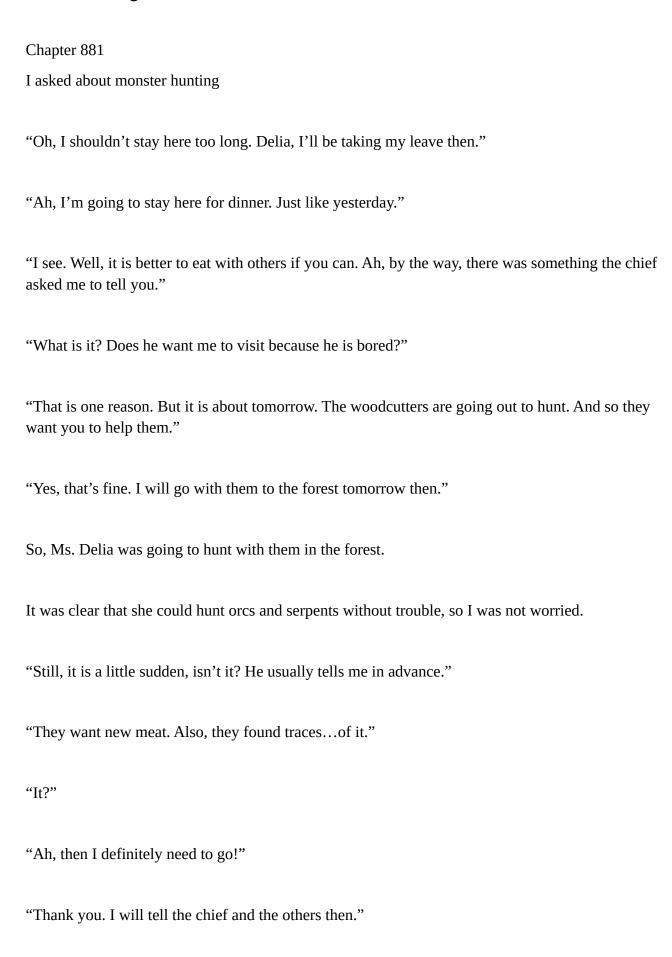
Beloved Dog 881



Said Mr. Kanat, and then he left.

He sure seemed busy. Negotiating for the chief and delivering messages. But I wondered what he was usually doing?

I would have to ask him later.

"Ms. Delia, what did he mean by 'it'?"

"Ah, you wouldn't have understood that. It is a certain monster. Quite large for a village like ours, but it is popular because it tastes good. And they try their best to hunt it if it ever appears."

"Huh. What kind of monster is it?"

"In terms of size...it is close to Leo. Well, at least when they are adults."

"That is quite big."

"Yes. And they are also so fast, so they often run away even when we find them. I think that is why they called me. So that it doesn't get away."

"Large, fast and delicious... Are you talking about Audhumbla?"

"So you know about them, Mr. Phillip. Yes, that is what they are called."

As he worked as a guard and a soldier, he had a decent amount of knowledge concerning monsters.

Nicholas was also nodding, so he must know about them as well.

Audhumbla, huh... I felt as if I had heard that name in some myth before.

Of course, there was no guarantee that they were the same in this world.



"However, the combination of their speed and weight make their charges even more dangerous than that of orcs." "Now that I think about it, I remember someone saying that they could easily knock a troll off of its feet." "Even a troll? That is something..." After Phillip, Nicholas also told me about the Audhumbla. Trolls were three meters tall and incredibly strong. How powerful would it have to be to knock down something like that? "Not only that, but they are also good at quick turns. Still, you just have to be able to dodge them. And turns can be seen as a chance to attack." "Well, you would have to be very skilled to take advantage of that..." "But after seeing Ms. Delia playing with the children, it makes sense." She had the speed of a horse, after all. It was no wonder that the woodcutters wanted her help. "Hmm, Ms. Delia. Do you think I could participate in this Audhumbla hunt?" "Mr. Takumi!?" "Uh...don't call me 'mister,' Phillip." "...Oh, I was just surprised. But surely there is no need to go out and hunt monsters? It is dangerous."

"Mr. Takumi, why do you want to go? I have not known you for that long, but you do not seem like the type who enjoys going on hunts."

Ms. Delia was right to wonder about that.

Indeed, if I had a choice, I would generally prefer to avoid fighting.

Still, I had to explain that it wasn't mere interest.

"I have not got to meet the woodcutters yet, so there is that. Also, I feel like I should experience this. Hunting...or watching something other than an orc be hunted."

I had been able to meet the people who worked in the fields, but not the others yet.

Well, it wasn't as if I had to, but since I wanted to view different people at their jobs, it seemed like a good idea.

"Well, there was that serpent that you caught... But I have not seen that many monsters here."

"There are people who live in the cities who have never even seen an orc."

"Well, they are generally protected by walls and guards. So if you do not leave, it is no surprise that you've never seen one."

"Still, I have fought against orcs. It was part of my training. And so I think I should see others as much as possible. Of course, I will be sure to not get in anyone's way. I just want to watch, not really participate."

After all, a stranger joining suddenly would affect their teamwork.

I did not know much about this monster and would not know what to do or how to be helpful to the others.

And the last thing I wanted to do was to cause trouble.

"Well, if that is all, then it shouldn't be a problem. And if something happens, I will protect you."

"...But that is our job. Ms. Delia, do not worry. We will protect Takumi."

"Oh, I forgot that you two are guards."

"And so you can focus on hunting the Audhumbla. Leave Takumi to us."

After thinking about it for a moment, Ms. Delia nodded her head and agreed. She also said that she would protect me, but Phillip and Nicholas insisted that it was her duty.

Well, I did want her to focus on the hunt without worrying about me...

Chapter 883

I felt that it was necessary to see monsters

"...So, you two are fine with me going then? I thought you would be against it."

"As guards, it is generally not our place to disagree with you. Unless we determine that it is far too dangerous."

"Indeed. Besides, I suppose you've been influenced by Lady Claire...but we know there is no point in trying to stop you."

"Haha. I wouldn't go that far... Though, I have been influenced a little."

If anything I am probably being influenced by Mr. Ekenhart.

"Very well. I will come for you tomorrow then, so please be prepared. We will be departing... around breakfast time."

"I understand. Thank you, Ms. Delia."



"...Regardless, I would like to see people fighting monsters as much as possible." The real reason that I wanted to participate. I was not lying to Ms. Delia and the others, but there was another thing that I had been thinking "I was born and raised in a world without monsters. So I have to get used to them... Even though my old world had war and death too..." It had now been some time since I came here, and I had fought some orcs as well. In Japan, you generally did not kill anything unless it was livestock for food. Otherwise, it would be a crime. But in this world, there were dangerous monsters around, and people did not have the same values. After all, you could die if you did not defend yourself. And no one wanted that. "Back in Range village, I had been desperate... If I had hesitated, I would have died, as well as the villagers." While I had been scared, I had been able to stand my ground because I had seen Leo fighting orcs in the forest before. "If Range village were to be threatened again, I don't want to get in people's way. After all, I have to protect the people that I was hiring. Well, I suppose it would be fine, if Leo is there..." That being said, I didn't want to rely on Leo for everything.

I wanted to be a boss who people could count on. And so this was an experience I wished to absorb.



While I knew it was her, I could not help but answer as if to a rhythm. Even Phillip was looking at me oddly. Nicholas turned away but seemed to be smiling. Well, I had just copied what I had seen in old dramas and cartoons. That was all. "Mr. Takumi, I came to pick you up... Is something the matter?" "No, it's nothing." "Hehe..." Ms. Delia looked puzzled as she entered the house. The other two looked like they were holding back laughter. "So! We are leaving now?" "Yes! The others have gathered together at the village entrance. Let's go! ...Mr. Takumi, that sword suits you well." "Ah, I've trained so that I have a decent handle on it." Now that I thought about it, I had not told her about my sword training... As I had been able to defeat orcs, it should not be wrong to say that I could wield it well enough. "He is being modest. Takumi is not much different than your average soldier." "Oh? Impressive!" While I felt he was exaggerating, it did feel good to have the approval of someone like Phillip.

I had only trained in order to protect myself, and had no intention of ever fighting soldiers or guards... Yes, especially since I was clearly not really at that level. I would be careful to not get carried away.

It was bad to get arrogant.

"In any case, do not worry about me, Ms. Delia. I can handle an orc, and Phillip and Nicholas will be with me as well."

"But could we really defend Takumi if he is attacked by the Audhumbla?"

"It would depend on the situation. I do wish there was at least one more person... But I think we should be able to manage."

"Ahh, if only Johanna were here. Though, she never would leave Lady Claire."

Phillip and Nicholas started to talk about a scenario where we were attacked...

They had taken on the responsibility, but I was starting to have my doubts...

"Oh, it's Delia and her new friends..."

"Uh, nice to meet you. I am Takumi."

"Aye. I'm the leader of the woodcutters. Everyone calls me foreman."

The woodcutters were all gathered by the south entrance, which was close to the forest.

About ten men were there, and they appeared to be mostly between twenty and thirty. All of them were carrying axes and saws, and so we introduced ourselves.

Chapter 885

The woodcutter foreman had a strong personality

I noticed that the foreman had a scar that went from his left sideburn down to his jaw. And he had piercing eyes.

Still, while he was intimidating, it was nothing compared to Mr. Ekenhart.

"Oh, I see that you are not fazed by my appearance. You have some nerve."

"Ye, Mr. Takumi is amazing!"

"No...I wouldn't say that..."

Ms. Delia really had a habit of praising people that she liked... But now I felt pressure to not disappoint them.

"Still, to see Delia become so friendly with others. The foreman must be anxious."

"Yes. His predecessor asked him to take care of her."

"Well, since this one looks promising?"

The other woodcutters were looking at us and laughing.

Regardless, after a short chat, we all left the village and headed for the forest.

It was only about half an hour away, and the entrance was marked with tree stumps.

"Hahaha! As you are skinny, I was worried about you coming with us. But you seem alright!"

"Ye-yes. Well, I can handle orcs. Yes..."

While walking towards the forest, the foreman mostly talked with Phillip.

Apparently, he was a big fan of drinking, and so they got along quite well. That was why he was currently in a very good mood.

Though, Philip seemed like he was mostly giving random answers, and would occasionally look towards us for help. But I ignored him.

As for Nicholas, I did not miss seeing him sigh with relief.

Apparently, he did not like talking with such people... So I suppose it made sense for Phillip to have that role.

Besides, Phillip had not been around when we played with the children. So it was only right.

"The forest seems quite different here, even though it is the same forest."

"It is because of the word of the woodcutters in this area. There is more space between the trees."

We walked through the forest and observed our surroundings.

Unlike the other times we've been in a forest, the trees were not so close together that they blocked all of the sunlight, and so it was quite bright.

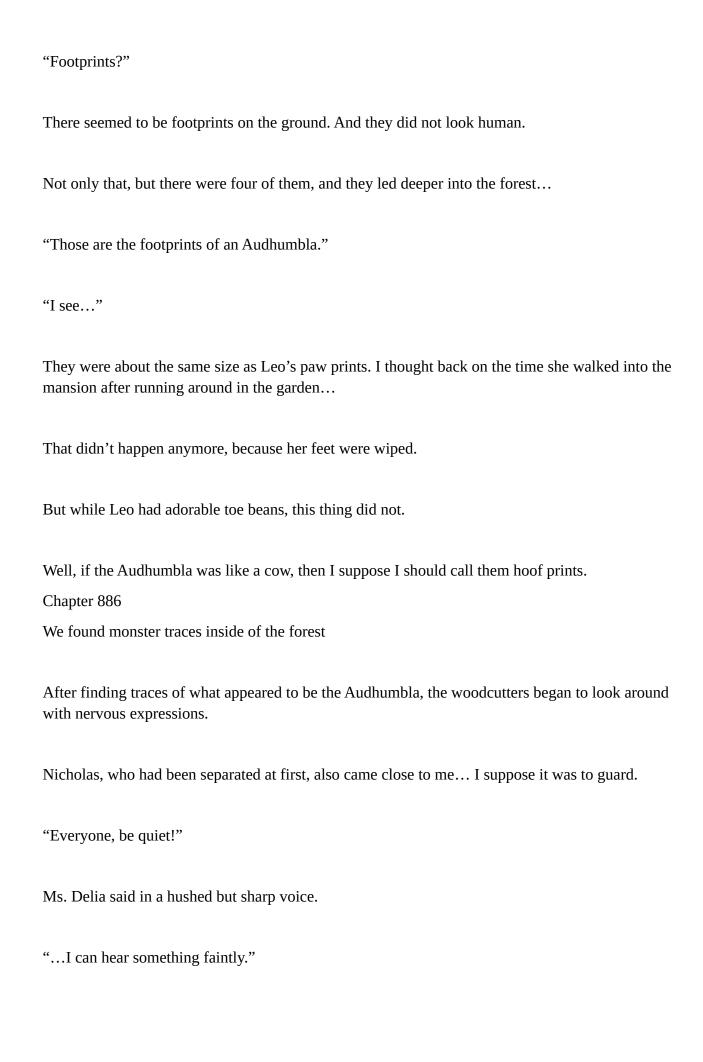
Not only that, but there were clear paths without weeds or vines to block us.

Ms. Delia and I walked in the leads, while Nicholas was in the back, and the foreman and Phillip were in the center.

"Mr. Takumi. I think we should be on our guard now."

"Do you sense something?"

"No. But that..."



She said so that only we could hear. I could not hear anything, and judging by the looks on Phillips and Nicholas's faces, I doubted that they could either. Well, Ms. Delia's cat ears were moving, so she probably had much stronger senses than we humans. It was the same with Leo and Liza. "I think it is not far ahead in that direction. Foreman?" "Aye, we came here to hunt it. Let's go." But just as we were about to continue on, I found some different footprints on the ground. "Ah, wait a minute." "What is it, Mr. Takumi?" I pointed in the direction that I was looking. "Those aren't the same, are they? Though, I cannot see them clearly from here..." "That...let me inspect them then." As there were trees in the way, Ms. Delia had not seen them.

Also, she had been so focused on the Audhumbla hoof prints... Regardless, these were a different size.

Not only that, but it appeared to be a creature that walked on two legs.

After noticing them, Ms. Delia moved close in order to inspect them.





Phillip and Nicholas were looking at me worriedly. As they were trained guards, perhaps they were more sensitive to anything strange happening in the forest. And since I felt something was wrong as well, I decided to stay on my guard so that I could react quickly if something happens... "Hyah!" "Delia, it went over there!" "Leave it to me!" After that, we went into the direction that Ms. Delia indicated, and then we saw the monster that I assumed was the Audhumbla. It looked like a black bull and was incredibly fast. And yet Ms. Delia easily dodged it while slashing with her knife. I could not do that... I doubted any human could. As for the orc, we found it as well, though it had been smashed against a tree. And so one of the woodcutters dealt a final blow and then recovered the corpse. I suppose they would take it back for food. "There are no other monsters around. It looks like we won't have anything to do then."

"Yes. But look at how she can keep up with the Audhumbla, and target its legs with precision."

"I think it is difficult for it to move because of the trees." And so Phillip, Nicholas and I watched Ms. Delia work. The serpent was found wrapped around the orc, so they must have been fighting first. Regardless, it meant that Ms. Delia could concentrate on the Audhumbla. The woodcutters would swing their weapons and scare the Audhumbla, causing it to turn and rush towards Ms. Delia, and then she would slash at it with her knife. It did not seem to be slowed down by serpent venom. However, it was only a matter of time before it would start to get tired. The Audhumbla could run at the speed of a horse, but it had to slow down in order to avoid crashing into trees. On the other hand, nothing seemed to slow Ms. Delia down... It was probably due to the differences in size. Also, she was used to being in the forest. "It will probably stop soon." "It's no wonder, after it was cut that many times. If Ms. Delia had a sharper blade, this would have ended even sooner." Said Phillip and Nicholas as they watched. Indeed, the knife looked quite rough and not very sharp. Regardless, the Audhumbla was bleeding a lot around the legs, and the pain was slowing it down.

At this point, even the wood cutters would be able to keep up with it.

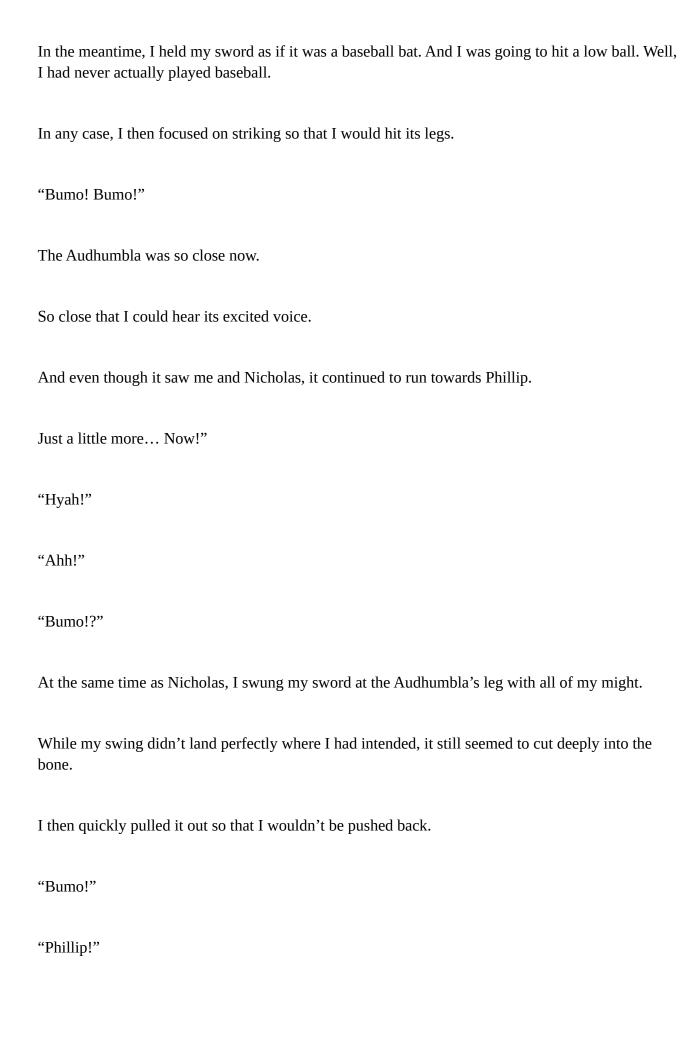
"She is good. Instead of just running in one direction, she constantly changes and sometimes meets it head on." "And she hasn't even undergone training. Beastkin really are amazing." As the Audhumbla was rather cowardly, it continued to run from the larger group of wood cutters, but Ms. Delia would always catch up with it and stand in its way. Like this it did not go too far or move in our direction. Ms. Delia was clearly used to hunting. Chapter 888 I helped with the last part of the hunt It would probably not be impossible for Phillip, Nicholas and me to work together to hunt down the Audhumbla, but it would definitely not be this easy. And it was even more impressive, since she had not undergone any training. "Ms. Delia! This way!" "Mr. Takumi! Are you alright!?" "I'm fine! So don't hesitate!"

After realizing my intention, Ms. Delia chased it in my direction, but seemed worried.

"Well, we might as well do something in the end."

I shouted to Ms. Delia while waving my sword.





"I know. You both did well! Hmmph!" Apparently, Nicholas had also been successful, as he pulled out his sword. The Audhumbla let out a cry and charged towards Phillip...but it was clear that it could barely run. Phillip lept lightly in the air as it came crashing, and while holding his sword with two hands, he brought it down between the creature's eyes. "Bu...mo..." And like that, the strength left it completely. Chapter 889 Ms. Delia had other business to attend to "Well, that should do it." "...I could not move like that. I really am not at your level, Nicholas and Phillip." "Ah, just a little acrobatics. Nothing to worry about. Besides, it wouldn't be as useful when fighting one against one." "Really?" Indeed, there was something very unique about his movements, and I wouldn't try to copy them. "Mr. Takumi! Are you alright? Still, it was impressive how you were able to cut at it." "Ah, Ms. Delia. I'm perfectly fine... No, it was only because you weakened it for us." "...Delia must really like you. We also worked quite hard..."

"Foreman, you shouldn't say such things. That's just how it is with fathers. Not that you are a real father."

The other wood cutters came behind Ms. Delia, and gathered around us. It was a little awkward, due to what they were saying, but I could only laugh.

At least they seemed to be having fun.

"Foreman! Could we rest a little?"

"Yes! Not only do we have to carry the Audhumbla, but there is the orc too!"

"Shut up and keep moving! I'm carrying it too, so stop your whining!"

After that, we made sure that the Audhumbla was dead, and then met up with the wood cutters that were carrying the orc.

Now that the hunt had been a success, we had to return to the village. Still, the Audhumbla and orc were quite heavy, and the wood cutters were grumbling.

As for the serpent, it was still wrapped around the orc.

"Uh, shouldn't we help them?"

"It's fine. People who contributed to the hunt do not have to carry it."

"Hmm, I heard that. But we only did the last part. I think the others did more."

"It's fine. There is no problem."

Well, I did not feel like it was a good idea to argue with Ms. Delia on that point, and so I left it to her.



Thankfully, the wood cutters were gone and there was no one else around us.. "Uh, Ms. Delia. What kind of herb is it?" "Uhh... It is called black nightshade." She told me the name, characteristic, size and the shape of the leaves. It had white flowers and black berries, but you could not eat them, as they were poisonous. Apparently, they were used by crushing them with another root. I had actually seen them in the book that I borrowed from Sebastian. "Ms. Delia. The chief hurt his back because he was trying to pick up something heavy, yes?" "That is correct. The pain makes him sweat, and he has trouble moving." "I see... Hmm..." "Is something the matter?" "Ms. Delia, do you know of a plant called ramogi modoki?" "I know of ramogi but... Modoki?" "Yes. It is similar, so sometimes even pharmacists get them mixed up..." "Oh. I have never seen them before. But what does this have to do with the chief's hurt back?" This was also something that I had read in the book from Sebastian.

While doing research for Weed Cultivation, I had something like ramogi that helped to warm up the body, and I had made it by accident.

While the plants looked slightly different, once they were dried out, they looked the same. By the time they were turned to powder, there was no way of telling them apart.

That was why you had to be very careful.

Well, at least it was not poisonous. It would just not have the effect that you were hoping for.

That being said, any pharmacist who sold it would lose the trust of customers. Sick people would buy it and not get well.

Regardless, it was important for me to not be thinking about other things when making ramogi.

"Well, we'll be making ramogi in the herb fields. And since this is a similar herb, I thought it would be best to show you."

"Show me? Do you have that herb with you right now?"

"No, I don't. Well, I cannot say for sure, but I was thinking that it might be better to warm up the chief's back, instead of cooling it off. And this is a herb that could help with that."

"Warm it up... But you said you do not have the herb with you? But there is black nightshade growing here... Do you mean to go into the forest and search? Well, I am not too tired after the hunt. So I suppose that I do not mind, but..."

I thought that while telling her about Weed Cultivation, I could also show her how I make the ramogi modoki.

Ms. Delia looked guite confused when I told her I did not have the herbs with me.

And now she thought we were going to go search for them in the forest...

Still, even after fighting the Audhumbla, she was not that tired at all.

However, there was no need to go into the forest... Well, it was time to get right to the point, and show her how it was done...