

Beloved Dog 731

Chapter 731

I told them about my past

“Really, Sebastian... Ah, that’s it. Mr. Takumi. You said something about not being able to be with Leo. How were things back then?”

After seeing that I looked depressed, Claire suddenly changed the subject. Or maybe she was just curious about how I used to live.

“Uhh, well, Leo didn’t used to be this big. I think that I told you that before...”

“Yes. When we were in Range village. You said that she was like that dog.”

“To be precise, that Maltese was still not fully grown. So Leo would be a little bigger. In any case, she was still small enough that I could pick her up...”

Since I thought it was a good opportunity, I decided to tell everyone in the dining hall about my life when I was in Japan.

“I see... So it is because of that past experience, that you decided to give your employees holidays?”

“Well, only does it mean that you have little time for yourself, but working so hard has a stronger impact on your body than you realize. Besides, I wouldn’t want to take it easy while others were working...”

After hearing about my past, Claire seemed to understand my reasoning.

The others were nodding as well. Except for Liza and Sherry. I suppose they didn’t really understand yet.

“In any case, the point is that I want to use a shift system, where they can take turns working. As we are dealing with plants, they cannot be left unattended for two whole days.”

“Indeed... There must be someone there to watch over them.”

“And so in order to do this, we will need to hire a lot of workers.”

Sometimes, it may even be necessary to watch the plants at night. And so I wasn't thinking about letting everyone rest at once.

As for the night time, when it came to the herbs we were currently growing and experimenting with in the garden, it was not necessary to watch them. However, it could be different with other plants in the future.

There were flowers that only bloomed at night. So such plants would have to be picked when the sun goes down.

Of course, most of the work was still likely to be conducted during the day.

“Yes. If there are that many days of rest, then you will have to hire that many more workers. Lady Claire?”

“Mr. Takumi, what an interesting idea. I think that maybe I will do something similar to that as well.”

“Yes, that is good. You would know how to adjust it to fit with this place.”

“Very well. I shall give it some consideration before I have to hire people.”

“Mr. Takumi... Yes, including the matter of way, let us think on it and decide later. There are still other things we have not figured out yet. And what we discussed here will have to be told to the people at the interview. I think even more people will be interested now.”

“I'm sorry for increasing your work.”

“Hohoho, it is fine. It is fun to think of various things and challenge myself. Hmmm...perhaps I will leave the small details to the younger butlers as part of their education. And then once we choose a butler for you, he will take on the rest.”

“Yes, thank you. However...why aren't you doing it if it's so fun?”

“I have other matters to attend to. Like that horse rental service. An interesting idea, but will need a lot of thought when it comes to expenses.”

“Ahaha...”

While Sebastian was smiling, there was a serious look in his eye. And so I could see that he was intent on making it happen.

It was just a whim, but I would be glad if it helped make things a little more convenient for the people in the towns and villages.

Though, it results in more work for the butlers... And it was too late to turn back.

At least Sebastian and Claire were enthusiastic about it...

Chapter 732

Liza had a strange suspicion

After dinner, I finished training with Tilura, and then I took a bath to wash off the sweat. Then I returned to my room and sat on the bed while petting Leo.

“...We ended up talking for quite a long time today. I suppose it was quite boring for you two?”

“No. I didn't understand it much... But it sounded important!”

“Wuff-wuff.”

Apparently, Liza had still been listening and was not bored.

Leo was nodding in agreement...but I wasn't too convinced.

"Hey, papa?"

"Yes, what is it?"

"Uh..."

She suddenly looked like she wanted to ask me about something. Though, it seemed more like curiosity than anything serious.

"Are...you not a human?"

"Huh!? Why do you ask that? I...am a human..."

"Well, when you were talking earlier... You said that you and mama came from a different place. That is not here... So I thought that maybe you were not human..."

"Hmm... I suppose I can understand that... Yes, it was a different place from this one. But that doesn't mean that I'm not human."

Sometimes, children think of really surprising things. But I had not expected this...

Though, I had never told Liza that I was from another world...

"Is that so? I thought that maybe you were different from other people...like me. But if that was true, people would bully you too."

"Oh, so you were worried... Thank you. But I'm fine. Everyone has been very nice to me. Besides, if people did try to hurt me..."

"Grau!"

“Right? Leo...your mama, would not allow it.”

“Yes! You will be fine if you’re with mama!”

While Liza did not really understand how I could be from another world, she sensed that I was different. And so she was worried that I might have been persecuted as well.

Of course, that had never happened. And if it did, I would just use my sword... Though, in order to reassure Liza, I just looked towards Leo.

“Wou. Wuff-wuff.”

“Thank you, mama. Aha!”

“Hey, Leo. Don’t do that too much, okay?”

“Wuff!”

Leo pushed her nose towards Liza and licked her face as if to reassure her.

While Liza seemed happy, I didn’t want her to have to wash up, and so I told Leo to be careful.

“Hmm?”

“Wuff?”

I was just starting to think about going to sleep, when I heard a quiet knock on the door.

“Mr. Takumi, Leo, Liza...are you still awake?”

“Tilura?”

“Wou.”

“It’s sister Tilura!”

While Tilura was usually loud and energetic, her voice was very hushed now. Perhaps it was because it was late.

“Is something the matter? Come in. We’re all still awake.”

“Yes, excuse me.”

Tilura hesitantly opened the door and entered the room.

Liza rushed forward and hugged her.

Chapter 733

Tilura was lonely

“So, what brings you here at this hour, Tilura?”

“I’m sorry... Haha, Liza’s tail tickles.”

“Hehe. You’re so ticklish, sister Tilura.”

Well, it was apparently nothing urgent.

“Wuff?”

“Ah, sorry, Leo and Mr. Takumi.”

“No, it’s fine. So, what is it?”

“Uh... You promise that you won’t laugh?”

“Well, it depends on what you say.”

“Oh... But I came all this way, so I have to say it...”

“Papa, don’t be mean!”

“Haha. I’m not trying to be. Alright, I promise that I won’t laugh.”

“And you won’t tell Claire?”

“Uhhh... It depends... But as long as it is nothing serious, I will not tell her.”

Of course, if it was anything important then I would have to tell Sebastian or Claire about it. But it seemed like this was not the case.

“Um... Without Rahle, I feel lonely... But I think my sister would scold me if I told her. And that’s why I came to see Leo and Liza...”

“Haha. I see... But Rahle always sleeps outside anyway. So I don’t think it’s that big of a difference.”

“That’s true, but... After Rahle left, I feel sad... It was fine up until yesterday...”

Apparently, Tilura missed Rahle and was sad that it had not returned yet.

When I was young, I once went to live with my uncle for some time. And I remember being sad, thinking that I would not be able to see my parents again. And I cried at night, much to my uncle’s confusion.

Once you realize that you cannot meet someone whenever you want, you suddenly feel sad.

Even if Tilura was older than Liza, she was still only ten.

“I see. Well, it cannot be helped.”

“...You aren’t going to laugh at me?”

“Well, everyone is feeling a little lonely these days. And so I don’t think it is wrong to talk about it.”

When I left Range village, I had been quite sad about leaving the Maltese dog, who had reminded me so much of the old Leo.

“Good. I’m glad I came then. Because my sister would have laughed...”

“I don’t think Claire would have laughed at you...”

Though, perhaps she would have admonished her in some way and told her to be strong.

“Still, it is a little embarrassing.”

“Well, you are sisters. Sometimes it’s more embarrassing if you are family.”

Perhaps Tilura was at that age where she was feeling rebellious towards her family, and did not want to confide in them.

Mr. Ekenhart would not be happy about that...

I wondered if Liza would go through the same thing as a beastkin...

“Mr. Takumi?”

“Ah, sorry. It’s nothing.”

Tilura must have noticed the worried look on my face.

I should be more concerned about her. And this was no time to be thinking of such things and feeling depressed...

Chapter 734

Tilura and Liza were enveloped by Leo's fur

"...Can I stay until I get tired?"

"I don't mind...right, Liza and Leo?"

"Yes, we can be together. Hehe."

"Wuff-wuff."

Leo and Liza nodded in agreement.

Judging by her reaction, Liza would probably not enter her rebellious phase for some time. I would probably not be able to handle her when it happened. Thankfully, Ms. Lyra would probably be around to help me.

"Still, Tilura. I think there is something else you were interested in?"

"Is that so, sister Tilura?"

"Wuff?"

"...How did you know?"

"Haha, it's just you looked familiar. I've seen kids be hesitant like that before."

When we were still in Japan, and I would take Leo out on walks, there was this one girl who would always want to play with her.

As there was no one home, she would always look sad when Leo and I had to leave.

Of course, since I was so busy, this only happened around once a month...

“It’s fine. I won’t laugh at you.”

“...Uh, I want to sleep with Leo and Liza...”

“I see. Leo? Liza?”

“Yes!”

“Wou!”

“Well, they are fine with it.”

“Thank you, Mr. Takumi! I’m glad that I came!”

“That’s fine. But I hope you told Sebastian and the servants that you are here?”

“Of course.”

Previously, Tilua had come here early in the morning to see Leo.

And since it was right after she was sick, Clair and Sebastian had been worried. Thankfully, that would not happen this time.

“So soft... I’m already getting sleepy...”

I suppose it was the relief of not having to bear the loneliness after all. Tilura suddenly yawned.

And then Leo moved her body so that she enveloped Liza and Tilura.

It was probably softer than any bed...

“Ahh, Leo is so warm...”

“Yes, mama is so fluffy and warm!”

“Thanks, Leo. Well, you two enjoy your sleep. Hopefully, you’ll have good dreams.”

“Yes...”

“With mama and sister Tilura...sleep...”

“Wou?”

“That was fast.”

The two fell asleep in no time.

It was like turning off a switch. Even Leo seemed a little surprised.

“Wou. Wuff.”

Leo barked softly and wagged her tail happily so that she would not wake them up.

And while she mainly looked at Liza, she was looking at Tilura as well.

“Leo. Don’t get jealous of Rahle, alright?”

“Wuff!? Wou...?”

Leo was alarmed, as if I had read her mind.

Well, Tilura had become close with Rahle so quickly.

“She still likes you too. Don’t forget that, alright? Besides, Rahle has not been a familiar for long. So Tilura is probably more worried and feels like she has to do a lot of things herself.”

“...Wou.”

Chapter 735

Claire apologized to me

“Mr. Takumi. I’m sorry that Tilura troubled you last night.”

The next morning, Claire came to visit while I was washing up.

While Tilura had apparently notified someone, Claire still felt that she had caused trouble for us.

“It’s fine. Liza and Leo were happy to see her.”

“Wuff-wuff.”

“Leo is in a better mood than usual, because they slept together.”

Liza and Tilura had already gone off to wash their faces. But Leo was with me and wagging her tail happily.

“Thank you, Mr. Takumi. And you, good Leo. Still, I am a little jealous.”

“Jealous?”

Claire had looked down and muttered that last part.

Did she want to sleep with Leo too? Well, the fur was certainly very soft.

“No...it’s nothing. Still, perhaps we can sleep together again, like we did before going to Range village.”

“Uh...ahh...maybe?”

“Wuff!”

Before going to Range village... Ms. Lyra had been there too. Uh...I suppose it was fun.

“We’re back. I feel so refreshed. Ah...sister..”

“Papa. Mama. Ah, sister Claire. Good morning!”

“Good morning, Liza. Tilura... You really must not cause trouble, you hear?”

“Yes... I’m sorry.”

“It’s really no trouble at all. You don’t have to be sorry.”

“Wuff. Wuff-wuff.”

As we were talking, Tilura and Liza returned to the room cheerfully. And while Claire rebuked her sister, I did what I could, and the conversation ended.

“Tilura seems fine now. I suppose she tends to act tough, like father. And so I was worried when Rahle left... To be honest, I thought she would come to me and Sherry.”

As her older sister, she had also noticed the change with Tilura, and had been preparing to welcome her.

Regardless, Tilura showed none of the signs of being sad like yesterday. And I could see that Claire was very relieved.

See, Tilura? It would have been completely fine if you went to Claire. She would have accepted you. But I suppose it was still awkward for her.

“Well, maybe there are things you don’t like to say to your family. Regardless, I think she will be fine.”

“Thank you, Mr. Takumi. I experienced similar things at that age. It can be difficult...”

I could only imagine it. Mr. Ekenhart must have had a very difficult time with Claire at that age.

After talking with Claire a little longer, we headed to the dining hall for breakfast...

Once we had eaten breakfast, Leo and Liza played in the garden, while I worked in the fields with Milina and Ms. Lyra’s help.

As for Tilura, she had been taken away by Claire and made to study.

In the meantime, Sebastian approached me again...

“Mr. Takumi. The servants are restless...”

“...Restless?”

He had snuck up on me in order to complain about the servants again.

Even Ms. Lyra and Milina were shocked and had to stifle a scream. So it wasn’t that I was that oblivious or anything...

Chapter 736

The servants were talking about salaries

“It seems to be related to what you said about the way you would treat your employees.”

“Really?”

“The salary and holidays sounded quite appealing.”

“Ah...yes, I can see that...”

I had no idea how the pay compared to what they were getting now.

But they would get two days off every week. And without getting paid less for those days of no work.

“Ah, I heard about that as well! Master, you are going to hire so many people!”

“I heard the servants talking about it too. Are you really going to do it, Mr. Takumi?”

“Well, I don’t know if I’ll hire that many... But yes, they will be treated properly. Ms. Lyra, I am thinking about hiring you with those same conditions. Well, perhaps there will be adjustments.”

“You are too generous. It makes me a little worried about the kind of people that might approach you.”

“Ms. Lyra, that is why we and the others related to the duke will help him. We will make sure that Mr. Takumi does not hire anyone suspicious. Lady Claire will help as well. I doubt anyone will slip through.”

“...Yes. I’m sorry for doubting you. It will certainly be fine with Lady Claire there. Still, I hope that you will be careful, Mr. Takumi.”

It looked like everyone had a trust in Claire’s eye for seeing people.

“Yes, I understand that. Uh...and I will be sure to ask you for help, if I need it.”

“You can count on me!”

“Master, what about me? I am working hard here too, you know?”

“Haha. You have a very different job... I will ask for help when it comes to things related to medicine. If I ever want your opinion, I will ask for it.”

“Good. I shall be waiting!”

“Hoho. They are quite fond of you, Mr. Takumi.”

I suppose it was true. As for Milina, she was studying medicine and various other things. So even if it wasn't the case now, I had a feeling that I would rely on her a lot in the future.

“Ms. Lyra.”

“Yes, what is it?”

“I suppose I should make it a formal request. Will you...come and work for me in Range village? Not in the fields. You will be doing very similar work as you are doing now.”

“Are you...certain?”

“Yes. Your name was on the list that Sebastian gave me. And you have become close with Liza and Leo.”

“Tha-thank you. Yes, I would be honored to go and work for you.”

“Haha. It's nothing that special. But thank you. I'm sure Liza and Leo may cause you some trouble, but I will be counting on you.”

As she had been taking care of us ever since we arrived at the mansion, I knew her well now.

Outside of Leo and Liza, she was the one I was around the most.

And the house in Range village would be quite large, so it would be reassuring to have her.

Also...I wanted Ms. Gelda to come... But she could also be quite clumsy.

“Mr. Takumi. Are you trying to take our servants right in front of me?”

“Oh...sorry.”

“Hoho. But it is best for you to hire the people you want. So I don’t mind.”

Well, she was on the list, so there shouldn’t be a problem with it.

“Still...the staff here will become much younger. Once things really get started in Range village, it will also be quite busy in this mansion...”

“Uhh...sorry about that. I will be careful to not take too many of your servants...”

“As some will already be going with Lady Claire, it would be a problem if you took too many at once. But I doubt you have to worry about it. Just focus on people you can trust.”

“Thank you. I shall look at the list and confide in you first.”

“Good.”

While it would make things much easier if I just poached everyone from this house, I would be careful to not hire only from here...

We were prepared to go to the interview

Sebastian was saying that the staff of the mansion would become younger, because they would have to hire new people to work there once Claire and I left.

Of course, it would be difficult for them if they hired so many young and inexperienced people at once. And so I would have to talk to him about it later, so I would know how many we could safely take.

But then again, perhaps he would enjoy training the new servants...

“Well, I finished making the herbs. So now they just need to be picked.”

“Leave it to me!”

“I will help!”

And so with Milina and Ms. Lyra’s help, we finished with the herbs.

I then used Weed Cultivation to dry them out. Some were set aside to be sold, and some were taken by Milina to be turned into medicine.

After that, Nick arrived, and so I gave him the herbs to deliver to Ractos. And then I spent some time with Liza and Leo until it was lunch. After that, there was sword training with Tilura.

Leo was still making Sherry run, but not as much as before.

Sherry had lost weight and seemed to enjoy running around now... When she had first come here, she almost always rode on Leo.

I did my swing after dinner, and then had Ms. Lyra give Liza a bath.

Tomorrow, there will be the interviews... It was my first time, and so I did not want to look tired. And so I went to bed early...

The next morning, I had an early breakfast, and then gathered at the entrance hall with Leo and Liza.

“Mr. Takumi. Are you ready to go and meet the applicants that have gathered together in Ractos?”

“Now that you ask me...I’m not confident... But then again, you selected them in advance. So I’m sure it will be fine.”

I had done quite a lot of research in the past, when it was me who went on job interviews. And so I went into them with an idea of how I should act. But I never thought I would be on the other side.

“Well, since we are ready, let us depart. I have told Kalis in advance, so I’m sure there will be a lot of children there.”

“Haha. So they can play with Leo.”

“Wuff! Wou-wou?”

“Yes, Liza will be there too.”

“...Will I be alright, papa?”

“You will be fine. Leo and Mr. Kalis will be there. No one will bully you. So just have fun and play.”

“Okay... Yes. Mama will be with me!”

“Wou!”

As Leo and Liza could not go to the interview, we had arranged for them to stay with Mr. Kalis.

“Don’t worry, I will be with you at Mr. Kalis’s store as well.”

“Huh? I thought you were coming with us, Claire?”

“Well, this time, it is just the people that you are hiring, Mr. Takumi. Besides, there are things I must discuss with Kalis.”

“Ah...I see. Very well then. Isn’t that nice, Liza?”

“Thank you, sister Claire!”

“You are welcome. Hehe.”

“I will be going too!”

If I was being honest, I was a little disappointed that Claire would not be there to help me. But she had her own business to attend to. So it could not be helped.

In any case, having her with Liza was also reassuring. So I pushed other feelings of anxiety aside.

Furthermore, Tilura was also going with them. There was even less to worry about...on that side...

Chapter 738

We set off for Ractos

“Are you saying that you are worried with only my help, Mr. Takumi?”

“No, I didn’t say that exactly...”

“Don’t worry. I will be there too.”

“And so will I!”

“Haha. Well, that is reassuring...”

Aside from Sebastian, there was also Ms. Lyra and Milina. So we should be fine.

Those two were from Ractos, so they might be helpful when it came to speaking to people from there... They may even have friends among them.

“Mama! I’m thirsty!”

“Wou. ...Grau!”

“Haha. You really do like Leo’s water, huh?”

“Yes. Because it’s so delicious!”

Now that I thought about it, she had asked for it during the journey to and from Range village as well.

“Well, let’s go then.”

“Yes... You’re going with us, Tilura?”

“Yes! I want to be with Liza!”

“Wou!”

As Leo low, Tilura and Liza climbed onto her back.

I suppose she did it because she thought that Liza would be nervous about meeting the other children... Or maybe it was because she didn’t have Rahle right now.

Regardless, Leo seemed to be happy, as she wagged her tail and barked.

Claire and the others got into the carriage as well. I saw her sit down with Ms. Lyra.

I could ride with them, but I always felt a little nervous, being in such a cramped space with multiple people. And so I got onto Leo.

Sebastian had been watching me. And I could see that he was amused, as if he had been wondering which I would choose.

“Alright. Thank you, Leo.”

“Thank you, mama!”

“It really is fun riding on Leo!”

“Wuff-wuff!”

“Hello. Has anything interesting happened in the town recently?”

“No. Everything has been peaceful! The slums are quiet, and none of the visitors here have caused any trouble.”

“I see. That is good to hear...”

Sebastian talked to the guard in front of the gate after we arrived.

From what I could hear, it seems that things had improved after Deam’s arrest.

It was probably just temporary, but I was glad that the town had some peace for now.

After we went through the gate, we parked the carriage and horses and went to the central plaza.

As always, the place really was crowded... Thankfully, the plaza was huge, so it didn't feel cramped.

"Now, Mr. Takumi. I will go to Kalis's store."

"Yes. ...Leo, take care of Liza, alright?"

"Wou!"

"Good luck, papa!"

After leaving the horses and carriages, we separated from Claire and the others, and made our way to the place where the interviews would be held.

Claire's team included Tilura, Liza, Leo, Ms. Johanna and Sherry.

Wile mine had Sebastian, Ms. Lyra, Phillip and Nicholas.

Now that Ms. Lyra had agreed to work for me, she was here to look at her future coworkers.

Chapter 739

Clumsy people around town

"Well, let's go then, Mr. Takumi."

"Yes."

After seeing Claire and the others off, I made my way to the venue with Sebastian.

"...You look nervous.

"Of course I am. I've never done anything like this before..."

“But given your position, I think you should be a little more confident... But I suppose that is not like you.”

“Mr. Takumi never acts important, no matter who he is dealing with. Even I think that he could give out orders a little more...”

“Haha...it’s my personality...”

Ms. Lyra was agreeing with Sebastian. That was like here. As she enjoyed taking care of people.

“Mr. Takumi. There it is.”

“I have never been in this area before. It is that large building over there?”

“Yes. The people that manage the town work inside of that building.”

So it was like a city office?

We were close to the orphanage, but it was away from the main road, so I had never been here before.

But then again, I had never walked carefully through every corner off Ractos, so there were a lot of places I didn’t know of.

The building was very large, with multiple stories and guards standing in front of the entrance.

“Excuse me. I am in a hurry... Ah!”

“Uh...”

As we made our way to the entrance, a woman rushed out from behind us, passing between Sebastian and I.

I thought that she must have some kind of emergency. However, before she reached the entrance, she tripped and fell forward.

It happened so suddenly that all of us, including the guards, were stunned for a moment.

...It reminded me of something that I had seen before... Oh, it was Ms. Gelda.

“...Are you alright?”

“That was quite a fall. Are you injured?”

“I...I...I’m fine. Thank you. ...Ah! Oh...good.”

“Huh?”

With the help of Sebastian and Ms. Lyra, we helped the woman get up to her feet.

She was holding her nose as if it hurt, but there was no blood.

I suppose she was lucky?

“Is something the matter?”

“No-no. Nothing at all. I’m sorry to have troubled you... I am in a hurry. Please excuse me! I won’t make it in time!”

“...What a restless person.”

“Indeed...”

As if remembering something, the woman swiftly left us and rushed into the building. I just hoped she would not fall again.

“Still, Sebastian...”

“What is it?”

“Well...including that woman...I saw a lot of people in town wearing hats with ears.”

“...Apparently, it became quite popular after you bought them, Mr. Takumi. Halton is good with such things.”

“Ah...”

“It seems that it was due to many people seeing us wearing them. At least, that is what I heard.”

“Well, I do remember that we attracted a lot of attention... But it seems much too fast? Especially if they are only being made at a single store?”

After the Deam incident, a lot more people knew about me... And so I knew that I would be recognized. But not to this degree...

Not only was it just people walking down the streets, but even merchants with street stalls were wearing them. There were definitely more than a few hundred out there.

No matter how hard they worked, I doubt Mr. Halton’s store could have made that much...

Chapter 740

It was like a city office

“Halton had a hunch that it would sell, and so he got the help of other tailors and stores. That is what I have heard. Of course, they are not the same quality as yours. But they were also sold at a cheaper price...”

“Well, it would be hard to maintain the quality if they had to make them so quickly. Still, Mr. Halton must have a good eye for business.”

“He understands what will sell.”

“I think those hats are very cute.”

Ms. Lyra was quite fond of the hats... Well, they did look cute on some people, I suppose.

Not so much on me or Sebastian.

“Regardless, we should go inside, or we will be late.”

“Yes, that’s true...”

And so we entered the building.

Now that I thought about it, the woman from earlier had also been in a hurry. Was there something else happening now?

“Mr. Takumi. This way...”

“The representative room...?”

The building did seem a little similar to a city office.

There were different desks where you could register for things or get consultation regarding taxes and other things.

We then walked down the hallway and climbed up some stairs. Once we reached the fifth floor, Sebastian took me to a large door.

“This room is usually occupied by the person who manages the town.”

“I see.”

Like a governor or chief, I suppose.

However, I had never met this person...even though I had met with the guards many times, and they recognized me.

“Well then...”

Sebastian knocked on the door.

I heard a man’s voice telling us to enter, and so we opened the door and stepped inside.

“Excuse me.”

“Welcome, Sebastian! So this is Mr. Takumi? I heard that he is the duke’s favorite! Ah, my apologies. I am called Soldon. Sebastian and the people of the town have told me a lot about you! It was unfortunate that I could not meet the duke before he left...”

“Mr. Soldon, please calm down. You are startling him. Regardless, His Grace knows that you are busy. So it cannot be helped. Uh, Mr. Takumi?”

“Uh, yes. Hello. I am Takumi. It’s nice to meet you...”

“Oh, how considerate the duke is! He understands, even if I cannot see him. Though, I really should have gone anyway.... Ah, excuse me, Mr. Takumi. I do not know how I can thank you for everything you have done for this town...”

“As you can see, he talks a lot. Perhaps it is because he works so much that he misses talking with people.”

“Ah...”

Soldon was a thin man who was all smiles as he spread out his arms and welcomed us warmly.

Well, it was meant to be warm, but his talking was a little overwhelming, and I was starting to feel tired... And right when I had to meet other people for the interviews... Still, I had been nervous about meeting someone so important, but it looked like I had no reason to be...