, Sherry would be fine.

As for Leo, she was in the deep part of the river, and swimming like a dog... She really did like to swim. Perhaps it was for exercise.

And then there was Ms. Lyra, who stood smiling by the river, and seemed to be watching over the others.

I greeted her as well, and then started to prepare for the morning.

“...Huh. So that’s what you do, papa.”

“Oh, you haven’t seen this before? Well, there are some things a man does in the morning.”

I washed my face in the river and started to shave.

As I was used to it now, I was able to shave cleanly without cutting my face... At least, I think I did... I didn’t have a mirror, so I could only check my reflection in the river.

Liza was looking at me curiously, which was a little embarrassing, but I made sure that it did not show on my face.

Because she always went away with Tilura or Ms. Lyra, she had never seen me getting ready before.

“Now, since we have finished eating, it’s time to finally go and search for some orcs.... Hahh...”

“Your Grace!”

“Oh...sorry. I didn’t get much sleep. In any case, today, we shall search for and hunt the orcs.”

After I was finishing getting ready, Liza, Leo and Sherry came out of the river, and we helped Ms. Lyra with breakfast.

As there were a lot of people, I thought that it would be hard. But since there was another maid, it finished quickly.

Well, I was just washing and cutting vegetables as ordered.

Ms. Lyra did the actual cooking.

Speaking of breakfast, this was to be the last one where Sherry would eat the same thing as the rest of us.

After lunch, she had to hunt orcs for food... According to Leo.

By the time we were all finished eating, Mr. Ekenhart got up and came out of his tent.

While he must have slept quite late, he always had trouble getting up in the morning.

And so he skipped breakfast, and we all got ready and gathered together.

Mr. Ekenhart then addressed everyone as if giving a speech. However, he failed to stifle a yawn when getting to the important part.

...How long had he stayed up after I left?

I had been in such a deep sleep that I did not notice when he returned to the tent.

When I glanced to the side, I saw that Ms. Claire also looked sleepy and was holding back a yawn.

“...”

Ms. Claire noticed that I was looking at her, and then she turned away and blushed.

She really did not like being seen with her guard down... But that was also cute.

...Could I be blushing a little as well...?

As for Ms. Anne, who stood next to her, she was more tired than sleepy.

I guess one night of sleep was not enough to rid her of the tiredness of trekking through the forest.

After all, she did not exercise daily, and was not used to this.

Thinking of it like that, Ms. Claire certainly had a lot of energy, for being a similar noble woman... But it was no surprise, given that she was Mr. Ekenhart's daughter.

Tilura was standing in front of Mr. Ekenhart and listening to him with a serious expression.

And while I could not see her face, she was probably a little nervous and tense now that things were really getting started.

"First, we will have Leo detect their locations. Is that alright, Leo and Mr. Takumi?"

"Wuff!"

"Yes, we're ready."

I had made Leo eat some sense enhancing herbs in advance, so she should be able to sense presences in an even wider range than usual.

Like this, she could know where to go in order to find the orcs.

"Mmm. Once we know where the orcs are, we will have Phillip and the others head in that direction. And if there happens to be other monsters there as well, try and stay away."

"Yes!"

“And if you do find any orcs, provoke them so that they will follow you. And if you can, make sure that they are few in number. While I intend for them to take turns fighting, in general I want to create a situation where it is one against one.”

“Yes!”

Phillip and the guards would go into the forest and find the orcs that Leo sensed, and lure them to us.

And if there were too many, they were to kill some and lower their number.

As for who would go, it was Phillip, Nicholas and one other guard.

The other guards and Johanna would stay and protect us.

Leo would also stay as a protector, so it was more than enough. But when a lot of people enter the forest, it was possible that they could attract the attention of other monsters, so it was decided that only three people should go in.

Besides, the guards had been properly trained, so it was unlikely that they would suffer any grievous injuries...

Chapter 486

Leo searched for the orcs

“Next, there are the people who will fight the orcs that are lured out... First, Takumi will fight them. Is that alright?”

“Yes, that’s fine.”

Mr. Ekenhart said that I should be the first one.

As I had battled against orcs before, I could show Tilura how to do it.

I opened my hands that I had been clenching without thinking about it, and took in a deep breath.

It would be fine... I fought them before in Range village. It would be easy as long as I stayed calm.

Last time, it had been so sudden. But this time time, I would be fully prepared, so in terms of conditions, I had the advantage.

As this was part of our training, we were to not eat any strengthening herbs. But I knew that I had become stronger since the last time...!

“And then next is Tilura. Are you ready?”

“Yes! I will do my best!”

As I talked to myself and tried to remain calm, Tilura was brought up next.

After all, the whole point of this trip was so that she could experience a real battle against orcs.

“Mmm. Watch Mr. Takumi closely, and learn from him, alright?”

“I understand!”

Tilura answered in a voice that showed that she too was nervous.

Don't worry. If I could defeat them, then so can you, since you are always training so seriously, Tilura.

“And then...there is Sherry. Is that alright, good Leo?”

“Wuff!”

“Kyu...”

Lastly, there was Sherry, who was to learn how to hunt orcs.

Unlike Tilura and me, Sherry was not eager... But since she was a fenrir, she would surely be fine.

...I think?

“Now, I hope that all of you stay on your guard. These are monsters. Even with Leo around, you never know what will happen. So be careful so that you are not injured. That is all.”

“Yes!”

Now that everything was decided, we all took our positions.

Mr. Ekenhart, Tilura, Sherry and I waited with Leo a few meters outside of the forest.

Liza, Ms. Claire, and Ms. Anne were behind us with the butlers and maids by the river.

Just in case, the non combatant kept their distance.

As the river was at their back, there would be little risk of them being attacked.

Out of the remaining guards, Johanna was with Ms. Claire, while the other one was next to Mr. Ekenhart.

“Mr. Takumi. When you’re ready.”

“Very well. Leo. Can you tell us where the monsters are?”

“Wuff. ...Wou-wou. Grau-wuff.”

According to Leo, there were two orcs close by.

I then told Phillip and the others, so that they could head in that direction.

It was hard to describe it, as there were no markers in the forest, but since they had eaten sense enhancing herbs, they would be able to detect the monsters when they were close.

“We will go then.”

“Mmm. Be careful.”

“Yes!”

And so they went into the forest while holding their swords out and ready.

“...Mr. Takumi. It is quite boring to just wait...”

“Mr. Ekenhart. They have only just gone in. While I understand that it is boring, you should be more patient...”

“Yes, father! You should be prepared so you can face anything!”

“Tilura, you are too tense. You won’t be able to fight properly like that, you know? Well, it’s your first time, so it cannot be helped. In general, no one fights at their best the first time.”

“Is that so?”

“Mmm. Well, the first time, yes. But it’s a good thing that Tilura is facing orcs, which are relatively easier opponents compared to humans. Because when you are this nervous on your first time, you are likely to only be able to show half of your ability.”

“I see. Well, I suppose it is natural for people to be scared at such times.”

It was the same with sports. Being nervous meant you would not be able to play at your best.

I didn’t have any experience like that, but I heard that when playing in a different location or environment, you would often make mistakes that you wouldn’t usually make.

On the other hand, there were some people who did their best under pressure. But they were in the minority.

And while I didn't want to think about fighting with other humans, it might be something I had to consider in this world.

In preparation for such a time, experiencing battles against monsters would then affect the way one acts when it comes to war.

While monsters and humans were different, it was better than not experiencing anything.

When thinking about it like that, I had fought both, which was a decent amount of experience... even if it didn't feel like it.

Chapter 487

I was given permission to use the katana

"Mr. Takumi. I heard that during your first real fight, you faced numerous orcs, while buying time and saving the villagers. That is more than even a rookie soldier could do."

"Indeed? I was quite desperate back then... I just didn't want the orcs to reach the others..."

"Thinking that was one thing, but being able to actually do it is difficult."

"Well, Leo did help me in the end."

"But without your effort, the village might have been overrun before Leo arrived. At the very least, people would have died. So it is impressive that you were able to buy so much time."

"Well, there were some who were wounded... But even I felt that I did good, since no one died."

"Mmm. You should be proud of yourself."

I had not known that Leo would come, and so I was only focused on the orcs.



At first, I only meant to buy time so that the villager could escape. But then Mr. Hannes and the others tried to fight as well.

Because of that, we were able to fight without anyone dying...though some were injured.

And there were some surprises, like when I activated Weed Cultivation on the orcs. But it all ended well.

...I was proud of myself, and grateful towards Leo.

“Ah, that’s right, Mr. Takumi. You may not use herbs this time, understand?”

“Yes, I know. This is to test my ability, so I wouldn’t do such a thing.”

“Good. Of course, it is a different matter if you get injured.”

It would be like doping, and was forbidden.

“Ah, that is right. You can use the katana.”

“Really? But would that be a good example for Tilura?”

“I don’t mind. As for Tilura, she is just watching you fight orcs. It doesn’t matter what kind of weapon you will be using.”

“I see...”

When I looked towards Tilura, I saw that she was incredibly nervous.

Indeed, I doubted she would be able to pay attention to what weapon I was using, or any other small details....

“Wuff. Wuff-wuff.”

“Got it.”

“So they came...”

After about twenty minutes since Phillip went into the forest, Leo started to bark.

According to her, they were returning with some orcs.

When I listened carefully, I could hear Phillip and the other guard shaking the trees.

I petted Leo in order to thank her, and then I nodded to Mr. Ekenhart and took a few steps forward.

Within a few minutes, I heard the rustling of leaves, and Phillip and the guard stepped out of the forest.

And then behind them, was a bipedal pig... The orc came running.

While luring it here had been the plan, it was red with rage as well.

How had it been provoked?

“Mr. Takumi. There were two orcs, but we killed one of them. You can handle this one. We threw some stones at it, and so it is very angry. But it should be no trouble for you!”

“I’m sorry. Phillip said it would be better this way and would not listen...”

“Good luck!”

“I don’t know if I like it... But, very well then!”

I looked at the orc that was running towards us.

“First of all, I have to stop its charge... I cannot block it with the katana... I know.”

“Gyuo!! Gyuo!! Gyuoooooo!!”

“...Why is it so excited?”

The orc was as red as an apple, and was ignoring me and running in a straight line towards Phillip.

I had to stop it, as it might charge towards Ms. Claire and the others.

The first thing to do was to stop its movement. And so I moved my hand towards the overexcited orc.

...I didn't know if it would be enough to stop it, but I had used this to buy time in Range village, and so it should at least be enough to slow it down.

Orcs were not that fast, unless they were charging... And so it would be reckless to intercept it with a katana... It would probably break.

In any case, in order to stop its momentum as much as possible, I gathered magic energy in my hand...

Chapter 488

I faced the orc with magic and blade

“Light elemental shine!”

“Gyuo??!”

“Good, just what I wanted...not really. But it killed its momentum!”

It was just magic that created light.

The first spell I ever learned and used in Range village. I unleashed it in order to blind the orc.

The light itself was only for a brief moment, but it was enough to stagger it.

And yet, as the orc was so angry, it did not stop its charge... Even though it was slower. But that was enough for me.

“Guoo!!”

“Ha!”

Its eyes were now open, and it was glaring at me.

Still, it had finally stopped targeting Phillip and the others.

Even though it was still excited...

I thought of such things and confirmed that I was calm. Then I held the katana at a low position and kicked off the ground towards the orc.

Experience really did make a big difference... Even with the orc in front of me, I was able to calmly think of the most effective action.

Besides, this wasn't a dangerous situation like last time, so there was less pressure.

“Hya!”

“Gyuo!? Gyuaaa!!”

Without losing momentum, I moved to the side so that I would pass by the orc.

And in the same instant, I swung the blade from my waist.

I was aiming at the orc's legs.

No matter how angry it was, it would not be able to move without legs.

The blade hit the orc's right leg, just as I had hoped, and it cut it off smoothly.

There was less resistance than with my normal sword...which showed how sharp it was.

As the orc's legs were short, I had to angle the sword lower than expected, and I lost my balance a little afterwards. That was the one mistake I felt that I made.

After losing its right leg, the orc let out a scream as it stumbled and rolled across the rocks before stopping.

“Gyu...gyuooo!”

“Ah, before it stands up!”

“Giii! ...”

“Phew...”

The orc had shouted and began to pick itself up off of the ground.

I wasn't sure if it would be able to stand with one leg, but I would not lower my guard with such a monster.

I quickly turned around and thrust the sword deep into the orc's head.

After a short scream, the orc became silent and then stopped moving completely.

Regardless, I had done the basics of stopping its movement and then dealing the finishing blow... but it had not been perfect. And so I sighed as I wiped off the blood and returned it to my sheath.

I didn't know if it was a good example, but I had done my job.

"Well done! You slowed the orc with magic and then attacked before finishing it off... Your training has clearly had an effect."

"Mr. Ekenhart. Yes, it is due to my experience and training."

"And your ability, Mr. Takumi."

"Wuff! Wuff!"

"Thank you, Leo."

As soon as I sheathed my blade, Mr. Ekenhart called to me in a loud voice.

And so I walked towards him and thanked him.

Leo also wagged her tail joyously.

"Uh, Tilura? Are you alright?"

"...Ah, yes! I'm fine!"

I petted Leo and then looked at Tilura. She seemed quite stunned as she stared at the dead orc.

But when I called to her, she said that she was fine... But was she really?

"Well, it is her first time, so it might have been a shock. It was a good thing you fought first, Mr. Takumi."

“Indeed...”

Even if she had seen orc meat, she had not seen a living orc before.

And she was still young, so it could not be helped.

“...Mr. Takumi. Were you hurt?”

“Ms. Claire. I’m fine. I was calm the whole time, and so I was not injured.”

“I see... That’s a relief. ...Still this is the first time I saw you fight. It was splendid!”

“Really? Of course, it’s nothing compared to Mr. Ekenhart or Phillip...”

“Well, Phillip and I are more experienced. We have trained for longer. But it is still impressive how fast you have learned.”

As we were talking to Tilura, Ms. Claire, who had been watching from the lake, came towards us.

Apparently, she had been worried about me.

I smiled and assured her that I was fine, and she sighed in relief. And then she praised me, which made me feel a little embarrassed.

I wasn’t used to being praised, especially not for fighting.

Well, no one would be in Japan.

This wasn’t sports, as you could actually die.

Chapter 489

It was Tilura’s Turn

We chuckled and then I looked towards the river to see how Liza was doing. She and Ms. Lyra were happy that I had defeated the orc.

She showed no signs of being overwhelmed.

Well, they were quite far away, so it wouldn't have had as much impact.

As for Phillip and the other guard, they were still catching their breath.

“Wuff? Wou-wou!”

“Hmm, Leo... What is it?”

“Wou-wou-wou!”

“Kyu!”

Leo suddenly started barking, and then so did Sherry.

Did you see that? It was so easy! A fenrir would have no trouble! Leo seemed to say.

Sherry was at Ms. Claire's feet, and replied cheerfully.

She hadn't been enthusiastic about it before, but perhaps she changed her mind after seeing me fight?

“It looks like Sherry wants to fight now. ...But I hope that she doesn't do anything dangerous.”

“Well, Leo is watching, so it should be fine. Besides, she is a fenrir. So surely she is stronger than an orc?”

“Yes, Claire. While it is true that Sherry is still small, and does not look strong at all... You should believe in her. As she is your familiar.”



“...Indeed. Well, do your best, Sherry.”

“Kyau!”

Sherry looked up and barked happily.

While she had been like a house dog, she seemed reliable now.

“So, Tilura is next. Can you do it?”

“Yes, I’m fine!”

“Tilura. You don’t have to if you don’t want to, you know?”

“Sister, I will do my best. So you better watch!”

“Yes, very well.”

While Tilura replied energetically, it was clear to all that she was terribly nervous.

I was a little concerned, but Leo was here, just in case. And the guards and I could also intervene.

...And Mr. Ekenhart would also help her.

Tilura also seemed to want to prove herself in front of Ms. Claire.

And Ms. Claire was looking at her seriously, as if to take in the sight of her sister’s growth.

Mr. Ekenhart nodded as he watched, and his eyes welled up with tears. Was this really the right time to cry?

“...Mm! So, good Leo?”

“Wuff!”

Mr. Ekenhart coughed when he noticed that I was looking at him, and then he turned to Leo so that she would detect the orcs.

Leo then turned her nose towards the forest and began to search for them.

Shortly after, Leo discovered three orcs, and I relayed the information to Phillip and the guard, who then went out to lure the orcs to us.

“Tilura. Be prepared so that you can face them at any moment.”

“Yes!”

Tilura then unsheathed her sword.

Obviously, it was not a katana, but a specially made short sword.

Mr. Ekenhart had ordered it in Ractos, and given it to his daughter before we entered the forest.

It was a plain short sword, and smaller than the one I had.

As Tilura was still short, even an ordinary short sword was too big for her.

Even the one she had now might be too long, but Tilura would grow quickly anyway.

And though it wouldn't have much reach, the important thing was that it was easy for her to handle.

Tilura swung her sword in the air a few times and confirmed that it was easy to use.

“Tilura, you saw how the orcs charge, didn’t you? Even if it is moving towards you, it will be fine as long as you remain calm. While you cannot use magic like Mr. Takumi did, you can still avoid them. And cutting them as they pass is an effective method.”

“Yes!”

Mr. Ekenhart must have been worried that Tilura was nervous, as he started to give her some advice.

In my case, I was able to use light magic to stun the orc, but Tilura had not been taught that yet.

There had been a brief lesson about magic before, but it was mostly just playing... Still, she had been told some basic things at least.

In any case, as it was now, she had fewer options for dealing with an orc’s charge.

And Tilura did not have the strength to directly block an orc’s attacks.

She would just get knocked off of her feet.

And so she would have to dodge. I suppose that meant she would use my own way of dodging as an example...

Chapter 490

Leo defeated the orc quickly

As Tilura’s sword was small, it would not be able to cut off an orc’s leg easily like mine. However, it could still injure an orc and slow it down.

Well, we didn’t even know if the orc really would come charging...

While the previous orc that had been lured here had been furious, since they knew that Tilura was facing the next one, they might try to avoid that...

“Mr. Takumi, about the orc...”

“Yes?”

As I was watching Mr. Ekenhart speak with Tilura, one of the maids called out to me.

Apparently, it was about the orc I had just defeated.

“We will take it away now and drain it of blood. Is that alright?”

“Ah, yes. Thank you.”

I suppose they were going to prepare it so we could eat it today.

We would probably have to go into the forest and recover the other orc they killed later.

“Wuff.”

As the butler and guards started to take the orc away, Leo suddenly barked right next to me. At the same time, I heard the sounds of rustling coming from the forest.

Had Phillip returned with a new orc?

“I’m sorry! There was another orc nearby, and it was difficult to attract one without the other noticing, and so there are two of them!”

The guard said quickly as he emerged from the forest.

Two huh... Yes, two orcs were a little severe for your first time...

As I was thinking this, Leo moved over to where Tilura was waiting.

“Leo?”

“Wuff.”

Leave it to me. Leo was saying that to her.

In the meantime, Nicholas and Phillip also came out of the forest.

As each had only been able to kill one orc, they had serious expressions, but they were then relieved to see that Leo was standing next to Tilura.

Well, orcs were nothing in front of Leo... She had defeated three in no time when we were here previously.

“Gyuooo!!”

“Gyuo! Gyuo!”

And then the two orcs followed them out of the forest.

Unlike the orc that I fought, they were not red in the face.

This time, they had not been provoked to the same degree.

“...Alright, Leo. Go!”

“Grau!”

“Gyuo!?”

“Gyua!!”

I gave the signal once Phillip and the others were out of the way.

It was the one that we had practiced in my room before.

Leo reacted swiftly and jumped on one of the orcs.

Her claws slashed the one on the right side, and after cutting it in half, she dashed in the direction of the forest.

The other orc was so stunned that it froze as the severed orc let out a short scream.

While Leo probably meant for Tilura to finish off the remaining one, why did she run to the forest...?”

“Gyuu!? Gyuo!?”

“...Ah, I see.”

By running behind it, she was blocking the orc’s escape route.

After seeing the other orc killed so quickly, and having seen Leo, the orc seemed to consider running away.

But Leo was blocking one direction, and in the other was Tilura with a sword, and other humans...

I could see it hesitate.

“Tilura, this is your chance. Do not let it go to waste.”

“...Yes!”

“Gyu!? Gyuaaa!!”

Tilura nodded and had immediately raised her sword and rushed towards the orc.

The orcs seemed surprised to see the single small human attack, but then it quickly made her its target.

And while they moved towards each other, there was not enough distance for the orc to get into a full speed charge.

It was probably aware of this as well, as it then raised its right arm, likely in order to hit Tilura with it.

While she wielded a sword, she was so small that the orc underestimated her.

But Tilura ducked underneath the right arm, and slid towards its feet.

“Guo!?”

“Good!”

“Oh...”

I couldn’t help but mutter. Mr. Ekenhart also sounded impressed.

Tilura had used her height to go low, where the orc couldn’t reach, and avoid its arm.

And as the orc was surprised, she stretched out her body and cut into its stomach!

It did not look that deep, but it was a strong enough attack to deal damage.