

The God of Jesters

Chapter 5: 1.03.2 A peaceful life.

"~Such a wonderful world~" I sang and sang, ignoring the mist that had stopped at the precipice of the village. With only my underwear on, the rest of my clothes were still drying on the stick that I was holding on to.

"Little guy, how is the view from there?" I asked Grifter who was also bound to the same stick and moved up and down with the beats of the song.

Not like he had any choice, to begin with. As I was not wearing any clothes, making it was impossible for Grifter to hide in my pockets anymore.

"Don't worry, you won't be enjoying that view for long. It's time for our rest."

I still had some dried rations left that could help me survive for three more days. But I planned to go to the village chief's house tomorrow and work for him.

Earning some on the side won't be harmful. And this would make it seem I am a dependable individual who is not scared to present himself.

Well, to begin with, this was a test by the village chief. Depending on my choice, he would rate me as either dangerous or a safe individual in the village. So not going there would be a foolish thing to do.

Or so, this is what I think.

And whether this is true or not, I can't be sure about it. Because as an Individual, I can never know what goes in the minds of others no matter what.

A fact that I have learned at a young age.

"Hmm, it seems like the kids were inside their homes before during the afternoon as well." When I eventually arrived back in the village, I saw the kids playing around in front of their homes.

No, it seemed like they treated this whole village as their home as they jumped from one home to another, treating every place like their own.

This truly made it seem like one big family.

"Is it that stranger that sister Meena brought here?"

And it would seem I was pretty famous among the kids already. Looked at me and followed me as if I was a zoo animal of some sort.

Guess I understand somewhat what my rats used to experience.

But they surely had not as much sentience as me.

Of course, I am not talking about Grifter who was glaring at the kids as if he would eat them.

And if left alone, he probably would.

That's just how he was, pure evil incarnate.

The kids should be considered lucky that I was holding Grifter back.

"Don't stare at kids. This rat bites." I tried to scare them but in an innocent way. I didn't wish to scare the kids in reality and neither did I wish to cause their parents to hate me for it.

Taking any drastic actions in this place would be antithetical to my goal in this place.

So, saying good night to the kids, I entered the temporary home I was given and found laid on the bed after cleaning off the dust from it.

Cleaning this whole home would take some time and I chose to do it tomorrow.

Because tonight I wished for a peaceful night, away from the thoughts of the mysterious mist and the scary pond where I just washed my body in.

So I wished to sleep early, which was before the sun went down. And as it was a village, the people usually slept by the time the sun was down anyways.

Giving one last look toward the mist that was waiting for me at the periphery of the village. I took out the dried rations for a meal.

I didn't wish to go hungry during sleep.

But before I could eat the biscuits made of rye. Someone knocked on my door.

"Hmm." I wondered who it would be at this time of day.

The kids were going home for food and the men were coming from herding and...

Oh! It seems there were still some animals left, as I saw through the window that some men must have hunted a wolf. Though it would seem the trap they dug for it left the body pretty butchered.

But I am being distracted.

Approaching the door. I opened it up.

And oh delight, if it was none other than Meera. Holding a pot of porridge and some bread.

"This is not free, think of it as early payment for your work tomorrow." She said shyly before handing the tray to me and leaving in a hurry.

Her cheeks are as red as before.

"Thank you." Before she left, I hurriedly put in thanks, as for whether she heard it or not, I don't know.

But she was probably embarrassed to face me after I exposed my body to her before.

Guess, this is what you see in rural areas. In the city where I belonged, some children were sold naked on the streets. But here, even this is a heavy subject for the village folks.

This is why I warned her before, she shouldn't treat the cities as some wondrous places. They are the perfect amalgamation of the worst aspects of human society in one place.

The kind of place that only I may be able to enjoy.

"But this place is also not that boring." I wondered, looking at the porridge with some meat chunks in them.

Meat that wasn't dried and mossy. But fresh meat smelled nice.

"If this is how life could be, I might just stay here."

Taking the tray to the bed, I placed the ration biscuits into the bag once again and noticed the poisoned vial that was still present in my bag.

"Guess, there will be no need for you in this place," I said before locking the satchel bag and then gleefully enjoying the porridge along with fresh meat.

For some reason, this food reminded me of the time before my father's death. When everything was enjoyable to me. The food that my mother made was similar to the one I am currently eating, even though the ingredients were bad.

But after my dad's death, even after making the food the same way, it never felt as good as it was before.

Which was surprising to me.

"I would request her recipe..."

And I was not joking, I would surely do this. I promise.

Then turning to Grifter, I poured some of the porridge with some meat chunks into a small bottle cap that I found on the table. And then handed it to the little guy.

"Enjoy for now. Tomorrow, I will see if I can find a new home for you."

I said before leaning on the bowls and the tray. And then jumping on the bed, going back to my sleep.

A sleep that I very much desired. As things happened way too fast recently.

And I wished for some much-needed rest.

"Mirage, if you are free, come to my home. I need some help with bleaching the hides."

"Sorry, the village chief has asked me to teach the kids letters today. I won't be able to help you. How about tomorrow?"

"No worries, those little runts learning things are more important than these hides."

I can't believe it's been three weeks since I came here. And I don't like to flex, but I have adapted to this peaceful place pretty well.

Though, reaching this state was not simple. The kind of things the village chief made me do as a test was just too much, breaking my body to some extent.

But after those first few days, he wasn't as harsh on my work as before. And one time he even came to me asking for one thing.

"Teach the kids how to read and write." The village chief was not as stupid as I had previously assumed, knowing the state of the forest and the problem caused by overhunting, he was looking at the future of the village and planning to send the kids to the city to work.

But for that, these kids need to know how to spell their names first.

So he asked me, who claimed to be a student. To teach these kids.

And so I did. Recalling the things my father taught me and how he taught me. I mimicked him and produced some fine results.

Though, what was more interesting was that there were not only kids that joined my class. But there were even some adults, mostly women, that came to the class and learned some things.

Something the village chief liked very much to my surprise.

Usually, in communities like these, the women are more conservative and the men look down on them for trying to become learned people.

I would need around then hands to recount the news I read in which a woman died after being mistaken for a witch due to her standing out from the masses.

Which made the village chief pretty progressive to some of the modern folks I have seen in the city.

"Oh, going to teach the kids once again?"

"And you skipping the class once again? Do you know how much your father wishes for you to leave this village and make something of yourself?" I asked Meena, who just bit her tongue as a child in embarrassment.

Oh, I forgot to mention that Meena is the daughter of the village chief and the oldest of this generation of kids.

Though, she is still a few months older than me.

"I find it too boring. Better to go out and enjoy life when I still have time."

"..."

These words.

I don't know, but these words when heard from the mouth of others, they felt unreal to me.

She was someone like me, trying to find enjoyment in things that she likes. Just the way I did.

But, I still didn't know why I felt so hollow hearing these words.

"I promise that I will have fun this time. So how about you join i..."

As I was going to request this jolly girl to join me. I noticed that there was a crowd concentrated in the Yaedel's home. And people talking among themselves.

As for the topic they were talking about.

"Someone murdered Betsy?"