

Pseudo Resident's Illegal Stay in Another World

Chapter 41: Hassan — The Swamp Local (8)

☪ Hassan — The Swamp Local (5) ☪

“Aaargh!”

I could hear the sounds of water and mud splashing around, along with the clamor of the adventurers and their terrified shrieks from all around me...it was the scene of nightmares.

“S-Save me!”

Grrrrr!

A crocodile with its mouth stretched wide-open just gulped half of the body of a bronze-tier adventurer down and tore him apart, with its razor-sharp teeth and inhumanly strong jaws, spewing blood everywhere in the surroundings.

The other crocodiles approached the torn body parts of the unfortunate adventurer at the sudden smell of blood. The violent beasts, as if losing all sense of reason, swallowed and tore every bit of flesh and debris remaining of the poor adventurer apart, relishing in the taste of the torn parts.

Fucking crocodiles! Shiiiiit!

I felt a shiver run down my back at this terrifying scene. Damn, did people die so easily?

It's been a long time since I saw a person die in front of me, my heart was beating fiercely from anxiety, fright, shock, and myriad more emotions that my brain was too jumbled up to even make sense of..

“Damn, r-run away! Everyone, run the fuck away!!!”

“Don't run away, cowards! Fight proudly if you're a warrior of Lord Mars!”

Hippolyte and the Sword Maidens drew their swords out with utmost swiftness. Not wasting a single moment of time, they then began slashing at the crocodiles, that were half-submerged in the muddy waters, with all their might.

“Their eyes and neck! Those are their weak spots. Everyone, aim at their eyes and neck!”

Schwing— Whoosh—

Hippolyte ripped one of the thick-skinned swamp crocodiles apart in a single slash. She showed no signs of yesterday's weakness. The feeble form that had struggled in vain in my arms was nowhere to be seen. Her show of absolute domination over the dastardly monsters looked extremely reliable, as expected of the silver-tier warrior.

The other Sword Maidens followed Hippolyte's example and were also working hard at desecrating the crocodiles around them.

"Hi-Hiik!"

Grrrrrrrr!

These crocodiles' skin was unusually tough, adding loads of confusion to the already difficult fight for the struggling adventurers. The toughness of their skins resulted in some adventurers not even being able to pull their knives out or falling down trying to do so and getting themselves injured by the counterattacks of the swamp monsters.

Not like there was any shame in this troublesome happenstance. It was very hard to move around in a swamp, any movement would be naturally slow and heavy, the fact that this was the home ground of the crocodiles was also a notable reminder. They were fighting at the monsters' habitat, their home turf, of course, they would be at a significant disadvantage.

These crocodiles were truly great predators. They had a ruthless nature— true killing machines that couldn't be compared in any way to the measly goblins that they confronted yesterday.

Slither— Leap—

A huge crocodile soon lunged at me too with the rapid slithering of its body in the viscous water, and my mind completely blanked at that scene. I hastily walked backward and fell down on my butt, fear and terror coloring my eyes and face. The crocodile didn't let go of that opportunity and quickly jumped on me with its fangs bared.

Screech—

Thanks to me flailing my arms around at the very last moment, the crocodile ended up only biting my wrist protectors. Holy fuck! If it wasn't for this expensive piece of equipment, my arm would have probably become the contents of its stomach by now.

"Let go of me you fucking reptilian piece of shitty bitch!!!"

Thanks to the dumbass me, falling and losing my long sword, I had no choice but to take out the dagger from my waist and directly swing it at this damned crocodile's face as fast as I possibly could.

Kaching—

The crocodile's body dropped down with the sound of my dagger ripping through its skin. It seems I was, fortunately, able to cut through its skull and part of its brain.

Damn?! Did I just kill such a cruel and ferocious reptilian monster all by myself? I'm Dragon Slayer, Hassan from now on, god-damn it. Woohoo!

I was thrilled and my heart was overflowing with shock and excitement, but the sheer amount of crocodiles around me didn't give me much time to revel in the joy of my first big hunt.

I'm already struggling so much, I wonder how the other guys, especially Luna were doing right now. I hurriedly turned my head at that troublesome thought, searching for the sight of the pink twin tails with an anxious gaze.

Sway—

Luna was raising her arms high in the sky, like a scarecrow, and oriented them towards the alligators surrounding her. Soon after, she began running in a zigzag motion with a weird posture.

"Kiooooooh, Haiyaaaa!"

Luna then opened her mouth and started producing weird incoherent screams, directing them towards the crocodile. Did she lose her mind because of her fear of death?

Not that I felt I could blame her for that, I felt I was going to go crazy too.

Shit, it seems that Luna's mind had broken beyond repair. Could a massage fix this mental breakdown state of hers? Would I have to press the acupoints on her brain or something? Fuck, what should I do?

But something ludicrous unexpectedly happened at that time.

G-Grrrr!

Barrrrr!

The crocodiles that had been surrounding her with vicious gazes hurriedly turned around and promptly disappeared to god knows where like lizards walking on water.

“Fucking sh-hit, what in the fuck is this?”

My mind just bluescreened from reality at this incomprehensible scene.

“What are you doing, Hassan? Follow along! Swamp crocodiles are afraid of creatures who run in zig-zag motion while making loud noises!”

“They’re afraid of what? Damn!”

“Hurry up!”

My brain wasn’t processing anything Luna was saying as it was getting blocked by my rationality filter. What she was doing and what was happening didn’t make the least bit of sense to me. However, the truth of the matter was that...it was somehow effective. Her movements, that resembled a drug addict bereft of its favorite drugs, were indeed making the crocodiles afraid.

“Hurry up, Hassan! It will be even more effective with someone your size! Come on, follow along, already! Damn it!”

“Oh, fuck it all!”

Grrrrrr—

Slither—

The crocodiles were quickly approaching and I had no time to spare anymore for any form of thoughts. So, I did the best possible action in that situation. Taking a deep breath, I raised my arms high in the sky. I decided to follow Luna along in her lunacy.

Clap— Clap—

I ran in a zigzag motion! My zigzag evasion movements were pretty good; years of FPS games and training to avoid Elfriede’s whip attacks made my movements much sharper and dazzling than anyone around me, I was damn sure about that.

In addition to avoiding them in my zigzag gait, I also swayed my body and twisted around like a rubber balloon.

“Hwaaaaaaaaaah-!!!!!!”

G-Gaerrr!

Damngrrrrryouu!

The crocodiles — who were, at the end of the day, merely puny beasts at best — were awed by my majesty and fled in fear while showing their tails and long serrated backs to us.

Damn, these crocodiles were actually scared of me. Woohoo!

“Hehe, you can’t go! I won’t let you g-go... Ahgghghghgh!”

Gaek!

I swung my long sword at the back of their heads, it easily penetrated their skin and took their lives in a flash. Damn, I can’t believe it would be so easy to hunt these bastards down!

“What the hell is this? The bastard crocodiles are running away? Is that a secret Samaritan hunting technique from the wildlands?”

“Yeah. I heard that’s how locals of the swamps deal with these freaks.”

“What are you all doing? Hurry up and imitate him, damn it!”

The misty swamp was now flooded with mad lunatics moving like fiddlesticks and producing weird god-forsaken sounds.

Ga-Garrrr!

It became a place where a weak crocodile, this mere beast, couldn’t survive anymore.

“Hey, check out this leather, it’s so fucking good! To think catching crocodiles was this easy.”

“I can’t help but feel sorry for these dead bastards though.”

After some time, the frantic jungle party finally ceased and it was time to get our loot from the scattered and mutilated bodies of the dead crocodiles.

I skillfully collected the skin of the two crocodiles I had slain, other adventurers around me couldn’t help but exclaim in awe at the sight of my masterful flaying.

“To think such a thick leather could be cut so easily by such a short knife.”

“Even as a person who lives in the wild, his dexterity is nothing to scoff at.”

Well, skinning and dismantling the bodies of dead monsters was one of my specialties, after all.

Because of my father who ran a health center and used to make his own medicine from weird ingredients, I had been forced to learn how to take care of these kinds of barbaric things.

And I eventually got used to it after being slaved by Elfriede for over two years.

Now, I could get an idea of how to do such things just by looking at it and feeling a little with my hands. Even if I were to do the same kind of things on new materials, I would be able to do it efficiently.

Sigh—

Of course, I couldn't deny the impact of <Imperfect Dexterity> along with my increase in strength in making the crocodile's skin come off so easily.

As I had suspected before, my newly acquired blessing seemed to correct or enhance any kind of action that required my hands and my efficiency in general.

Although it was a more useful blessing than I thought, I still don't think it's worth going bald for.

"Wow, you were done with this one in under two minutes. Amazing. Can you skin the crocodile I caught too, Samaritan? I'll give you 10 percent of the estimated sale price of the leather."

"Please, take care of mine too. If someone skins it without damaging them they should be able to get 5 silvers per skin at least. Crocodile skins in a good state sell very well..."

"Holy Shit!"

"W-Why? You can't?"

"Just form a line and wait."

Adding these four crocodile skins would make a profit of two silvers, at least.

Gains summary!

My two crocodile skins will sell for around 10 silvers.

Then I'll get an additional 10 silver after completing the quest.

44 coppers after selling the goblin fangs and two silvers for skinning 4 crocodiles.

I currently have 5 silvers and 40 coppers.

After all of this is over, I'll nearly have 30 silvers. The same amount I painstakingly collected after two years of slavery.

Fucking heeell, how could I earn so much money in such a short amount of time?

I finally understood how Elfriede and the others could spend so much money on their equipment.

Thanks to all the new weight, my backpack had become a lot heavier, but I was feeling so elated and light that I felt I was on the verge of soaring in the clear skies above.

"Where on earth did you learn this? That's quite a neat and clean work."

The middle-aged bronze rank adventurer was affirmatively nodding at the end result. Just when I was about to answer him.

"Don't Samaritans take off the skin of the opponents after killing them? This brother of mine probably has been making clothes out of the skins of his opponents before he even learned how to speak properly."

"I didn't expect it would be like this, damn, that's scary."

Marco answered before I could even open my mouth.

How is this little bastard still alive? Tough motherfucker. Is his nose tougher than this rigid crocodile skin? How incompetent must the guys who died be since even this living burden called Marco survived?

"Hey, brother. I enjoyed your performance today. Hassan — The Swamp Local. That seems like an avid title. I'll make a good tune out of this."

"Motherfucking bastard, I'll beat you up if you exaggerate the story again."

"When did I ever exaggerate? It's just my artistic talents taking over, that's all."

"Marco-Kun!!! Where did you go? Come here and pick up the skin of the crocodiles we caught!"

"Sigh... I've been doubting my path as an artist these days. Should I go back to my hometown, in the end?"

Marco returned to Lord Destroyer's side with drooping shoulders. The luggage he was carrying on his back was full of crocodile skins. Still, nothing he was carrying on his

back could be heavier than the affection Lord Destroyer was constantly showering him with.

Well, that's how things concluded.

I lifted my bag and then looked around for Luna. My mind almost went blank when I saw her sprinkling coins on the ground.

Ho...ly... No matter how rich you are, throwing coins on the ground was still a little excessive, wasn't it? I don't even know what to say anymore.

"You just saved my life, Luna. How did you know how to deal with the crocodiles like that?"

"Ah... Ideope has a lot of swamps. We get attacked by crocodiles whenever they're bored, so it's quite often in frequency. Since their eyes are on the floor level they tend to misjudge heights, so the bigger you are, the better the effects of this technique."

This sounded like the ramblings of someone who was out to sell something shady. However, I had no choice but to believe it since it actually worked. Anyways, that's not what I really wanted to ask currently.

"Why are you tossing coins on the ground? Just give it to me if you don't want it."

"Ah, I'm not throwing them away, it's not even my money, to begin with. This money is for Charon, it's their travel expenses, I got it from their pockets, 1 copper each."¹Greek tradition, they say the dead need money to pay the fair to Charon, the ferryman who leads the dead on the Styx.

Luna then began putting coins into the mouths of the corpses with terrifying upturned eyes. Is this some kind of funeral rite in this world?

Come to think of it, I was often asked to leave money in the bodies of fallen adventurers back when I was with Elfriede and her party.

People in this world seemed to believe in some kind of afterlife. As for me, I just stood there. I didn't say anything or asked any more questions after that, silently observing the strange funeral rite.

"Five deaths and two fugitives before even meeting the damned cultists. That's bad. We have only 13 people left now, right?"

"Yes. Should we go on Miss Hippolyte? The Sword Maidens seem to have picked up some injuries too."

“Thanks for worrying Lord Destroyer but there’s no need for that. It’s going to be fine as long as you and I are present.”

“Is that so? Well, it doesn’t matter to me. You don’t look well though, Miss Hippolyte. Are you injured anywhere?”

“...No. Let’s leave this place..”

The group packed up their belongings and advanced through the muddy swamp without even having time to mourn the dead.

Some people were excited by their newly found gains while others were still shaken by the previous devastating attack that resulted in the loss of one-fourth of our party members.

Hooooooooo-

Maeooooow-

“D-Damn it!”

“Why are you scared, little bitch? It’s just birds.”

It was clear that the tiredness and tension of the group were a notch higher than earlier. People were alarmed and expected an attack at any slight unusual sound or anomaly.

“Damn, I hope the fog clears up soon.”

“Was this place even supposed to be so foggy? It wasn’t if I remember correctly.”

“I don’t know bastard, just look around you. Tell me if you can discern it or not. Stupid bitch!”

I was silently walking while listening to the chatter around me. From what the adventurers were saying, it seems this fog was unusual and was a bit uncharacteristic for this swamp.

Human perception mostly relied on sight and having it blocked like this wasn’t doing any good to our already drained mental state.

Moreover, the air was getting hotter and hotter as we were advancing through the fog as if walking inside a giant steamer...as if we were about to be cooked alive.

“Hassan, you caught 2 crocodiles!”

As usual and completely contrary to everyone else, Luna was excitedly jumping around as if she was in a great mood.

Was she roaming so freely because it felt similar to her hometown? Well, seeing her this cheerful did help in alleviating my mood...even by a little.

Luna was giggling as she peeked through my backpack to check out my crocodile skins.

“You can make clothes out of these.”

“Clothes?”

“Yes, weren’t they ripped up when we were attacked by goblins during the temple clean-up?”

“Oh yeah. I almost forgot.”

I was covering my tattered clothes with my cheap raincoat. What I am wearing right now is closer to being called rags rather than clothes.

I couldn’t buy clothes after splurging so much on protective gear. I’ll have to get new clothes if I make money this time.

Luna’s idea wasn’t half-bad either. Would the price be lowered if I supplied the crocodile skin myself? It was a possibility, and any avenue that saved up money should be treaded...

However...

Clothes made out of crocodile skin. Never thought I’d have the luxury to wear those.

Hippolyte, who was walking in front, suddenly stopped while I was indulging in my self-induced fantasies.

Shit fuck, what is it gonna be this time around? Hippolyte then spoke in a firm voice as if she had made up her mind.

“Not good. We can’t continue unless we deal with this fog somehow. Cultist camps have been sighted around this position.”

“What do you propose then, Miss Hippolyte?”

Some focus was shifted to Hippolyte after Lord Destroyer’s inquiry. It was all because of the faint hope in their hearts that a mighty silver-ranked adventurer would be able to solve this hopeless issue somehow.

I was of the same thought. In my head, I was imagining the mighty Hippolyte conjuring a typhoon with the movement of her arms, utilizing her inhuman strength, and blowing all of the fog away...

Hippolyte then spoke in a loud tone, breaking my reverie...

“I am unable to clear out this fog, but I know someone who might be able to. Priestess from Delphi, let me borrow the blessing granted to you by the god you believe in. The luminous light of the esteemed god is perfect to get rid of the fog.”

Cassandra promptly emerged from the crowd after being called. She then shook her head and silently spoke after looking around.

“My prayers cannot reach the heavens because of the cold energy around here. Rather than me, why don’t you ask the guy over there for help...?”

She then pointed her finger at the group. Everyone’s eyes followed her finger until they finally reached the person she was pointing at.

Damn, just as I was wondering who it was, it somehow ended up being me. This shouldn’t be possible. Was she perhaps mistaken?

I need to clear things up...

“Me?”

Footnotes:

- 1Greek tradition, they say the dead need money to pay the fair to Charon, the ferryman who leads the dead on the Styx.

Chapter 42: Pluto's Black Star (1)

☾ Pluto's Black Star (1) ☽

I was very much embarrassed by their attention which had suddenly shifted to me.

My blushing face and timid attitude due to the sudden influx of gazes fixed on me made way for an extremely stupid display, making me want to die of shame.

“W-What am I needed for?”

Cassandra slowly and gently walked over to me at my panicked inquiry. She then placed her hands on my shoulders, I don't even know how she was able to do it in spite of being blind but she did nonetheless, and addressed the adventurers around me.

"When it comes to the blessing of Light, Hassan of Samaria here is the most blessed among us. His prayers are the most likely to reach the silent and lofty peaks of mount Olympus."

Cassandra's words spread like wildfire and created a rather big commotion instantaneously.

"That guy was a blessed?"

"Isn't the God of Light famous for not easily blessing people?"

"I don't think the priestess from Delphi, the great temple of the sun, would lie to us..."

"Be quiet."

It was Hippolyte's heavy voice that finally put the chattering group's debate, about my status as a blessed, to an abrupt halt in a single instant. Her words just had that much weight.

The silver-ranked warrior then walked closer to me with a group of adventurers trailing behind her, including the sword maidens, and stood up just below my face, glancing straight at me with her steely eyes.

Fuck, the people of this world had no awareness of any form of personal space. It was kinda embarrassing every single time they nonchalantly walked up so close to me without respecting my personal boundaries. It felt very shitty, in fact.

"Can you do it?"

"T-That..."

How can she look straight into my eyes like that?

As I returned her gaze, I abruptly recalled the scene in the cold lake last night—the scene of our entangled bodies under the moonlight, and felt blood rushing to my little brother at a frightening pace.

"If you succeed, I will back you up for your promotion to bronze rank and even personally request Baltma for it."

Holy god-fucking-damn, a promotion?

“I’ll give it a try, but I have to warn you, I can’t assure you of the success.”

Promotion to the bronze tier? Fireworks and fanfare for my promotion party began ringing in my head.

I thought It would take another half a year for me to leave the iron tier, at the minimum. Although this was a very happy occasion, I still felt a chill go down my neck looking at the pair of brown eyes nailing me down.

“Then, try. Pray.”

And so I started a strange prayer ceremony while surrounded by the other adventurers.

Everyone looked at me with some nervousness, anticipation, interest, or doubt; some form of emotion rested in their gazes without exception. My mouth dried up while my hands got sweaty from nervousness and anxiety.

“The prayer of a blessed Samaritan. I’m really looking forward to this.”

Hippolyte was urging me to start. Fucking hell, what was I to do now? As I said before I have no prior religious experience.

What am I supposed to do if you guys suddenly ask me to pray? All I could think of right now were the ancestral rites my father used to force me to join four times a year. Damn, should I just try and do that? It was worth a try, at the very least.

“Then, please, can you spread out some food around here? Just a bit from the rations you guys have packed.”

Hippolyte nodded and soon after the Sword Maidens reluctantly began putting down some food from their bags on the ground while glancing at me with stern eyes.

Putting food on the muddy floor didn’t feel right to me, so I took out some crocodile skin and set the assembly of dry rations, dried fruits, and the newly acquired crocodile meat on them.

I think this was good enough as a ritual table, filled with the ritual offerings, for the ancestral rites, but if my strict father saw this makeshift table then he would be angrily badmouthing me while spitting out in rage.

As the eldest son of a large family, he had always been passionate about ancestral rites.

I, then, sat neatly in front of the ancestral rites table, then I made two bows toward the muddy ground; wet sounds were made whenever my head touched the mud.

Twice? Maybe doing thrice was appropriate since it was a god. Damn, I'll do it once more; just to be safe.

Splash-

"What is he doing?"

"I don't know too. I guess it's a kind of Samaritan prayer?"

"It has a primitive feel to it."

"That's how they did it in ancient times, I suppose."

Contrary to the noisy adventurers that were making a ruckus, Casandra's voice was muffled and barely audible, like a forced-out whisper.

"I heard that in ancient times, before even temples were built, people used to pray after preparing offerings such as food and other kinds of sacrificial objects. Burning offerings before praying was an everyday occurrence to the people of the old."

"Indeed, this is the old-fashioned way. How unexpected."

"Let's see what happens from now on."

The crowd and I were immersed in a state of awkward silence after I bowed three times toward the simple makeshift ritual table.

Only fog and the cries of wild animals were filling our surroundings.

Even after waiting some more, the fog showed no signs of lessening, it didn't even stir the slightest.

Well, that's about what I expected.

Although I was full of confidence in my abilities after what happened these few days, I still didn't believe in the gods of this world and didn't offer them even a single prayer since getting sent here for who knows what reason!

Damn, this is plain embarrassing. Won't they beat me up if nothing happens after all the ruckus they made and the anticipation they placed on me?

Just as I started worrying about the dark future that was surely ahead...

"Hassan of Samaria. Brother. Why don't you try offering praises or compliments?"

I could hear Cassandra's voice from behind me, I felt like I was stuck in a deep and dark hole and a rope of salvation was finally offered to me. She was my savior, I'm sure of it, damn it!

"Praise?"

"Yes, brief praise is okay. Please do your best. You can recite a prayer. Samaritan dialect is fine t..."

I couldn't hear the rest of her words as I was immersed in my thoughts. She wants me to praise a god? Nothing comes to mind though. I'm not the kind to easily praise others, to begin with. Hallelujah... Fucking hell, that isn't the right religion, for fucks sake! What should I say?

Right now the closest thing I knew to prayers was the ridiculous "Praise the chaos" or whatever that line I often had to mutter to invoke the status screen.

Shit, being ridiculed never killed anyone, I have nothing to lose, I'll just do it.

"Praise the Sun-!"

Just when I uttered such a ridiculous and awkward praise that almost made me cringe visibly.

Ding-

You can borrow the authority of the gods by consuming 200 task points.

Your current task points are 217.

『Yes.』

『No.』

Holy. Fucking. Shit! Letters appeared! They really appeared!! I've never seen these before. Even an optional "Yes/No" appeared too.

I felt hope and a sense of deja vu when I heard I could consume 200 task points to borrow some power from the gods.

"Nothing is happening."

"Was he lying?"

It was time to move, I couldn't hesitate anymore when they were slowly giving me more and more suspicious and scary looks.

I'm gonna get promoted if I do well. Damn, I'll raise my rank to the next tier! More money and an even more comfortable life was awaiting me! Wooohooooo!!!

Ding-

My hand moved and pressed on the floating 『Yes.』 option, the letters faded away with an artificial noise akin to those you'd hear when choosing an option in a mobile game.

What's going to happen now? I'm so nervous that I couldn't even breathe properly.

Swish- Bang-

Something flew out through the fog with lightning-fast speed. Brushing my face, it crashed on the muddy ground with a resounding splash, nay, it was more of a thud than a splash which was weird for the muddy and watery ground we were standing upon. At the same time, the thick fog that was surrounding us began to slowly clear up, faintly revealing the bright sky as if the previous fog was merely an illusion.

Holy shit, what was that?

Did that thing just fly in from the fog and then get stuck on the ground? The speed and weight looked way too much. Was this a missile or a meteor or something similar? Fucking shit, just what the fuck was that?

The land surrounding me was actually hollowed out as if an object of considerable mass had collided with it. It was akin to the state when a meteor had just landed on earth with a terrible momentum. And in the middle of that hollowed space, was an object blazing with fire.

“An arrow...?”

Luna said it was an arrow, and I also confirmed that fact with my own eyes.

Instead of feathers, fluttering and shining gold flames were vividly burning at its end. It was a very hard-to-process scene, especially for me who had come from a world without magic.

It soon disappeared, like a flame that had burned out all of its firewood with a whoosh sound.

“Wow, damn, the fog cleared up in an instant!”

“It wasn't just the fog! Look! Even the mud has suddenly dried up!”

“What!? What just happened? I didn't see anything, I just heard a loud sound!”

The adventurers began loudly rambling with each other in shock at the earthshaking changes around us. Hippolyte then interrupted them after looking at the hollowed-out ground.

“The food and leather on the ground are gone. It seems the great God of Light has accepted the tribute. The way the floor is dented and this heat...”

Hippolyte, then, knelt down on the spot where the arrow was and swept the floor with her palm.

The priestess from Delphi was also kneeling next to her and was also getting a feel of the ground. She then spoke in her characteristic quiet voice.

“He never answered no matter how many tributes I offered. To think he’d answer so quickly... Uuh, Uuuh, Uuuugh...”

Cassandra who was looking fine just now suddenly started convulsing violently.

“Ugh, Gugh, Hah, Haagh-!”

S-shit, what the hell is happening? Is she having an epileptic seizure?

In this world where people had weird eccentricities and bizarre conditions, I wouldn’t be surprised to see someone suffer from a mental illness or two.

Even if it was a well-dressed Priestess who seemed to be living quite the good life.

“The priestess from Delphi. W-What’s happening to her? What’s wrong?”

Even Hippolyte couldn’t stay calm after seeing her body shake like that, as if she was going through a great amount of pain.

She then grabbed the slender shoulders of Cassandra, who now started foaming from her mouth, and began shaking her back and forth.

“Wake up!”

“Geuh, Uuuugh. O-Oracle-!”

“It’s an oracle?”

“...Geuh, the s-sun rose high from below the ground and stayed in the sky for three days. Nothing could hide from its bright light whether it was high in the mountain peaks or deep on the sea floor... But it then sank back into the earth, breaking with it its own covenant and crown of light...”

Cassandra who had lost her consciousness after rambling that oracle of hers suddenly woke up after a few dozen minutes.

“Uh, Uuh...”

The woman woke up behind me in a state similar to the ones I'd seen on those experiencing a hangover. She then shouted in surprise at the realization that a man with tanned skin was holding her on his back.

“W-What the hell is going on?”

“I had to lift you on my back since you lost consciousness. Get off now since you have regained your consciousness. You're heavy.”

I wasn't really bothered by the duty of carrying her being dumped on me. It was like having to carry another piece of luggage after losing at rock-paper-scissors.

I even liked it at first since it meant I'd be carrying a soft-looking woman on my back. I couldn't say the same thing after walking a few kilometers with all this load under the rays of the scorching sun, however.

“I was unconscious? Okay, first things first, sorry for showing you such an unsightly side of me.”

Cassandra came down and patted her body to dust off the leaves and other residues that got stuck on her clothes. She then slowly came to my side and quietly expressed her thanks along with her apology for burdening me so.

“Hassan of Samaria. I'd recommend visiting Delphi if you have the time after we're done with this mission. It seems to be the wish of the great God of Light and the Sun, Apollo himself.”

“Delphi?”

Where is Delphi situated anyway? I heard people say that it was the city where the headquarters of the church believing in the Sun God was located.

In a world without cars and buses, traveling to another city required a lot of effort. This quest wasn't called an expedition or journey for nothing.

“That's all I can tell you as a mere mortal.”

Cassandra distanced herself from me after leaving those words. It seems she didn't care about any kind of question I might have for her sudden and cryptic recommendation.

"Heugh, uh, ugh-."

Luna then walked up next to me, making strange groaning noises.

"What's wrong?"

"I-I think I sprained my ankle. There was a rock and I kinda tripped over and fell..."

This troublesome bitch walked so freely on the muddy ground and then ended up injuring herself on dry ground.

Was it similar to having your feet hurt on the plain ground after having fun jumping on a trampoline?

Maybe her feet that were used to the muddy terrain couldn't adapt to the suddenness of the dry ground.

"I-It hurts-."

"Oi, let me see. There doesn't seem to be any problem on the surface."

I was used to curing strange diseases so a simple ankle strain shouldn't be too much of a deal, right? I put my hand on Luna's wrist.

"I-I hurt my feet, so why are you touching my arms...?"

"Stay still. Don't speak."

Ding-

[Stats] Name: Luna Knox Dotty

Level: 8

Conditions: Curse of Knox» Curse of Erebor» Mild Growing Pains»

There was nothing mentioned about a sprained ankle. What was the difference between what appeared on my ability and what didn't? More research on this was needed to ascertain that fact. For now, I should approach this the traditional way.

"Want a massage to make you feel better?"

Well, I didn't really need the help of my ability to cure something as trivial as this.

Just as I was trying to reach for the ankle of the sitting Luna she suddenly swung her hand and blocked mine mid-route.

"H-having my ankle touched in public is a little..."

"Ah..."

I forgot about that. I can't even imagine the number of rumors that me touching her feet right here would produce.

Whisper- Whisper-

"The Samaritan prayer method wor..."

"Put food on the floor and keep bowing down..."

Since the weird ancestral rites incident from earlier, people began keeping their distance from me while muttering to themselves.

"What's going on there?"

As if thinking it was strange for us to slow down, Hippolyte stopped walking and looked at us with that indifferent gaze of hers. There was a slight frown forming between her brows as she looked at us.

"Hey, is there something wrong? Any problems?"

"No, nothing's wrong."

"We're already behind the schedule. Nothing should be in our way since the fog has been cleared and the ground is now dry. So, we need to speed up."

Then we started walking again. It was a ruthless march. It was frankly quite difficult to keep up with Hippolyte, who was leading us as though she was running.

"What do you want to do Luna? Should we take a break?"

"N-No, we can't do that. I need to get promoted to the bronze rank..."

Luna, who was weakly limping, began walking again with a pained expression on her face. I can't stand this, she just looks so pitiful.

"Want me to carry you on my back?"

“C-Can you? I-I owe you one then, Hassan.”

I bowed down a little then Luna approached me and wrapped her arms around my neck as if she had been waiting for this to happen for ages. The weight of my luggage and her combined was rather significant.

Perhaps because I had become stronger, I wasn't feeling too bothered about it. Luna who could barely have a proper meal every day was thin and light, to begin with, so there wasn't any additional burden to speak of.

Touch-

Maybe because of the bag on her back, Luna kept leaning forward. Because of that, I could feel her warm and soft front pushing on my back.

In addition to that, and although I had no impure intention, I could feel her soft and springy rear after lifting her from her butt.

“Is it too heavy for you...?”

“No, it's alright.”

“But it's so hot. I'll blow some air for you.”

It was very commendable of her to blow some air on the back of my neck with “Hou, Houuu” sounds. My body, however, was getting hotter instead from the stimulation that action brought to my very core.

Fuck, this was getting dangerous.

Chapter 43: Pluto's Black Star (2)

☪ **Pluto's Black Star (2)** ☪

I carried Luna on my back for a while.

Since the fog was now lifted, the Acheron swamp was like an open wilderness without any obstacles to hinder our march. Simultaneously, there was also nothing to threaten us and no need to unsheathe our weapons.

Well, this kind of open space like those in a savanna makes sense. After all, before entering the swamp area, we had witnessed large plains with paddy fields surrounding us.

That didn't mean we could slack off and drop our awareness, however. I made sure to look around with vigilant eyes and made sure that no form of abnormal sound, if they were to ever come up, could avoid my keenly listening ears.

Maybe mole-like wretches— abnormal variants of monsters like those, could pop out of the ground and grab my ankles. I made sure to check where I was walking and gave attention to my footing as well.

“Looks like you're carrying a lot, Samaritan.”

Someone commented on my situation, interrupting my silent and vigilant march.

I turned my head to see who it was. It turned out to be one of the members of the Sword Maidens, her blond hair was tied with an odd korean-themed ribbon and she had freckles on her face. I think I knew her. Her name was Rene if I remember right.

I could feel Luna nervously tremble on my back as soon as she talked. Was Luna scared of her?

“Want me to carry her for you?”

“No, it's alright.”

I hurriedly distanced myself from her after clearly and concisely expressing my rejection. Rene however stepped closer to me, shortening the distance between us despite my efforts to keep our distance. I was once again reminded of the fact that these barbarians were unaware of the definition of 'personal space'.

“You're more amazing than I thought. You killed the crocodiles and even slashed the goblins. Are all Samaritans as ferocious as you? Moreover, the way you fought was very different from the Spartans.”

I'd never thought that an Amazoness that would scream and fight with a face covered in mud would call me ferocious. Was my bearing as a modern and civilized person lost forever? What went wrong I wonder? I was forced to contemplate my life due to her sudden statements.

“It seems you also received a blessing from a famous god, somehow. You're a funny guy. The funniest guy I've met lately. This is a compliment. I don't usually give out compliments, you know?”

“Is that so?”

The corners of my mouth faintly curled up after being unexpectedly praised by a woman.

To me, who had been mercilessly abused by Elfriede, praise and compliments were as sweet as the greatest honey.

No one in the world dislikes praise, and I liked it too. You could even say I reveled in them due to my abusive past.

Just as I was thinking about that I felt Luna's arms press with a bit more force around my neck.

Luna's relationship with these guys was not dissimilar to that of the circumstance between a predator and a herbivore. Maybe it was more appropriate to call it the relationship between a bread shuttle and the bullies? ¹Usually used at school, where one student is picked on and/or bullied to do the errands for people who are in a stronger position than they are.

Of course, she'd be feeling anxious with such a bully standing next to her and talking casually with the guy she was friends with.

"Well, I don't feel like talking anymore, go away." was what I was about to say...

"See you later then, Samaritan."

Rene walked away before I could even have the chance to say those words. Promptly, she rejoined the Sword Maidens while gently waving her hand toward me. I think the Sword Maidens were making a racket about something but my attention was soon caught by Luna.

"Ha-Hassan..."

"A-Are you uncomfortable? Are your ankles fine?"

"The thing I was going to say the last time..."

"The last time?"

"Before the night watch... I prayed to Knox, early into the next morning... Her response..."

Luna, who was about to say something suddenly stopped as if she was choking, perhaps at the heaviness of the word she was about to relay to me.

Her body then began to tremble and shake like a person who had been damned with the fate of sleeping outside during the bone-chilling nights of winter with nothing to keep her warm.

Was she having a seizure? Just when such a worrying thought crossed my mind, Luna spoke again.

“P-Put me down, Hassan... Hurry up!”

“Put you down?”

I had no clue what was going on but I had no reason to keep carrying her in this situation when she asked me to stop carrying her. Just as I placed her down on the dry ground...

Sprout- Sprout- Sprout-

Sounds similar to the ones of something coming out of the ground resounded from around us. White stick-like objects began popping out from the ground below.

Why did bamboo suddenly shoot out from the ground? Although such a ridiculous thought crossed my mind, I unhesitantly pulled two of my swords out instantaneously, revealing their shiny and glorious splendor.

The time for me to use the Santoryu art has finally come.

Sprout-

What actually sprouted from beneath the ground was a kind of bone. These bones were old enough to look bleached white. Moreover, it was wriggling abnormally as if it was alive.

They were actually skeletons. The remains of the deceased. Or whatever you felt like calling them.

For me who followed Elfriede into Pluto's Underground labyrinth countless times, they were something like a regular sight, as we encountered them multiple times. The count was so many that I couldn't even recall the exact number.

Still, no matter how much experience I had accumulated, it didn't lessen the surrealness of the scene of the dead corpses being animated to life.

“Draw your weapons!”

One of the adventurers shouted so, his voice had a hint of panic laced within. That's because...

“There are too many of them, fucking damn it!”

The number of skeletons was similar to that of a platoon. Did they have a spawning area under the ground that could infinitely create them or what? The constantly adding numbers compelled me to think as such.

HeuHeuHeuHeuHeu...

At that time, a peal of deep resonating laughter spread out among the panicked adventurers.

“The Acheron swamps... It’s infested with those who have fallen during the cold winter... They died without even being able to receive the fare for their journey to the afterlife... They became ghosts, having been denied entry to Charon’s boat...”

Whisper-

I could suddenly hear a voice, that gave me the fucking creeps, from god knows where. It was terrifying, similar to the sound of someone licking the damp bottom of the swamps with its devilish tongue.

Rather than a voice, it would be better to call it a curse or a very disturbing and bizarre noise.

Rustle-

Soon after that, a black shadow appeared among the skeletons.

There was no reason for a shadow to appear on this large plain with no tree on the horizon. It was clearly an anomaly without any valid reason for its existence.

“The scent of deep fear...”

The shadow grew bigger and appeared on the ground in human form. Its body was covered by a black robe.

Seeing the bulging chest of the figure, it was clearly in the shape of a woman. She also had a pointy necklace on her neck that looked like a mace without its handle.

“The fog is gone... and the mud has dried. However, the power of light... It can’t get rid of the dead that lurks deep within this earth...”

Damn, was she a witch? I’m weak against this magical shit. I was vulnerable against witches in more ways than one, god-damn it!

“You’ve finally revealed your identity, vile cultist! Are you the one controlling these skeletons?”

Hippolyte drew her sword and gallantly exclaimed out loud. Lord Destroyer also raised his huge hammer and took a fighting stance, ready to kill his enemies with overwhelming force.

“Necromancer Koma! I will get rid of your army!”

“No one... can restrain death... Pluto, the god of death, will rise from the dark depths of the underground and rule over the earth, the seas, and the skies... Nobody can stop his almighty reign...”

“That’s crazy!”

Hippolyte pulled her sword out and fiercely attacked the figure; it was as if she couldn’t stand listening to her mindless blabbering anymore. Countless remains consisting of white-colored bones, however, assembled in front of her, blocking her path.

Clatter- Clatter-

“This kind of trick-!”

Clatter- Clatter-

At the same time, the bones, which had remained immobile after surrounding us, creating a great amount of tension among the adventurers, suddenly began attacking us with a maddened fervor.

They had no weapons, but their basic appearance, reminiscent of the very essence of death itself, was enough to scare some adventurers silly.

Most of all, there were just way too many of them.

“Whoooagh!”

“H-Help me!”

The skeletons of the dead were resentful and longed for life more than anything else. One of those vengeful skeletons grabbed the arms and legs of a bronze-tier adventurer and tore them off like it was a mere piece of paper.

The adventurer let out an unsettling scream before being torn into pieces in the next second by the same skeleton.

“Tanathus, Sigtes-. Bel Mos Grima...”

The flesh of the fallen adventurer then came back together, to form a jumbled mess of flesh and gore, after the witch had let out some scary sounds, and formed a crude shape in the visage of the fallen adventurer consisting solely of gorey flesh.

“Go, my flesh golem...”

Ughaaaaa...

Damn, this necromancer is too much of a cheat. Can't I change my savage warrior class into the one of a necromancer? No way wielding a bladed weapon could hold up to something this unfair and broken.

A bladed weapon wouldn't affect bones in any significant way, so the strategy here was to sheathe the sword back and swing the sheathe like a makeshift mace instead.

“Damn you, skeleton bastards! I'll kill you, fucking undead scums!”

Swing- Clatter-

The skeleton bastards lost their shape and crumbled on the floor with every hit of my sheathed sword.

Indeed, striking them with a blunt object was more effective than just trying to slash them with a sword's edge. The knowledge I had learned from Elfriede was no joke and was coming in handy right now. At least, there was some form of silver lining in that god-forsaken life of a slave that I was living the past couple of years.

“S-Skeletons? I-It's time to use my spirit voodoo.”

I woke up from my reveries at Luna's sudden shout. I just remembered the fact that she was a voodoo shaman.

Wasn't a part of voodoo all about making zombies? Weren't they like close relatives of the necromancers?

“Spirit Voodoo! Haah!”

Luna raised a huge stick and fully swung on the body of a skeleton and smashed it apart.

Damn, wasn't this just like her Silence totem from yesterday? She said it was called Spirit Voodoo; she seems to be thinking that just naming them something fancy like that was enough for them to be seen as something cool. As I thought, she was just a plain retard.

Luna's Silence totem had worked for her like a charm and had a 100% working rate. And similarly the skeletons she hit after swinging her arms turned into pieces.

Adventurers watching the scene of my and Luna's one-sided slaughter also changed their strategy, sheathed their swords and used them like that, or just picked up sticks and hit the skeletons with them.

Clatter- Clatter-

Soon, the sounds of bones falling apart spread out throughout the battlefield. For beings that looked so scary that they nearly frightened everyone to death, they were rather weak.

Truthfully, however, it was difficult to fight a skeleton warrior or a skeleton knight even if multiple adventurers banded together. Fortunately, the people who died here, naked and struggling from the harsh winter, were weaker than even the weakest goblins. Not only were they not strong, but they also weren't really smart either.

"Guys! It hurts!"

Graeuuk-

Even the flesh golem who looked like the final boss lost its shape and collapsed on the ground when one of the Sword Maidens hit it with a cutting board after they surrounded it.

Damn, necromancers are actually shit, what the fuck! I'd rather keep being a barbarian warrior. I decided to give up on requesting a class transfer.

"That's pretty good... How about this... Arise... My servants."

Clatter- Clatter- Clatter-

The piled-up bones and the remains of fallen adventurers began converging into a single place at the commanding words of the necromancer.

They then began combining like legos and formed into the shape of a scary-looking skeleton dragon with flaming blue eyes.

Karrrrr...

"I-It's a dragon..."

Just until a few moments before, these bastards were excitedly beating the limping skeletons, and had finally found the chance to relax and loosen the strength they put in

their weapons. But now... only terrible despair remained on their faces when they looked at the horrific scene of an undead dragon.

“S-Sister Hippolyte...!”

I could see how serious the current situation had become when I saw a member of the Sword Maidens, that was holding the cutting board, falling to the ground with her legs still trembling from fear and shock.

A dragon made out of bones, god-fucking-damn! This shit is as big as a three-story building, so fucking scary. Was this even something that humans could deal with, to begin with?

The only way I could think of to get rid of this damned monstrosity required the assistance of a helicopter or a tank. And at that moment, when my mind was cooking up outlandish thoughts to defeat the skeletal dragon, something heavy jumped on the ground and then propelled itself up in the air.

Looking at the thick fur and huge hammer, it must be Lord Destroyer who had decided to take the first hit.

“Lord Vulcan! Give this servant of yours the strength to fight his adversaries!”

Thump-

The huge hammer hit the dragon’s head, emitting a huge shockwave of giant proportions.

The swing of the epic-grade hammer along with the strength of a silver-tier adventurer was enough to create an enormous impact reminiscent of a huge cannonball fired from a barrel!

“Haaaargh!”

The aftermath created by the huge blow even made some adventurers trip off balance from the resulting shockwaves; they lost their footing and fell flat on the dry ground. I might have fallen or downright flown away too if I didn’t put a lot of strength in my legs.

“My God!”

Damn, probably because she was as light as a feather, Luna flew far away, like an ant swept by the wind! Was she going to be okay? I can’t afford to worry about her right now, unfortunately.

Grrrrr...

Even after being hit with that strong-looking hammer, the skeleton dragon didn't budge and was left without even a single scratch!

He then lifted his heavy foot up and ruthlessly slammed it on the chest of Lord Destroyer who was lying on the ground, recovering from the backlash of his huge attack.

Lord Destroyer was flung far away and hit the ground with a loud thump. At the same time, the skeleton dragon began violently moving around, waving its sharp bone claws and heavy bone tail in all directions like a frenzied beast.

Grrrrrr...

"Uh! Uuaaaah!"

"R-Run!"

It was a one-sided slaughter. Adventurers were sent flying and crashing here and there after getting hit with its tail that looked like it weighed a fucking ton, at least. It was like being crushed by a heavy truck!

No one would call them cowards for wanting to run away right now. I was so scared, I wanted to run away too. But the hands of a skeleton were wrapped around my legs with a tight grip and didn't let me budge from my spot.

"Unhand me! Bastard! Let go of me! What's wrong with you?"

And just then...

"Skeletons? Do you think mere skeletons are enough to stop me? Such puny tricks to stop me!? The daughter of the great Mars? Laughable!!"

Hippolyte cut all the skeletal warriors surrounding her with the slashes of her sword. Taking a different stance than usual, she abruptly swung her blade several times in short instantaneous bursts.

Whoosh- Swoosh-

I thought it would be a waste of time to try and fight this bony monstrosity but I was proven to be wrong. The warrior proved me wrong. The invisible waves she was producing made my ears ring from the way they cut air apart in its wake. The invisible slashes were actually able to hurt the dragon!!!

Swish- Swoosh- Bump-

I was simply left speechless, what could I even say in this situation? My mouth was wide open at the sight of the skeleton dragon collapsing before the might of her blows.

With a sword? Damn. Could such a thing even be possible? Is this magic? Or was Hippolyte a witch too?

Seeing something so surreal was making my head spin.

“Ouuugh... You’re nowhere near worthy enough to claim Mars’ blood.”

The necromancer, bamboozled by what transpired, turned into a shadow again and tried to flee the scene.

Swish-

My inner evaluation of the necromancer rose by half a star. They sure have a lot of tricks up their sleeves.

“Koma is on the run! Everyone follow me! If we don’t catch her right now then all the deaths and even this expedition itself will all be in vain!”

Hippolyte tried to follow her and called everyone for help but no one was in a state to heed her commands.

I was the only one still standing, everyone else was rolling on the floor and groaning with serious injuries plastered all over their bodies.

“Oh, fucking damn it... Hey! Samaritan! Follow me! Quickly!”

“Y-You mean me?”

“If all goes well, I’ll completely forget about yesterday’s scandal. So, follow me already, you big oaf!”

Is this how a prisoner feels after getting rid of their electronic anklet? I felt refreshed and my mind sprung up with positive thoughts at her declaration.

“Not only will I forget about it, but you’ll also be promoted to the bronze rank if you catch her. I swear it by the river Styx!”

What? She just swore by the Styx? I know the credibility of that better than anyone.

“What are you doing Miss Hippolyte? Let’s go!”

“Ah, T-That’s right! You’re more fearless than I thought brave Samaritan.”

It's not like I'm not scared.

It's just that the Necromancer couldn't use her ultimate attack anymore. In other words, she was just a mage on cooldown. I might be able to win over such a weak mage, god damn it! No way was I going to miss such a chance.

I was also confident because Hippolyte would be with me. Fuck, this woman could even shoot invisible projectiles from her sword. She was no different from a walking missile launcher. I was thoroughly assured of our victory. That promotion is on the bag already! Wooooohooooo!

12/11/22 Edit: And we're back. Been a while, we know. What can we say? We got skill issue'd, rip. New chapter tomorrow so stay tuned. Thanks for still following us.

Footnotes:

- 1Usually used at school, where one student is picked on and/or bullied to do the errands for people who are in a stronger position than they are.

Chapter 44: Pluto's Black Star (3)

☞ Pluto's Black Star (3) ☜

"Here are her footprints... She couldn't have gone too far, hurry up!"

"Hak, Heu, Ha... I-I'm coming but..."

Hoo... I was panting and my breath was coarse from fatigue. Although I didn't know any swordsmanship or martial arts I was at least confident in my running ability.

My self-confidence waned a little after today.

Hippolyte was effortlessly running as though she was floating on the ground. She was kicking the ground with her two legs like a fucking cheetah. Holy fuck, I don't think she'd lose in speed to a cheetah at all. How the fuck is she so fast?

Even though I recently got a bit stronger, it was still merely at the level of a fairly robust man. Since my growth was fairly limited, by the standards of this barbaric world. I could barely follow Hippolyte's footsteps.

Hippolyte would sometimes look behind, trying to see if I was keeping up with her.

"Hurry up!"

“Geuuh...”

Instead of falling at the hands of the Necromancer, I might just drop dead here from exhaustion while following Hippolyte.

“Fucking... tired... Ah, damn it...”

“Fucking, damn it...”

All of a sudden...

I suddenly felt my body kick off from the ground and hover in the air. Hippolyte actually picked me up and carried me on her shoulders like I was a piece of luggage.

The way she casually picked me up, like casually picking up a lunch box from the ground, after briefly stopping was fucking amazing. What was more amazing was my flipped view of the back of her legs moving rapidly on the ground.

Shake- Shake- Shake-

Wow, it felt really similar to riding a two-wheeler. I felt like I was sent back to my world for a few moments.

“Wow, you’re so fast, this is no joke. Do you even need a carriage at this point?”

“You’ll bite your tongue if you speak! Don’t open your mouth.”

“Umm.”

I immediately closed my mouth, hearing her warning words.

I kept my mouth shut until Hippolyte, who had been running around with her drizzling brown hair like a horse’s fluttering mane, suddenly stopped in her tracks and began looking around with a vigilant gait.

Having her untidy hair cover up my face wasn’t what I could really call comfortable, but she might just throw me away if I made any comments so I kept it all in.

Sliding-

Due to her sudden stop, her body which was moving at high speeds left a long trace on the ground as though she had been sliding on a snow-covered path.

From her shoulders, I could see the rare sight of her smooth thighs expanding like they were the brakes of a car.

Hippolyte soon groaned, interrupting my thoughtless indulgence in this weird yet beautiful sight.

“We caught up. Get down.”

I quickly stepped down from her shoulders and took a good look at our surroundings. It didn't look any different from the previous plains we were previously in, at least to me

“There's nothing here though...”

“I can feel the eerie mana. That wizard can actually use concealment magic? I can't believe she can use such a large-scale concealment as this. Is she perhaps from Corinthe's Ivory Tower?”

She could actually feel mana? Wow! The plebian that was me, however, could only feel the hot air and sweat drops falling down my back under this scorching hot sun. Damn, it was fucking hot!

Whenever I heard something like this, I'd feel uncomfortable at the clear differences between the humans of this world and those of my original world.

“There...”

Hippolyte lifted her blade up in the air. And the same sharp yet invisible wind blades that cut the skeleton dragon were produced once again; it began tearing through the air and was probably targeting a specific spot.

Whoosh-

Not only was she actually cutting through the air ahead, but I was made to witness the bizarre sight of blood starting to spray from somewhere along the wind blade's path.

Fwooh-

At the same time, our surroundings began fading out like paint being peeled off from the walls of a house.

The wilderness disappeared, replaced by dark passages, and cold and mossy stone walls suddenly surrounded us from all sides.

Damn, is this shit for real? I was probably even more surprised than Sima Yi after he had discovered an empty fort. ¹The Empty Fort Strategy is the 32nd of the Chinese Thirty-Six Stratagems. The strategy involves using reverse psychology (and luck) to deceive the enemy into thinking that an empty location is full of traps and ambushes, and therefore induce the enemy to retreat. It was featured in “Romance of The Three Kingdoms”.

Hippolyte lifted her mouth and calmly spoke while seeing the dilapidated walls...

"This feeling... It's Pluto's ruins. How long have we been inside? Did an entrance to the depths appear in the Acheron swamps too?"

Her eyes were directed at a corpse wearing black robes. He had collapsed after being hit by the invisible blade and subsequently died after falling on the cold floor of the ruins.

"To think you'd see through Golos' concealment magic... You have great senses... But it's too late... This is our home turf... A place full of the aura of death... The aura here fuels our magic to unsurmountable heights..."

Soon after that, a group of people, wearing black cloaks, appeared from the dark depths of the dilapidated ruins and blocked our road ahead.

I didn't know what to do and could only tremble in fright. Fuck, I shouldn't have followed her! Just when I started regretting my choices.

The necromancer with the pointy necklace, probably the psychopath from earlier who was called Koma by Hippolyte, spoke in a sinister voice.

"Warrioress... Your skills and strength have indeed reached the level of the heroes..."

Spark- Spark-

I could see black sparks and lightning crackling out from Koma's necklace, encircling her shadowy form.

"Too late... The spell has been performed... You're an experienced warrior... You must know how difficult it is to face a wizard who has successfully performed their spell..."

A wizard who finished performing his spell?

I could instinctively feel how bad that sounded. From my little involvement with magic, I knew that this spelled nothing good for us.

"Come behind me, Samaritan! A big one is flying our way!"

Damn, how reliable!

I didn't refuse her words and immediately hid behind her back. My heart was overflowing with unknown emotions at the sight of her fluttering and reassuring cape. Damn, she was really charismatic, worthy of being called a hero.

"Ideos... Koperu..."

The necromancer suddenly shouted in that weird language of hers and even more sparks burst out from her necklace. Giant black lightning bolts as thick as my thighs were coming our way.

Spark- Spark-

The black streaks of lightning were flying like an arrow while bouncing off the stone walls; it then flew straight towards Hippolyte's body which was firmly standing in front of me, protecting me behind her.

"If I cut it like this then..."

Seeing Hippolyte accurately swinging her sword on the swift-moving black lightning was again an amazing sight.

Swoosh-

Unfortunately, Hippolyte's sword simply moved through the air without having any effects on the lightning. As a result, Hippolyte was directly struck by the thick black thunderbolt and fell down with a grotesque "Argh!" sound. It was particularly jarring to the ears and made my heart almost leap out of my throat from fright.

"Ugh- Huuh..."

Now that the wall defending me was thoroughly smashed, it was my own responsibility to protect my life from these black-robed cultists.

"Spiritual Severance... Great Beginning of the Heavens, the power of Chaos... You will survive this even if you have the blood of Jupiter... One more is left... Die, you barbarian..." (Hippolyte is saying she's the daughter of Mars, and Mars is the son of Jupiter/Jupiter)

Thus, the necromancer grabbed her necklace again and seemed to be gathering mana for one last deadly attack aimed at me. If I don't do something I'll get turned into charred crisps by the black thunderbolt from earlier.

"What the... fucking damn it all!"

I chose to pull out my sword and charged forward with a fierce howl.

"W-What?"

Maybe because they never expected that I'd attack them so fiercely, the people in black robes looked very flustered.

Wasn't it common sense to attack wizards when they were busy casting their spells? Were they retards or what?

"S-Stop him!"

Koma shouted loudly at her, seemingly hesitating, comrades. Although flustered, the robe-clad cultists quickly tried to block my path, but my sword was much faster and cut through their bodies like a knife through butter.

Whoosh-

My long sword that had previously cut through the frail goblins and crocodile skin was now cutting the other person's shoulders and arms with a fountain of blood in its wake. At the same time, I could feel the black-robed cultists falter under my berserk hits.

It was then that I realized.

They're pretty damn weak, aren't they? I can fearlessly deal with these weaklings.

Swoosh- Swish-

I would hear "Argh!" or "Gyagh" every time I swung my sword in the narrow hallways of the moss-covered ruins. Some of the black-robed scums even pulled out daggers and tried to counterattack using their weak bodies.

Still, even with daggers in hand, their reach was nothing compared to my long sword. I began cutting off their dagger-holding wrists before they could even come close to me.

Sniff-

Although the stench of blood was very unpleasant to the nose, I had no time to worry about that right now. My life was on the line, damn it!

"What are you doing...?! Use your spells to subdue him...!"

"W-We're trying to but it's not working...! Our spirit-scattering spells are not working...!"

"I heard Samaritans had great mental fortitude. Isn't what we're doing practically meaningless?"

"Damn, what are you guys even useful for...! Foolish bastards!"

I had no clue what they were talking about. The black-robed cultists began shouting at each other, clearly, they weren't as united as I was told they were.

Infighting while the enemy is in front of you? Isn't this the same as declaring defeat? They really were retards, weren't they?

I continued to cut off the arms and shoulders of all the bastards blocking my way and knocked them directly to the ground.

In a world where welfare for the disabled was nonexistent, this was the same as killing them, maybe even worse.

"I-I did it! Ideos... Koperu..."

The lofty necromancer shouted after seemingly completing her spell casting. Soon after that, black sparks started buzzing out of her necklace and a black thunderbolt was shot out of it with immense speed.

This black thunderbolt was enough to knock down an inhumanely powerful warrior of the silver tier. I couldn't help but feel scared out of my wits as I was sure a mere weakling like me stood no chance against it.

It was impossible for a human to avoid the claps of lightning. Eventually, I was hit by the black thunderbolt and helplessly screamed before my inevitable demise.

"Damn it! Gyaagh!"

"I-I did it! F-Fucking idiot... V-Very good... I've got some nice bodies... A warrior of Mars and a Samaritan. You're gonna be my henchmen now... V-Very good...! Ah, I-I thought I was going to wet my pants for a second there... Fucking lunatic almost scared me silly... But he's finally down, no one can stop me now.... Hahahahaha.....!"

Only the terrifying laughter of the necromancer could be heard in the dark hallways. Something was off, however. I was still alive...

When I was struck by the lightning I reflexively screamed, waiting for the unbearable pain to assault me. But, for some reason, I actually wasn't feeling pain or anything like that.

Well, my muscles were a little bit numb but it was nothing extreme. Damn, what is this? Did she miss or something? How was I fine when even the mighty Hippolyte had been knocked cold by that terrifying attack?

Anyway, she just missed her finisher which took a long time to cast. No fucking way I was gonna let this golden opportunity go through my hands. Not waiting for a single additional instant, I raised my sword as high as I could and swung down with all my strength.

The necromancer whose laughter was resounding all across the stone walls suddenly flinched and was left bewildered at my sudden momentum.

“W-What?! The black star’s spiritual severance spell isn’t working? I-It can’t be!”

She seemed bewildered as she was touching her necklace in utter doubt as though she couldn’t fathom this turn of events. Seeing another opening, I slashed her shoulders as hard as I could. Her arm fell to the floor and rolled over with a thudding noise. Blood sprayed everywhere from her wound.

“M-My arm! My aaaarm!”

“It’s not your arm anymore bitch.”

“Geuh, W-What?! I don’t get it! Lord P-Pluto! G-Give me your strength...! Help meeeeeee.....”

The necromancer held out her injured shoulder, with the severed arm, and began staggering back in retreat. I didn’t get why I was unaffected too, but if there was something I was sure of, it was that I was the predator here.

“Praying is of no use. I’m the only God here now damn witch.”

“D-Damn it...!”

“You should have chosen your class wisely, stupid witch!”

“W-What even is that...!”

Swing- Swing-

I then cut off her remaining arm with another swing of my blade. She then fell to the ground with both arms severed and struggled hard until she bled out and lost consciousness, probably from blood loss.

“Whoa...”

Once the situation was over, and the effects of adrenaline had thoroughly faded out, I finally grew fully aware of what situation I was in.

My legs lost all strength and were on the verge of giving in, and my hand that was holding the sword was shaking like an old man with late-stage Parkinson’s disease. Fuck fuck fuck... I can’t believe I just beat those wizards!

“Geuh, Huugh...”

I let out a sigh of absolute relief as my excitement after winning this tough battle faded out a little. Only then did I remember that Hippolyte had taken a hit in my stead and was injured because of it.

“Ughh...”

Hippolyte continued to groan in pain while lying on the ground as if she had a severe fever. It doesn't look life-threatening but it might be risky to just leave her like this.

Damn, what kind of first aid should be given to a victim of an electrocution spell?

Should I do CPR? I ended up putting my finger on her wrist after cringing at my stupid idea.

Ding-

[Stats] Name: Hippolyte Heavensinger

Level: ??

Condition: Blood Curse » Moonlight Enervation » Severe Menstrual Pain » Partially Blocked Airway » ????»

As expected, what I could see now was different than the last time. Blocked airway? Was she perhaps having trouble breathing?

I then laid Hippolyte flat on the ground and lifted her chin slightly to not obstruct her airways from their natural flow.

“Geuh...”

But her breathing was showing no signs of improvement. Shit, is there any spot that I could press on that could help remedy her breathing difficulties?

Fuck, I can't see shit. Still, I need to do something... her chest!

Compressing her chest would surely help in removing the block. Swiftly, I took off the iron plate armor covering her chest area.

Cling- Clong- Clang-

The knots on her backside were very tight. I was fortunately very dexterous due to my ability and could easily unravel them. A very thin piece of black fabric appeared in my sight, something resembling a sports bra or maybe a tank top.

Shock-

I lost focus for a few moments at her chest, which had bulged out after removing her armor, which was bigger than I imagined it to be.

Wow, Holy Fuck...!

I didn't notice before because it was covered with the iron plate but damn, of course, you'd have difficulties breathing if you were forced to press something so massive with stuffy chest armor like that.

"Well, Miss Hippolyte. This is... This is an act of rescue. It's nothing weird. Please don't think of it as sexual harassment"

I put my palms on her chest after declaring so, trying to alleviate my troubled conscience.

Jiggle-

The softness of her chest was transmitted from my palm through my spinal cord and directly to my brain. How could something be so soft? Fuck...

Damn, I'll just touch it one more time.

Jiggle- Jiggle-

Just when I felt the smooth surface and soft sensation once again, almost started to get addicted to that feel...

"Euuuh, Euuh, Euuuh. W-What a cowardly trick... Cough, Euuh..."

Hippolyte finally woke up while coughing. I was so happy to see her, who was seemingly about to die, suddenly wake up that I began shouting in excitement and joy. My benefactor was alive!

"M-Miss Hippolyte! Are you alright?"

"Whoa... W-What's wrong with me? Wait!!! W-Why are you touching my chest!?"

"Holy shit!"

I knew it... I'm fucked... Again...

Wanna unlock all premium chapters? Check the Membership Chapters will seamlessly unlock no need to bother buying coins anymore.

Footnotes:

- 1The Empty Fort Strategy is the 32nd of the Chinese Thirty-Six Stratagems. The strategy involves using reverse psychology (and luck) to deceive the enemy into thinking that an empty location is full of traps and ambushes, and therefore induce the enemy to retreat. It was featured in "Romance of The Three Kingdoms".

Chapter 45: Pluto's Black Star (4)

☿ Pluto's Black Star (4) ♁

"H-Hmm, Hassan of Samaria, you seem to have the habit of desiring to release the excitement of battle by venting your sexual urges, yes? But I am not a priestess of Venus, though. If it's sexual desires, just let them deal with it, please. Don't be like this..."

"It was an act of rescue, I was actually trying to ease your breathing difficulty..."

"Hooou, good, then. I'll let it slide this time too since you've done a really good job here, but there will be no next time, okay?"

Hippolyte, after regaining consciousness, doubted me by herself and then proceeded to forgive me of her own accord too.

I gave up on explaining what CPR was since it would probably be considered illegal in this world. This woman won't care about anything I would say anyway. That's the kind of person Hippolyte was.

Well, if a woman were to tear off my pants and said she was trying to rescue me by pressing on my schlong, I wouldn't believe her either. So, I can get where she's coming from.

"You're even better than I thought, Samaritan. The moment I think I've fathomed your limits, you go and surprise me again with your ludicrous stunts and actions. Even though your movements are savage and barbarous, you were able to miss their vital points perfectly. They were injured but with no harm to their lives. This way we'll be able to capture and interrogate them later. A pretty good job you did there if I say so myself."

Hippolyte then praised my swordsmanship to change the awkward mood between us. I was wielding my swords with the intention to kill them, so I wasn't sure whether saying that I perfectly missed their vital points was a compliment or a curse.

To be frank, I think my crude swordsmanship was good enough as is.

"Necromancer Koma. I, Hippolyte, priestess of Mars, will restrain you today, by the authority of lord Mars."

Hippolyte spoke in a dignified tone to the necromancer who was rolling on the ground with her arms severed. The necromancer then laughed hysterically while vomiting mouthfuls of blood.

“Death... can never be restrained... I told you... We’re all equal before death...”

Disintegrate-

As she uttered those last words in that eerie voice of hers, the body of the necromancer began crumbling down, like ashes they scattered in all directions as though influenced by an unknown current of wind. Damn, what the hell is going on?

It wasn’t just her body, even the bodies of the other fallen cultists also scattered as if they had been turned into fine powder.

“...Did they use poison? To think they’d take their own lives. Aren’t they afraid of receiving divine punishment in the halls of Tartarus?”

“I’ve already... accomplished my goals... Beginning of the Heavens... The seeds have been planted in the body of its legitimate successors... Chaos...wants a new beginning...and...he shall have what he desires...”

The necromancer’s body finally turned completely into a mix of dust and ash, scattering like the rest at the end of her words. All that was left on the ground were her bloody and dirty black rags and the weird mace-shaped necklace she was wearing.

Hippolyte then picked up her necklace and spoke in a tone of surprise.

“This is an epic-grade relic. The Black Star. I heard it was lost in a temple in the Acheron region a decade ago. So this is where it was, huh...”

Swish-

She then moved it toward me. Having already experienced the terror and terrifying imposingness of the relic, my voice shook a little in panic.

“W-What is it?”

“You’re the one that killed her so the spoils should be yours too. This Black Star belongs to you.”

“R-Really?”

An epic relic? Damn, this is so cool!!!

I can't believe I just got an epic-grade relic, just like that. Aren't these things worth quite a lot? Ten gold coins at least or something!

"Holy shit, thank you, Miss Hippolyte!"

"This is just what you rightfully deserve. Don't raise your hopes up though, Hassan of Samaria. The Black Star of the Acheron spews out wild mana that can sever the spirit of its users too if not subdued first. Its power is something that is hard to bear with or suppress for most..."

Hippolyte was apparently talking about something serious but my mind wasn't registering anything she was saying. The only things on my mind right now were images of the shiny gold coins that would land in my pockets soon. There's so much I could do with those gold coins.

Should I buy a house? A personal carriage? My dull brain was having a lot of trouble deciding on what to do with such a large sum of money.

"Just take it. This thing gives me the creeps, I don't have good compatibility with it. I don't want to keep it, so it's yours."

"Compatibility? Does such a thing matter with relics?"

"Yes, epic-grade artifacts are left by the glorious heroes who left their names in the historical epics. They are products created by their deeply-ingrained karma. So, unless it's someone with matching karma as theirs, trying to use an epic artifact would be fruitless. Some people even went crazy because of them sometimes."

What is she even talking about? Was this similar to a class-specific item?

So this Black Star would be a necromancer-only item, right? That made it no different than an expensive piece of junk for people who didn't have a matching class.

Rustle-

That being said, I still received the relic from Hippolyte's hands.

At that moment, I felt electricity run throughout my whole body starting from the fingertips coming in direct contact with the object and soon after that, somehow familiar letters appeared in my vision.

You've acquired Pluto's Black Star.

You can consume 100 task points to strengthen this piece of equipment.

Will you use your task points to strengthen Pluto's Black Star to Pluto's Eye?

『Yes.』

『No.』

Something strange has yet again appeared in front of my eyes. Strengthening equipment by consuming task points? Did it have such a function too?

This is actually not my first time touching an epic-grade artifact.

Because just before getting freed from my slavery I could hear “You are the first to acquire the Epic-Grade Relic Asclepius’ Staff” after touching the Asclepius’ Staff on the labyrinth raid with Elfriede’s gang and even got this strange <Imperfect Dexterity> ability from that encounter.

I didn’t understand back then but now I could conscientiously assume that all epic-grade artifacts had stranged and unexplainable powers after getting this necklace.

Fuck, things that need task points keep popping up left and right. They’re really precious, huh... Well, it wasn’t that great of a deal since I knew of a few ways to collect them very swiftly.

“Is there a problem? What’s wrong with you? You didn’t lose your mind, right?”

Hippolyte drew her sword and positioned herself in a sword stance as if ready to cut my throat at any given moment. Seeing that horrific scene, I hurriedly spoke to avoid any kind of unfortunate accident from transpiring this time.

“There’s no problem, p-put your sword away, please!”

“Then let’s go back. Well, Hassan of Samaria, again, you’ve done a great job today. You’ll hear good news you can look forward to from the guild soon, I can assure you of that.”

When we returned to the place where we had fought with the skeletons, I was greeted with the sight of priestess Cassandra performing medical treatment for the injured.

I could see bandaged people groan in pain all around me, struggling in the dry ground. And just as I arrived, the big-nosed Marco excitedly greeted us with hasty steps.

“You made it back, brother!”

“Fucking hell, how are you still alive after these skeletons attacked?”

“I was comforting the dead with a requiem so that they can peacefully reach Charon.”

“I’m the one who protected Marco-kun!”

Lord Destroyer appeared and cast a shadow over us with his towering body. His whole upper area was covered in a plethora of bandages. He alternatively looked between Hippolyte and the relic hanging around my neck then asked with a voice filled with intrigue.

“Miss Hippolyte, Koma is...?”

“All the cultists from the Acheron died.”

“I guessed that much but... this necklace did Samaritan-kun...?”

Nod-

Hippolyte silently nodded her head, understanding the silent question that Destroyer wanted to ask.

“The more I look at you, the more interesting you seem, Samaritan-kun. You’ve gained a few points in my heart with that act, keep it up!”

Holy motherf... When it came to men, this guy was a lot more dangerous than a few cultists. No matter how many times I simulated a battle with him in my head, I lost 9 times out of 10. I don’t think I could remain standing for more than 5 seconds if I clashed head-on with this beast.

That would have been fine if it just ended in me getting beaten, but I knew that clearly wasn’t all, god-fucking-shit.

“That aside, there seems to be an entry to Pluto’s ruins here, Lord Destroyer.”

“Pluto’s ruins?”

“Yeah, it’s probably the cause of the cultist’s presence here and that weird fog. The entrance has been blocked for now but we’ll have to appropriately deal with this eventually, lest another catastrophe descends on us.”

“Well, this is something we’ll have to discuss with the other silver-tier adventurers. It seems we’re done here so let’s go back. I’m glad we dealt with it sooner than our previous estimation. It would have taken a lot more effort and sacrifices had we kept walking through the mud and the fog.”

The journey lasted less than two days, it shouldn’t go past three days even after counting the way back.

Fatigue was piling up quickly on my body even on the way back, but I finally could feel every speck of energy leaving my body after finally sighting the tall walls of Sodomora.

I'm finally back, damn it. It feels like it has been years since I left.

"Then I'll go report the completion of the quest as the representative. You should visit your dedicated receptionist tomorrow for your share. With that, everyone is dismissed!"

We disbanded after reaching the outskirts of the city, it was time for everyone to do their own things and live out their own lives.

I was holding the goblin fangs and the crocodile skins I worked hard for in my hands while excitedly thinking about all the money I was going to get for it. My steps were very light as if hovering in the air, I was on cloud nine with the excitement I felt.

Where should I sell them? Should I go to the general store from before? What was its name again? Ruth's General Store or something like that, I think... I felt someone tap on my back as I was sinking into deep thoughts.

"What is it, Luna?"

"Hassan."

"Hmm? What do you want to say? Wanna have a drink with me today?"

"Mhmm, we worked hard! We need to have an after-party for such an occasion! Do you have anything to do?"

I just returned and had yet to plan on doing anything.

Visiting a bathhouse to clean my body and deliberating how to best use my newly-earned money aside I had nothing holding me back.

"I'm as free as one can be."

"Well, then let's meet at Nymph's Wings at dinner time, like the other day!"

And before I could even answer her, Luna ran away and disappeared from my field of vision.

Maybe she left to sell the swamp mushrooms and other materials she harvested during the quest?

Now that I think about it, Luna, who I had thought would be a burden, ended up being of great help in this quest. We might've been completely wiped out by the crocodiles if not for her unusual methods that were effective against them.

I had promised Luna to party with her until she reached the bronze tier. Maybe, it wasn't a bad idea to keep partying with her even after that?

Anyway, the sun was currently high in the sky and I had a lot of time until the after-party. So I went to a bathhouse, thoroughly washed my body, and began scouring the streets for a decent clothing shop.

Although one of my crocodile skins was used as a tribute or a sacrifice for whatever happened back then, I still have one more crocodile skin of great quality left that I could use.

Which one of them should I go to?

After thinking about it and agonizing over and over about which one to visit, I finally settled on a clothing shop with a large sign saying, "Clothing Shop Blessed By Lord Minerva," etched on it.

Even clothing stores can be blessed? What was this even supposed to mean? Was it like winning a sewing contest and then getting a blessing as the first prize? It was probably something along those lines.

Diriring-

As I opened the wooden door, I could see the typical sight of a clothing store with bright wallpaper and fabrics hung all around.

I could smell a rather distinct aroma after coming in. It smelled great and refreshing. Maybe lavender? Or jasmine? Anyway, it smelled good and that's all that mattered. No need to think deeply about that.

"Oh my, it's a young Samaritan. Welcome!"

A woman with long dark navy hair greeted me after my entry.

She was wearing a purple shoulderless dress that looked to be made of silk. It left a clear view of her dazzling white thighs, calves, shoulders, and neck.

The dress was actually very weird since both of the sides were only connected together with a very thin knot in the front, exposing a lot of her upper torso... As expected of a worker in the fashion industry, I guess.

Although she was a beauty, her face had a glint of sharpness and fierceness embedded within, giving her an overall spooky aura. She looked to be in her mid-thirties? I wasn't really sure.

Well, you couldn't accurately judge someone's age just by looking at their faces in this world. It was a world of magic after all. Just as I was sinking deep in my thoughts, the female shopkeeper spoke out in a calm tone.

"What brings you here, young Samaritan? That's a nice necklace you've got there. You've got a great sense of fashion. It looks pretty expensive too, I'm sure I've seen it somewhere before though."

The woman's attention was caught by the relic hanging around my neck. Maybe she was knowledgeable in accessories since she knew a lot about fashion.

"Umm, well, I came to sell some leather."

"Leather? Is it from a rabbit, a squirrel, or a deer?"

"Crocodile."

"What? C-Crocodile leather...? Wow, interesting. I never expected something like this out of the blue. Take it out, then."

So I took the crocodile skin out of my backpack. I could see the blue eyes of the shopkeeper flicker slightly as she keenly watched the long and rigid skin I took out from my bag.

"The quality is pretty good, excellent even. Swamp crocodile's skin can spoil pretty easily but yours, dear customer, seems to be well maintained. The drying process was a little lacking in comparison but this is more than enough. I'll give you 7 silvers for this."

"Oh."

7 silvers? That's more than I expected.

"Or, you could give me three silvers, and I'd make clothes out of these for you. A jacket, a pair of pants, and some leftovers that you can use or sell if you like."

The middle-aged shopkeeper spoke as such while glancing up and down, scanning my body. Was my appearance that bad?

Anyway, I was happy she offered me this service since that's what I was thinking of doing all along.

"I'll give you three silvers."

"Unlike how you may look, you must be earning quite a lot. Well, let me take measurements of your body."

The navy-haired woman came closer to me and measured my waist, arms, and other parts of my body with a belt-like measuring tape.

Squish-

Her large and soft breasts were repeatedly touching my arms and back, and I felt blood rushing down to my little brother at breakneck speed. Is she unaware of the way she's touching me or is she doing it on purpose? I didn't know...

Although it was probably just an urban legend among adventurers, I heard that some shopkeepers used their bodies to get regular customers. Was this woman the same?

"Please sit there and wait for about 30 minutes."

"30 minutes? Wow, that's way faster than I expected."

"I was blessed by Minerva, the goddess of talents, I'm on a completely different level from the competition, I can guarantee you that."

The shopkeeper confidently snorted as though she believed her craft to be the greatest. In the next moment, she fetched scissors, needles, and a wool of thread. She began cutting the skin back and forth while adding fabric to it in between, to make a set of clothes for me.

Cut- Cut- Sew-

She looked dazzling and full of skill, like a veteran spider building a large web while treading around with its numerous legs.

"I think there will be some fabric left, more than I initially thought there would. Do you have anything you want to make currently?"

"C-Can you really make something with what's left?"

"Aha... it's not that difficult for me. But I'll have to charge you two more silvers for that. This takes a lot of work, after all, you see..."

"Hmm..."

I ended up getting a fairly sturdy weight-jacket-esque coat along with comfortable leather pants.

I even got another piece made from the remaining leather. The product was made-well and came unexpectedly good. As expected, people with blessings were just of a different breed.

“Please come again, young Samaritan!”

The female shopkeeper waved her hands as she sent me off with a dazzling smile hanging on her lips, I waved back to show my goodwill as I started walking on the street; my feet carrying me to my destination.

The sky grew dimmer before I even realized and I headed to the Nymph’s Wings Inn. I got there rather quickly after growing familiar with the geography of the surrounding area. When I arrived there, I could see a pink-haired girl, fashioning her usual twin-tail hairstyle, holding a table in a corner of the first floor of the tavern.

“Hassan! I’m here!”

“Did Marco not arrive yet?”

“Huh? I didn’t call big-nose though. I heard he had an appointment with Lord Destroyer. More importantly, you got new clothes! Oh my Gods, they look great. You look like a competent bandit now!”

Luna often compared me to murderers and the sorts. A bandit, huh... Do I really look like a bandit now?

Maybe it was a compliment in some way? She said ‘competent’ this time, so this must be some big praise in her dictionary, perhaps... Fucking shit, what the hell was I supposed to make out from that? Let’s just stop thinking and consider it a compliment. It’s better that way.

Luna was snooping around and looking at me in agitation as though she was excited about something. There was also a faint trace of gloominess in her eyes that I didn’t know the origin of.

“Wow, crocodile skin looks so good. It’s considered the best in Ideope. Very few could get to wear one.”

“Really?”

“I’m so jealous! I wish I was strong enough to catch one!!”

Come to think of it, crocodile skin was expensive in my world too. There was a lot of discourse about how collecting it was animal abuse and killing or harming them was even labeled illegal in some places too.

Anyways, I might have understood where the gloominess I felt from her was coming from... Well, it was great that I had just the item to surprise and dispel that sadness with in my hands...

Luna's eyes suddenly lit up, while she was sniffing my new clothes, as she saw that I was hiding something behind my back. Her eyes were twinkling in interest. Damn, I was caught...

"That aside, what are you hiding behind your back?"

"Ah, this? Here, take it. It's yours. I had it made for you."

I would have preferred to give it to her later, but I was caught already so I might as well give it to her now. It was for the better in my opinion.

"F-For me? Really!? Seriously!?"

"Yeah. It cost me two silvers."

Although it was an astounding 30% of the crocodile skin's price, I wouldn't have been able to catch them without her help. In a way, this was her fair share of the loot.

So I handed her a small pair of leather sandals made of crocodile skin.

They were strap and leather sandals, typical of ancient European culture.

Luna's emerald eyes widened a lot like saucers when she received them in her hands, and drops of liquid began forming at the rims of her sparkling eyes.

Drop-

Her eyes widened further and further, and soon after that tears began falling drop by drop from her dazzling eyes making my heart almost freak out from fright.

What the hell????

Wanna unlock all premium chapters? Check the Membership Chapters will seamlessly unlock no need to bother buying coins anymore.

Chapter 46: Little Night (1)

☞ Little Night (1) ☞

Lots and lots of thoughts crossed my mind after having the crocodile skin sandals made for Luna.

What should I say when I hand them over to her? How should I do it? When should I even do it? Would she like them?

It has been a long time since I gave a gift to someone, not to mention the fact that it was a gift for someone of the opposite gender, so I was feeling rather awkward about the whole ordeal. Constant thoughts that this whole gifting process was actually pointless troubled my mind, making me afraid.

I sincerely hope that she'll like them.

I don't think many women in this world own products made out of crocodile skin.

Well, this world was still more or less a mystery to me. Maybe she'd get angry at how I wasted precious crocodile skin for mere sandals.

I had imagined multiple possible reactions— multiple ways this whole scenario could play out.

Drop—

But I never thought that she'd start crying instead.

What? Why is she crying?

I felt my heart tighten up in guilt and anxiety. Had I done something perilous?

“Hey, why did you suddenly start crying?”

“Uh, it's weird... I'm just so happy. Don't you know what it means to gift someone shoes?”

“Does it have any meaning? I just thought I'd prepare something for you..”

“I see. You were unaware... W-Well, you don't have to know for now. On the other hand, these look so well crafted.”

Luna wiped the trail of tears falling off her cheeks with the back of her hand. I can't describe the amount of relief I felt when I realized she was crying tears of happiness instead of sadness or anger.

“Hassan, this is the first time I've ever received such a valuable gift... B-But what should I do? I have nothing to gift back even though you gave me something so precious...”

“What do you mean by you can't give me anything in return? Can't you make me a child or two?”

“C-Child?”

“Why are you so surprised? Can’t you give me one of those Moai totems or something? They are called child, right? Did you forget already?”

The bizarre carvings Luna had made, during that whole child-making fiasco, offered me the ability to increase my stats such as strength and agility by consuming 100 task points.

Instead of having to train for months or even years and invest countless efforts into increasing my stats, I could just ask Luna for a few totems and easily increase my overall parameters.

“T-Totems? Yes, a Moai... I’ll make a lot for you. I’ve got a lot of Karma after finishing this quest. Still, thanks a lot. I think these are too precious for me to wear them.”

Somehow, I felt proud of my own insight when I saw the pink-haired shaman girl rubbing the sandals on her face while sniffing them every now and then.

“I can’t just wear something so precious. It would be such a waste to dirty them.”

“Just wear them, will you? And if you’re still troubled about what to give me, then, buy me something better with your own money after you get some good income.”

“Okay, then. I’ll use them well! And, you can be sure that I’ll gift you something really good when I am able to afford it!”

Nothing could beat the feeling you get when you see the recipient of your gift liking it so much.

I think I now understand why couples would spend so much money on gifts and anniversaries back in my world.

“The subtle scent of the swamps that these shoes are giving off... I love it, it reminds me so much of Ideope.”

Luna continued to sniff the leather until the food and alcohol we had ordered were about to be served. Seeing that, she finally put them down but I could clearly perceive that she was reluctant to do so.

Come to think of it, she was living alone in a place far away from her hometown for all these years. The swamp-infused smell of the crocodile leather must have made her feel a little bit homesick.

I wondered if I intentionally made her feel depressed but I couldn’t notice any lasting feeling of sadness on her face so I just ignored that gnawing thought.

“Samaritan gentleman, here’s the pheasant you ordered. They came out pretty good too.”

“That’s not really grilled pheasant, is it?”

“How did you know?”

Wait, I thought it was only a mistake with the menu but he was actually trying to scam me, wasn’t he? Shit, what in hell is he trying to pull off?

“My health has improved a lot since the last time I saw you, by the way.”

The owner of the inn secretly whispered to me after placing the dishes on our table—where I was sitting along with Luna. This guy often tried to sneakily talk to me.

I don’t know if he was brazen or just nosy. Anyway, I was feeling great after making a lot of money so I didn’t really feel bothered or displeased by his sneaky acts.

“I’m just asking because I noticed the change, but is that really crocodile skin? It seems adventurers make quite a good amount of money. Of course, it makes sense too since you have to risk your life a lot. Ah, think of this as a special service.”

Clatter—

The innkeeper slammed a plate with something solid on top of it on the table. When I looked at it, I was awed at the sight of an unevenly frozen lump of ice.

“Keep it a secret from the other customers, okay? They always make a small ruckus if they can’t get their hands on some of this.”

Holy fuck, was he giving me ice cubes for free?

In this world without refrigerators, ice cubes were pricy commodities.

Let’s not even mention completely filling your stomach on a day-to-day basis, most could not even afford a single meal per day and had to starve for days on end. Ice cubes that had no use other than making your drink cooler were a luxury among luxuries in that regard.

There were about 10 coppers of ice cubes inside the plate.

“S-Special S-Service? L-Look, Hassan, it’s ice cubes!”

Luna’s hands were visibly trembling from the sheer excitement she felt at the thought of putting these cubes in her lukewarm drink. The innkeeper laughed heartily, seemingly satisfied at our honest reactions.

“A good-natured wizard visited the day before yesterday. He could use ice magic without having to use a spell or any form of chants, but the shape came out a little messed up. Anyway, I was wondering if you could help me with something...”

Aha, and I was wondering why he was being so kind. Looks like it was some kind of bribe, damn it.

“What do you need? You’ll have to go through the guild if it’s a quest though.”

Personal requests and formal quests requested through the Adventurer Guild were quite different matters altogether.

Without the guild acting as an intermediary, the one offering the quest could save money, money that would most of the time go to the one being requested, netting an additional gain for the adventurers commissioned. At the same time, private contracts offered a lot more freedom in the clauses which was different from formal contracts regulated by the guild.

While the short-term gains were quite appealing, there were still risks— one of the major one being, the one commissioning the quest refusing to hand over the reward or it disappearing somehow. It was a high-risk high-reward choice, so to speak.

On the other hand, the guild would take commissioning and relay fees from the reward money for their services, but they also ensured that nothing would happen to the money and that the content of the quest wouldn’t change halfway through out of the blue.

The guild wouldn’t stay still if something like that happened.

Although each method had its advantages and drawbacks, I preferred going through the guild. The legal way was just overall better, in my opinion and there was also a plus side that personal unregulated quests could never bring...

And that was contribution and fame. Simply said, the more guild requests I accepted, and in that way, the more I brought income for the guild in commission and relay fees, the easier it would be for me to reach the silver tier and higher.

“Well, I wouldn’t have come to talk to you like this if I could do it through the guild now, would I?”

“Ah...”

Well, the innkeeper was a native of this world and probably dealt with a lot of adventurers throughout his life. And thus, he should certainly have a good reason for this sudden and illegal request.

That probably meant that... What he was about to say next was something for my ears only. No authorities could be privy about that matter. Shit, this is making me a bit nervous now.

“What is it then? I’ll decide after listening to your request.”

“Well, it’s regarding my wife... old age hasn’t been tender with her and her lower back is not in a good state. The alchemists at the treatment center gave me some potions for her but they weren’t very effective for some reason...”

“Ah... So, she’s having trouble with her lower back, huh...”

“Do you have free time in three days during the evening? I’ll be sure to reward you handsomely. I’ll obviously keep it a secret, I can swear it by the river Styx too if you’d like.”

Was this innkeeper asking for an illegal business massage or something along those lines? Of course, it wouldn’t be a weird massage like whatever happened last time but a true physical therapy this time around.

Doesn’t sound like a bad idea to me. I was in pressing need of a hefty amount of task points too, at the moment.

I had a need for every single point I could get my hands on since I had recently discovered that they had so many uses.

“Alright.”

“Sigh, what a relief! I’m so grateful. Enjoy your meal then. Just ask me if you need anything.”

The innkeeper left for another table to take orders after leaving me with those parting words. I and Luna then began gobbling down the fake-pheasant meat that the dastardly innkeeper scammed me into eating.

This grilled pheasant, or whatever the fuck it was, turned out to be more delicious than this world’s standard dishes and their god-damned weird names filled to the brim with unique spices.

And so we drank barley wine while stuffing ourselves with copious amounts of meat. I soon felt full and began feeling rather tipsy from all the alcohol I chugged down my throat.

“Then you started screaming “Hwaaaaah”! I thought you went crazy for a second there, but then a miracle happened and the crocodiles actually started running away in fright.”

“Is that so? But you did well too, Hassan! I felt really afraid when you started screaming as you slashed all the goblins and crocodiles. You were just like a vicious murderer, out for blood.”

“Dayum, that bad, huh?”

Even though we didn’t have anything to snack on, our conversation was still enjoyable. It always felt great to discuss the experiences we shared together, be they good or bad. Was this great mood why every adventurer pushed themselves so hard?

Sizzling hot meat.

A cold brew.

And heavy coffers that would give you a good night’s sleep.

Not to mention, a casual stress-free conversation full of laughter with your comrades who you shared life and death with.

To the tired me, all of these felt like finding a true oasis in the middle of a blazing hot desert. It was no different from achieving paradise. I was so happy, smiling so hard that my cheekbones began hurting from the overused muscles.

“I’m going to get promoted to the bronze tier soon. T-To think I am a bonafide bronze-ranked adventurer now! I still can’t believe it. It really feels like a dream.”

Luna blinked rapidly as though she couldn’t believe that all of this was real. I was surprised too when I first heard she was getting promoted, but I quickly changed my mind after seeing how the bronze-ranked adventurers I partied with during the expedition behaved throughout the quest.

There were very few differences between iron, bronze, and silver-ranked adventurers when it came to experience and equipment; what truly differentiated them, however, was their skill. And when it came to skill, there was no chance of comparing between them, the gap was just that large. It was akin to the difference between heaven and earth.

“I’ll have to face new hardships after getting promoted to the bronze rank. I don’t know if I’m ready to face them. I’m feeling a bit scared now that I’m thinking clearly about it.”

“What are you so stressed about? Don’t worry, you’ll do well.”

I remembered Luna’s image as she viciously swung her silence totem while fighting the skeletons and goblins.

Instead of a voodoo shaman maybe the role of a physical warrior suited her better; that was the conclusion I came to after observing her during the quest.

“Thank you for your support. Unlike what your looks might suggest, you’re really kind, Hassan.”

“I’m kind?”

Well, calling an adventurer kind in this world wasn’t really a compliment in the slightest.

Only idiots that were waiting to get exploited to their very last bones were unlucky enough to be called kind in this ruthless and barbaric world...

“From your spirit, I can glean that you grew up loved by many people. You grew up far from struggle and fighting, right?”

“Hmm...”

I got lost in myriad thoughts after hearing Luna’s evaluation of my life. As Luna just mentioned – and as I was a person from the 21st-century earth – I lived as sheltered as one could get.

Wow, Luna actually had great intuition. Has her voodoo talent finally been awakened? She then added in a whispery tone.

“But then you went on and became a savage murderer that could cut people and goblins alike in half without the slightest hesitation.”

“I had to, I’d be the one currently lying dead otherwise.”

“True. I’m happy though. We actually came back safely from the dreadful swamps of Acheron. We fought goblins, crocodiles, and even a giant skeleton dragon. It wouldn’t have been weird for us to get severely injured or leave a few limbs behind in this kind of dangerous scenario. You even faced a necromancer, Hassan. That’s amazing you know! Really amazing!!!”

Luna’s eyes were sparkling as she directed her eyes at my spoils of war – the necklace hanging around my neck – the Black Star. Holy shit, now that I think about it, I still can’t believe I just dealt with one of those overpowered necromancers, that too all alone as Hippolyte became immobile from that spell spewing out black lightning.

Previously, I was still overwhelmed by the excitement of combat and obtaining an epic-grade relic, and could only process my feelings right now.

I could only come to the disappointing conclusion that I was very lucky. It's an actual miracle that I didn't get a single injury from fighting the goblins, the crocodiles, and the skeletons, and even the last fight with the overpowered necromancer.

Damn, how did I even survive all that?

I began reminiscing about the past events with a slightly intoxicated mind. Soon, however, I remembered something I had forgotten in the wake of the intense battles.

"Is your ankle okay now?"

"My ankle?"

"Didn't you trip over a stone and fall on the ground last time?"

"Ah...yeah, I did, didn't I...?"

Luna absent-mindedly nodded as if completely clueless about her injury. No matter how clueless she might be, I never thought she'd even forget how she got injured.

"Doesn't look like it should be hurting anymore since you forgot about it."

"It's actually still stinging a bit even now but I'm alright, it's bearable."

"It might worsen if you leave it like that. Apply some medicine or have it checked out at a health center."

Even in the modern society, that boasted of high medical development, I came from, little injuries could easily spiral out of control and turn into life-threatening calamities.

Not to mention this superstitious world where licking a wound was expected to have a healing effect.¹Finley did that in the early chapters.

"What? Going there just for this? The health center is very expensive. They'd treat me for things I didn't ask for and would charge extra for issues that may not even exist..."

"I guess so... But it's worth it at the end of the day. Anyway, do you want me to massage it for you then?"

"H-Huh?"

It was a drunken joke. I knew Luna was reluctant to show her ankle to others and would thus not easily accept it.

"W-Well, if you don't mind doing it..."

Holy shit... Was she really agreeing to my bullshit proposal...!?

Wanna unlock all premium chapters? Check the Membership Chapters will seamlessly unlock no need to bother buying coins anymore.

Footnotes:

- 1Finley did that in the early chapters.

Chapter 47: Little Night (2)

☞ Little Night (2) ☞

“Then just go to the corner room on the top floor.”

The innkeeper gave me a brief explanation of the directions, and then handed me the key to a room on the third floor, the highest floor in the inn.

There were only five rooms on the third floor. They were akin to the hotel suites back in my world, costing a minimum of 2 silver per night. I never thought I'd get to experience staying at one of these luxurious rooms in my life, be it in this world or my previous one.

1st floor.

2nd floor.

3rd floor.

I could see signs hanging on the handles of the tightly closed doors, my head fumbling every time I read the words written on them. Leaving that questionable musing aside, we had finally reached the corner room the innkeeper had pointed out to us.

『Interlude Room』Also known as Romantic Interlude Rooms, these rooms are kind of like honeymoon suites, just smaller and consisting of a single room only. This seems like a french thing. Hassan doesn't seem aware of it though. Maybe because he is Korean and lived most of his life in the middle of nowhere, lol.』

“Ah, here it is. The last room.”

Click— Creak—

Immediately, I could see a rather spacious room after unlocking the lock and opening the large door to the room.

Following that, I noticed the sight of curtains swaying and fluttering with the gentle breeze, A distinctive soft and slightly sweet scent of incense candles overflowed the entirety of the room, even the chairs and the work desk looked luxurious at a glance. There was even paper and a pen on said desk, damn...what the fuck!!

Holy shit, I didn't think he'd send me to such an expensive room. And... Wait, why was there only a single bed in the room?

I'm sure I had asked for a room with two separate beds. We somehow ended up with a room with a single double-sized bed instead.

Did the innkeeper mess up again? Or was I too drunk and asked for a single-bed room instead of a two-bed one? No, I'm sure I wasn't drunk enough to make such a rudimentary mistake.

The innkeeper was definitely the one who messed up here. I decided to go down to the first floor and complain, annoyance started filling up my mind at the blatant mistake of the innkeeper; my tipsy mind and the thought of the subsequent journey down in this intoxicated state didn't help my temper either. All of a sudden, I heard a whimper from behind my back, halting me in my tracks.

"What's wrong? Why are you not going in?"

It was Luna, questioning me in an intoxicated tone. Her body and clothes were drenched for some odd reason.

"What? Why are you all wet?"

"I-I heard it was good to bathe before going to sleep."

"Didn't you already go to the bathhouse earlier today?"

"...I usually bathe twice a day."

Wow, Luna had better hygiene than I thought she would. I could even smell some kind of fragrant incense scent wafting from her body when she came close. Her damp pink hair slightly sticking to her beautiful face gave her a very enchanting look.

For someone wearing clothes that expose so much, her skin was very smooth without any kind of blemishes. Damn, what's her secret to this amazing look. I feel like I'm growing older every day, looking at the state of my body.

"Anyway, I-let's go in. I-It's pretty cold around here."

"You should have dried your body properly, you idiot."

I scolded the trembling Luna just like I used to scold my little sister.

Maybe because of the hardships we shared together and the multiple interactions we had these days, the awkwardness between me and Luna decreased a lot. Now, I could confidently consider her a dear friend of mine.

Well, that's just how I feel, I don't know if it was the same for Luna.

"There's only one bed though, Luna. You okay with that?"

"It's big. We can share it just fine. One bed is cheaper than two, after all."

"Right."

Luna was right. Having one bed was cheaper than getting two. And wasn't there a sense of camaraderie between us? I mean, we both slept in a cramped tent already, sharing a large bed shouldn't pose much of a problem for us.

Sleeping in the same room should be fine, in that sense.

Still...

Sleeping in the same bed as a girl didn't leave me completely unaffected or unfazed; the heart and the lower body of the inexperienced me were raging violently.

Even my inebriated state, which was fully displayed on my completely flushed face, seemed to lessen a little at that thought.

Now that I think about it, wasn't this a great chance to experience the suppleness of her body again?

I could feel my schlong almost visibly stiffen as I remembered the softness and smoothness of her incredibly lithe body. I felt like the damn rascal was going to tear through my pants even though I had yet to do anything.

Thud—

With the muffled sound of something falling, Luna let herself sink onto the bed that was covered by a blanket while I was lost in my inner turmoil.

She buried her head in the pillow while swinging her legs in the air like an overly excited young girl.

"It's very dusty in here."

"..."

Luna didn't reply back. It was weird. The usually excited and parrot-like blabbermouth that was the being called Luna had suddenly turned so quiet. Was she tired, perhaps?

Owing to that silence, the atmosphere suddenly became stiff and awkward. Meanwhile, the hopeless me didn't know what to say anymore. I was all out of dialogue options. It was so quiet, I could even hear the sound of the breaths coming out from my nose.

"Well, let's get done with this quickly and go to bed early. I'm so tired, I have a lot to do tomorrow too."

Having said that, I slowly approached Luna, who was lying on the bed face-down, still not reacting to any of my words.

Was she asleep already? We had quite a lot of drinks today, and this journey has been very tiring for us, she was probably as tired as me.

Stare—

Well, seeing that her emerald eyes were peeking at me from the side of her pillow, she probably wasn't completely asleep at least.

"As usual, I'll start by checking your pulse."

I gently lifted Luna's wrist, which was lying on the blanket, to trigger my ability and observe her stats and conditions. Although I had touched her hand many times already, I was always dumbfounded by how thin her wrists were.

How could such a thin wrist produce enough power to swing that heavy-looking Silence Totem? This is probably the main cause of her growing muscle pains.

Ding—

[Stats] Name: Luna Knox Dotty

Level: 8

Strength: 2

Agility: 5

Stamina: 1

Status: Fluttering Heart » Anguish

Condition: Curse of Knox » Curse of Erebor » Mild Growing Pain » Mild Excitement

What the hell is this?

There was a lot more information than the last time I checked her stats.

I was a little surprised that, instead of just seeing her level and condition, I could now see her other stats such as strength and agility too.

Now that I think about it, weren't her stats just as detailed as the time when I accidentally touched Elfriede's wrists for the very first time?

Is there any reason for the sudden differences? Is it because I've grown more skilled in handling this ability of mine after going through various experiences? I can't know for sure.

Pondering a bit more, I realized that there was no need to waste time thinking too deeply about it. Hence, I shifted my attention to the floating letters again.

What immediately caught my eye was the 'Mild Excitement' condition she was afflicted with. Was it, perhaps, because of the tension of the expedition and the gift she received earlier?

I also noticed that her pulse rate was pretty high. Simultaneously, her skin was very warm despite the fact that she just washed herself with cold water. It looked similar to the early symptoms of high blood pressure.

"Well then, I'll start by putting some pressure around your wrist area."

"..."

Luna didn't answer this time either. I interpreted her silence as consent and touched a spot about 5 centimeters below her wrist. Stimulating this red spot should invigorate her blood flow.

Press—

I heard that pressing here lowered stress and helped to calm down strained nerves.

I didn't actually believe in any of this acupuncture bullshit. But honestly, I had no choice as putting pressure on these red spots has shown results far too many times already for it to be a fluke.

"Heuu..."

"Tell me if it hurts, okay?"

"H-Heuu..."

Since a woman's body was very fragile, I have to be exceedingly thoughtful and attentive with each and every touch of mine. I gently, and as carefully as I could, pressed the area around Luna's wrists and slowly began doing round motions with my thumbs.

Then Luna's body, which was previously as rigid as it could get, maybe because of her nervousness, finally loosened a little.

"Whoo..."

Luna leaked out a small sigh, probably from the relief she felt due to my massage. Soon after that, the usual letters appeared in my sight with that familiar noise.

Ding—

『Healed Luna Knox Dotty's Mild Excitement condition』 『Task Points + 10』 『Current Task Points: 27』

Oh, nice, I finally got my hands on some task points. I really needed those. I am now able to use task points to raise my stats, strengthen my necklace, or even borrow the power of Gods. They were now paramount for my future growth, so the more points I earned, the better.

"What do you think? Feeling any better?"

I asked Luna after dealing with – what seemed to be – the early symptoms of high blood pressure she was showcasing. She then answered with her face still buried in the pillow.

"A little?"

"Then I'll move on to your shoulders, back, and then the rest of your body."

Luna was still suffering from the 'Mild Growing Pains' condition.

Our last massage session had been cut short before I could deal with her growing pains condition. The way she's been experiencing them for such a long time, which shouldn't have lasted more than a day at most, is really unusual.

So I gently climbed onto her thighs and pressed on the dented area near her shoulder blade with my thumbs. Gently pushing my thumbs in, I began rotating them in a circular motion.

What was important for massaging this particular area, below her shoulder blades, was to put proper force while keeping up a firm revolution with your thumbs.

“Heuaah...”

And just like that, Luna’s body relaxed completely and went limp as though her whole body melted into the blanket-covered bed.

The human body had certain parts that one normally wouldn’t be able to reach by themselves and, if one were to stimulate these spots accurately, they would make the whole human body relax. I don’t know what causes this phenomenon but that’s just how it is.

“Ah, Eeuh...”

“Does it hurt?”

Even if I do my best not to press too hard, it might still be rather painful on her already feeble body due to the chronic muscle pain. Thus I made sure to frequently ask Luna if the amount of power I was putting in was appropriate or not.

“Tell me if it hurts. Don’t hold it in.”

“I-It’s okay. I can put up with it...”

So it’s hurting, huh?

Hearing her words, I made sure to use even less force than I had planned initially. Due to that, the presses of my thumbs, on her shoulders and sides, turned more into sweeping strokes.

Well, just sweeping over her skin was already good enough as it stimulated the blood vessels and promoted blood circulation.

Swish— Swoosh—

“Haaaah...”

My hand which was gently stroking her back and shoulders, then went in the direction of her armpits.

As I mentioned the last time, stimulating the lymph nodes was very important and beneficial to the human body. It was a rudimentary part of full-body massaging. And... I admit... I also held the desire to touch her soft and smooth armpits.

I wanted to experience that mesmerizing soft feeling I had felt back then in the cramped tent. I wanted to go for a sniff too but I’d probably get slapped right in the cheeks, so I abstained from that degenerate act.

“Euuh... Haah, Hahahaha. I-It tickles, Hassan-!”

Luna was shaking as she was feeling ticklish. She was reacting much more than I thought she would. Was she the kind of person to be extremely sensitive to external stimuli?

“Heuheuh, Heuheu!”

She kept trying to close her arms and cover her armpits, so I had her put both of them on her head like an arm pillow.

“You need to bear with it even if it’s ticklish. Just like the last time, okay? Alright! You can do it!”

“Heu-Heuuh. B-But, Heuheub...”

Press— Press—

And so, I kept pressing her lymph nodes with a moderate force while rotating the area of applied force in clockwise motions.

I didn’t know whether it was me or Luna, who was sweating so heavily, but my hands were now drenched with sweat.

Press—

Although I was just pressing on the soft skin of her smooth armpits, that mere act was enough to make my schlong so hard that I felt like it was almost about to explode.

My hard and stiff rod would sometimes rub between Luna’s thighs and buttocks but she didn’t seem to notice that. Whether that happened because she was naive or because she was too absorbed in the massage, I didn’t know for sure. I was just glad that I didn’t get accused of molestation already.

My actions, however, were more geared toward wanting to experience Luna’s supple body than giving her a proper message. I didn’t know before that a man’s sexual desire could give him such a frightening drive— a drive that would force him to do such daring and immoral acts.

“Ah... Hang... Aaah...”

After rubbing her shoulders, with stroking motions, for a long time, Luna couldn’t hold it in anymore and began grabbing the blanket with her hands while producing sweet and sultry moans.

I didn't notice before, as I was too absorbed in my own actions, but this didn't sound like what people would make as they were enjoying the refreshing feeling of a massage. Not for a single bit...

"Ah... Haang... Haaah..."

My hot and hard rod rubbed frequently against her soft and springy buttocks while she kept producing those obscene sounds. My mind had almost fully succumbed to that sweet sound as thoughts of depravity kept churning in my head.

Rub— Touch—

She was completely oblivious to my inappropriate advances.

While I kept feeling guiltier and guiltier inside, I also wondered how something that felt so exciting, thrilling, and jubilating could exist in this world.

Holy hell, my only regret, at this moment, is that my alligator pants are too thick. How good would it feel if I was wearing thinner pants or maybe even underwear?

What would it feel like without anything on?

What if I unleashed my overbearing lust on Luna's soft bare skin? What if I forgot all my restraints and ravaged this lithe body of hers to my heart's content? And just as my hip movements were getting faster with such savage thoughts...

"Ha-Hassan, euh, Hang...o-on... T-That's enough... I think you can stop now..."

"Uh, uh... Ah! Hmm, yeah..."

I hurriedly lifted my hands from her shoulders and stealthily stopped my waist movements at the sudden call of my name. I was so shocked by the sudden call that I unconsciously raised both of my hands up into the air— akin to a criminal who was caught in the act and was left with no choice but to surrender with raised arms.

"D-Do you want me to massage you anywhere else or should we end today's session?"

"M-My ankles...if you can..."

"Ah, yeah, you had a sprained ankle. I almost forgot about that..."

I'd have to go further down her lower body to touch her ankles, and I, thus, lost the opportunity to furtively get a rub or two more using her heavenly and supple body.

It was very regrettable but I had no choice as I had already been asked to stop. Fuck, I'm gonna have to rub one, two, or maybe a dozen or so out today before going to sleep.

Pushing those hazy thoughts to the very back of my head, I went down to the other side of the bed and gazed at Luna's ankles. I was thus greeted with the sight of her slender toes, and tiny and cute soles.

Thin anklets hanging around her thin ankles like a hula hoop caught my attention in particular. They looked really cute on her thin ankles.

Luna's ankles were so thin that I was made to wonder how they could support the weight of her body. A single hand was more than enough to grab both of them and still have a lot of leeway left to grip some more.

They were, however, slightly thicker than the last time I saw them. Maybe, they were swollen after being overtaxed during the arduous journey?

I never told this to anyone before due to the fear of getting teased, but I actually had a kink for thin ankles. Seeing the area from the thin ankles slowly widen until the calves was an extremely delightful sight to me.

"I'll start by slightly rotating your ankles, tell me if it hurts, okay? Again, don't hold it in like before."

"Euh, Hmm..."

Press—

It is important to not put too much pressure on a sprained ankle since it could lead to the worsening of the injury.

Keeping that thought in mind, I carefully held onto Luna's feet and rotated them as meticulously as I could to check the functioning of her joints.

I don't feel like there's anything wrong with her joint movements...doesn't seem like the blood flow is blocked either. This area didn't need any treatment at all. It would most probably get better after she wakes up tomorrow from her slumber.

Having confirmed the state of her ankles, I stopped taking care of them and directed my attention to her wide and cute soles. Every time I gaze at her bare feet, I couldn't help but wonder how someone's soles could look so adorably cute.

Suddenly, I had the feeling that I could now understand the desire to protect and cherish cute things that some men were said to experience in their lives. Slowly, my face got closer to Luna's toes and then...

Sniff—

“W-Why are you suddenly smelling me? Do I smell weird?”

“No, you don’t smell weird, don’t worry.”

“I-I washed up already, after all... Anyway... B-Be gentle when you press on them, will you...? A-And don’t... just don’t smell my feet like that... p-please....”

“Alright.”

Although I agreed to her request, it was actually better to put a lot of force into pressing the feet for an optimal outcome.

I then clenched my fists, like a person doing a dutch rub, with a slightly raised middle finger. With that raised point, I applied pressure on the Bubbling-Well acupoint in the upper part of Luna’s soles.

The spot I was aiming for was the bent part of the feet forming a (人) shape on the soles.

Press—

“Hah-!”

Luna’s body bounced up high, as soon as I accurately pressed the acupoint, like a slug that had been sprinkled with salt.

I heard that pressing on the Bubbling-Well point was so stimulating that even the dead would spring back to life. Well, that’s just what my father used to blabber on, at least, when he imparted me with his weird medical practices.

Stimulating this acupoint had various positive effects on the body and mind, ranging from fatigue recovery and relieving insomnia to strengthening the heart and dealing with edemas and swelling. It sounded very vague and unrealistic, but that’s what alternative medicine was all about, wasn’t it?

“Haugh! I-It hurts, Hassan, it hurts! So much!!”

“Foot massages have better effects on the body the more they hurt. Don’t worry, you’ll be begging for it soon. I promise!”

“It hurts! It hurtsh! Geyagiiigh!”

Such a vivid reaction of pain and agony! This reminds me of the first time I used this method on Elfriede. She was twisting in pain just like Luna, and I soon joined her, in her twists of pain and agony, after she slapped me in anger.

Although she slapped me the first time around, she later would get mad if I didn't press there strong enough, even going as far as to order me to put more strength in my massages. There was no coming back for someone after experiencing such a stimulating and effective massage. Your body would only keep begging for more and it would feel more and more refreshing every time you received it.

“Haagyaaaagh-!”

While it might feel better in the future, Luna was right now struggling in pain. Seeing her struggles full of anguish, I decided to stop pressing her on that spot, which left her in a heavily breathing state. She looked like she was about to pass out any moment. At least, her screams had stopped this way.

My hands never stopped massaging her, however. They even climbed from her calves to her thighs, I really wanted to touch Luna's smooth and soft thighs at least once today.

Wouldn't it be fine to get a rub or two with my thick and hard meat-stick if I blame it all on me losing concentration during the massage?

Rustle—

Squish—

Luna didn't say anything after I began rubbing her thighs. Her body just began twitching and shivering like she was being electrocuted.

This was my golden opportunity. Capitalizing on it, I began moving my hand higher and deeper inside her thighs.

I'm gonna touch her smooth and squishy parts as quickly and as much as I can so that I can remember this exhilarating sensation later when I relieve myself before going to sleep.

“Euh, Heung, Euhh...”

“T-Tell me if you are feeling any pain.”

I forcibly reminded myself again that this was just a simple massage and not an obscene act of molestation by asking her if she was feeling any pain or not. This way I could lessen the perpetually gnawing guilt that was building up inside me.

“N-Not there, Hassan... A-A little higher...”

“A-A little higher...? H-Here?”

“ ... ”

The reply didn't come...

Wanna unlock all premium chapters? Check the Membership Chapters will seamlessly unlock no need to bother buying coins anymore.

Footnotes:

- 1Also known as Romantic Interlude Rooms, these rooms are kind of like honeymoon suites, just smaller and consisting of a single room only. This seems like a french thing. Hassan doesn't seem aware of it though. Maybe because he is Korean and lived most of his life in the middle of nowhere, lol.

Chapter 48: Little Night (3) 18

Little Night (3)

Swish— Swoosh—

It felt surprisingly cramped in the king-sized bed— placed right at the center of the spacious inn room.

The only thing that was getting registered in my head was the fleeting sounds of me slowly stroking Luna's body along with the occasional sound of the wind passing through the window, shaking it with a soft rattle.

The drunkenness I had felt was now all gone, hence the truth of the situation was that— I was fiddling with Luna's body with a clear and conscious mind, fully aware of all my actions. No, this is a massage! I repeatedly told myself about that fact, trying to pull myself together.

It was enough, I had my share of fun already. I was able to massage Luna's thighs, groin, hips, and oh-so-soft buttocks to my full enjoyment. It was time to call it quits already.

Lymph nodes were not only situated under the armpits but also in the hip joints, essentially around the hip flexors. So, they were extremely important areas that a professional masseuse would take note to stimulate in order to help blood circulation and get rid of the accumulated waste permeating in those nodes.

The reason I didn't try to go for them earlier was because...few women would normally allow someone to touch those rather sensitive areas. Despite what my not-so-innocent actions may look like to an observer, I was doing my utmost to avoid massaging any of the secretive and sensitive areas of Luna's lithe body.

I never thought, for the life of me, that Luna would take the initiative and ask me to massage her in that spot, stimulating it and invigorating it.

Well, that just went to show how much pain she was feeling there, suffering from intense muscle aches. Seemingly, the massage I had given her the last time around must have felt really great, probably relieving her from most of her pains at that time, which prompted her current controversial decision...

The pleasure and refreshing feeling of receiving a butt massage couldn't be explained properly without experiencing it firsthand. I even heard a few people would get injured on purpose just to experience it again. Which is honestly nuts, at least to me it is!

"Euuh, heuuu. Haeuuuh..."

Luna began exhaling hot, steamy breaths and throaty moans after I rubbed my thumbs over her smooth hips for some time.

To be frank, I was already at the very limits of patience and endurance at this point. The only thing revolving in my mind right now was just how much I wanted to tear this thin cloth off and rub my face against this heavenly derriere of hers.

However, it was a known fact that a first-class masseuse must know how to restrain oneself— that is one of the basic codes of professional massaging.

Hence, I made absolutely sure to remember the feeling of the soft hip and groin that I'd touched for the first time in my life.

Swish— Swoosh—

"Ahh..."

What was bothering me the most was the knowledge I had once learned. Many people said that this area right here was connected to the secretive areas of a woman's body. As a result, massaging this area would probably make her feel a lot of things one shouldn't feel during a massaging session.

"Ahh, Hang... Heuahh..."

Was this the reason Luna was moaning so much? Instead of enjoying a simple massage was Luna actually craving a man's touch instead?

Damn, what should I do?

My stiff schlong was filling my brain with useless thoughts along those lines.

Should I try brushing along Luna's legs with my hands and check my theory? I can still say that it was an accident if Luna complains about my dubious movements.

I decided to sneakily run the back of my hand and fingers across Luna's soft butt while pretending to stretch out.

Rustle—

"M-My shoulders are feeling rather stiff."

"Heu, Hiik...!"

Luna quivered visibly. I was a little afraid— nervous and almost certain that she might say something, pointing out my sudden movements, but she didn't and just buried her head further in the pillow.

Should I move to the next step?

With this idea in my mind, I directed my hand toward Luna's butt and grabbed it with a firm grip. Her lovely buttock could fully fit in my palms. My hand was moving as if intent on devouring her smooth rear like a starving man finally given a proper meal after years.

Soft— Squish—

The skin was soft and supple enough that it would form into the shape of my palms with the slightest push, but it also felt pretty firm at the same time, retaking its well-rounded form the moment I removed my palms. How could such a conflicting feeling even exist?

And this warmth... If just her butt feels like this, how would her breasts feel?

"Ha-Hassan..."

"Huh, yeah?"

My hand movements became slightly hesitant as she addressed me with a shaky tone.

"I... I've actually been thinking of going back to Ideope for a while now."

"R-Really?"

"I'm not good at completing requests... I can't even afford to eat... Everyone looked down on me... Then I decided I'd do one last quest before heading back to Ideope. That's when I met you, Marco, and Plato.

"I see."

Although I stated as such, I was completely clueless, not understanding where she was trying to go by mentioning these things. The only thing still latched on my mind was the softness and warmth of her supple skin. I was really a pathetic existence of a human being...

"Hassan, that day... you know, the day we drank together... When you swore by the great river Styx... What actually happened was..."

"You made me drink so that I would invoke the Styx's oath, right?"

"Y-You knew...?"

"Only an idiot wouldn't notice that. I'm not the kind to recklessly make promises anyway, so it was easy to figure out."

"As expected... you don't look angry at all. You're so nice to me. But I can never repay you for that kindness... I'm such a horrible person, aren't I?"

"..."

Being unexpectedly put in such a sober situation I couldn't find any way to answer her. Luna's voice was trembling as if she was on the verge of tears, making me even more solemn with each passing moment.

As if taking the hint, even my excited little brother, down there, lost a little of its raging vigor. Luna then began sniffing and her voice was cracking the more she spoke.

"I'm such a horrible person..."

"Don't be so harsh on yourself. Everyone lies. And it wasn't that bad, was it? We did end up succeeding in our adventures. We make a great team."

"N-No... I'm a horrible person. Because... Although Lady Knox should have already occupied the entirety of my heart... Holding dominion over all my love, affection, and devotion..."

Luna paused for a moment, probably because she was bawling out the words. She finished her sentence soon after that.

"... I think I like you a little bit more than her now, Hassan."

She mumbled a few more words after that shocking statement, but my brain didn't register any of them. Because what I just heard was occupying the entirety of my mind.

She...liked me?

It was the first time in my life that I got confessed to by the opposite sex. Until now, I could only imagine and wonder in my dreams about how it would feel to receive a confession from a woman and how I'd respond to it. But now, it was happening to me in reality.

Contrary to what I had expected, my mind completely blanked out while confronted with the real deal. At the same time, my heart was pounding a mile a minute, so ultimately I was unable to respond and remained speechless for some time.

"... You can do whatever you want, Hassan. Although I dedicated my body to Lady Knox... I'll be all yours for tonight..."

My head emptied of all thoughts as if I was hit with a hammer to the head, rattling my brain off all of its capabilities.

I just kept silently staring at Luna's trembling body.

Although my mind was currently unresponsive, my body was still very much responsive and up to the task—the proof being my fingers excitedly latching onto her buttocks and hips immediately with a mind of their own.

"Heu..."

Did Luna notice that my touches were different than usual? Her body which had been previously loosened and relaxed by the massage tensed up again from nervousness and perhaps excitement.

I was, in fact, just as nervous. It wasn't going to be a massage from now on, everything after this was venturing into unknown territory for me.

What should I do first?

I thought that the knowledge I had amassed through gossip and audio-visual stimulations would come in handy, but I was completely clueless as to what to do right now.

Guess I'll start by taking off her clothes first. Surely, I can't go wrong with this one... I think...

Rustle— Rustle—

My movements were a little hesitant since it was my first time doing something like this but I was somehow able to accomplish the task, revealing Luna's white and smooth skin as a result.

But because she was lying facedown to hide her embarrassed appearance, all I could see was her back, waist, and bulging buttocks.

That was obviously good enough but what I wanted to see the most was her front.

"S-Show me your boobs, Luna."

I gathered every ounce of courage I could muster and uttered those shameful words. My embarrassment went through the roof, my heart beating so fast it was almost dizzying.

"Let me take a look at your front."

Flinch—

Luna flinched and trembled intermittently. In the end, however, she slowly turned her face, and in turn the front of her lithe body, toward me.

She covered her chest and inner thighs, mainly covering her sensitive areas, with her hands but that made it even more exhilarating for me. But what made me the happiest was the fact that Luna actually did as I requested of her.

Rustle—

After climbing atop Luna's body, touching her belly, sides, and armpits on the way, I could finally get a feel of her chest which I had only taken a peek at previously.

"Heuuuah..."

Luna's chest sunk under the pressure of my hands as she moaned out loud. I can proudly and confidently say that this soft and tender flesh, under the confines of my hands, was the softest and warmest thing I've ever touched in all of my life.

Soft— Squish—

Then as if it was a matter of course, I grabbed the other one with my remaining hand. No matter how much I touched them, I don't think I'll ever get sick of this intoxicating feeling.

But what caught my attention the most right now were Luna's nipples which were as pink as her beautiful hair.

Luna's body jerked up every time I touched them with my thumb and index fingers. I was very excited since it meant she was responding to the stimuli that my hands were providing to her body.

"...Heu...aah... Euaahh..."

Her thin lips, which were letting out sultry moans, couldn't look any more lovely to me. So I tried overlapping her lips with mine, kissing her for the first time.

The first thing I felt was the indescribable softness of her lips and her firm and smooth teeth that tasted like peppermint, then, at last, I felt the soft sensations of her cute tongue that was quietly sitting inside her oral cavity.

Chu— Chu—

I shoved my tongue into Luna's mouth and began moving back and forth like a thirsty man— given the water he desperately needed. It was a clumsy and monotonous kiss even by my standards.

"Heu, Slurp, Eup, Heu.. Ha-Hassan... I-I can't breathe..."

Luna who was on the receiving end wasn't any more skillful than me, so we ended up having a short and clumsy smooch that soon ended with both of us left panting for air.

However, how sloppy and clumsy the kiss was didn't really matter, my heart was already floating like it was attached to 20 balloons and I couldn't calm it down at all.

How could a kiss feel so good?

So, I took a deep breath and kissed Luna again, but this time, even Luna made clear efforts and readily accepted my tongue.

"Chu. Chuu. Chuuu..."

Only the kissing and slurping sounds of saliva overlapping and being exchanged remained in the room. Then I grabbed Luna's chest again and began rubbing her firm nipples with my fingers.

"Has-, heu... Hassan..."

Luna would repeatedly call my name from time to time as if my name was the only thing left on her mind.

I obviously liked that fact a lot. To think it was me and no one else who got to take the first time of this pure and lovely woman.

She would be all mine for today. Mine and mine alone. With these ravenous thoughts, my possessiveness soared to an all-time high and my schlong rose even higher and was definitely...harder.

I'll taste everything before the end of this night. And I'm gonna engrave it anywhere on her body that she is mine. Mine and mine only for however long I desire.

I then took my mouth off Luna's lips, then went on to lick her ears, neck, and collarbone, and finally headed toward her tits.

I couldn't understand why, but the only thing on my mind right now was how much I wanted to lick her firm nipples clean. Wasn't this an instinct naturally embedded in men since they were born?

"Euh, euh... euuh, haaaah..."

Bite— Bite— Lick— Nibble—

I kept stimulating Luna by biting her nipples and licking them thoroughly with my tongue.

While her firm and stiff nipples unexpectedly didn't have any taste to them, I oddly still liked the feeling of biting and licking them.

"Has, heung, eu... Haang..."

Her body would tremble and flinch every time I did so, and the way she was moaning was so responsive to each of my actions that I didn't feel like stopping any time soon.

What Luna seemed to like the most was when I'd lick around her areolas rather than when I directly licked her nipples or bit them with my teeth.

With that, Luna's waist couldn't stop trembling and saliva that she couldn't swallow was leaking out from her mouth in steady lines as though she was drooling.

"Heu, ha, ha...haah, haah..."

While I didn't mind licking and touching her nipples like this for longer, my sexual desire which was at its all-time high was asking for something more direct and sensational.

So I slowly moved my head toward Luna's lower body. Sensing my actions, she covered her private parts with her hands and clenched her legs in shame.

When I lifted her obstructing wrist, I saw pink pubic hair, sticking out from her pelvic region, which was short and tidy...as if it had been recently trimmed. I thought she might not have any pubic hair at all but I got excited after seeing their existence.

As expected, she was an adult. I can be relieved of some of my worries now...

Putting that thought aside, I reached out to Luna's body and then, slowly and gently, tried to open her clasped thighs to reveal the sight that I was dying to witness.

"S-So embarrassing..."

Luna lifted a pillow atop her head and tightly pressed it against herself as if she was feeling extremely ashamed due to my brazen actions.

It was the first time she was showing her private place to another person, of course, she would be ashamed, I thought in my hazy mind.

But even though she was embarrassedly hiding her body, her pale and pink skin and clenched thighs were infinitely cute. And here I thought I had been numbed to women's charms after the blatant exposure to various audio-visual media.

How could something in the shape of a straight line feel so pure and clean? Pretty? Beautiful? Could it be described this way?

It felt, in a way rude, to refer to this as female genitalia or pussy. It didn't matter to me right now as I just reached out to it with my shaky hands.

"Haeu, euuh..."

Carefully, I widened Luna's quivering snatch, which was closed shut, and revealed her trembling pink depths. Widening it further, I could already see further along her leaking pussy, revealing more of her pale pink depths.

I could clearly see her labia minora, labia majora, and the pale pink skin covering her cute clitoris.

I could see some blood trickling due to the sexual tension she was feeling and with that, I could now attest to Luna's purity.

Her wide vaginal hole and the reddish-pink membrane wall covering and blocking the way to her very depths were clear proof of it.

I felt sympathy for our common lack of experience, making my heart beat even faster with thrill.

"D-Don't spread it so wide..."

Wanna unlock all premium chapters? Check the Membership Chapters will seamlessly unlock no need to bother buying coins anymore.

Chapter 49: Little Night (4) 18

Little Night (4)

With utmost admiration, I just kept blankly ogling the previously tightly clenched snatch of Luna, not unlike a typical lecherous bastard, that was now opened wide and quivering in front of my heated gaze. Soon, I heard Luna's small and shrill voice, leaking from under the pillow she had used to cover her face.

"Please... Hassan... D-Don't spread it so wide... I-It's very embarrassing for me...!"

"Ah! A-Ahem, sorry... It's my first time seeing something like this, so I was a bit too intrigued there... Sorry..."

Then, following a desire that I didn't know the origin of, I started sniffing and whiffing out the smell of Luna's trembling honeypot. Needless to say, Luna's body started quivering violently as though she was utterly horrified.

"Hey, What the hell are you doing? D-Don't smell it like that-!!"

"You smelled me too, you know... Besides, this is the first time I've seen a vagina, so I'm a bit curious, you see..."

"H-Huh? D-Did you just say that this is your first time...?"

The subtleties underlying Luna's sudden question slightly disturbed me. If her question had been along the lines of seeing a naked woman for the very first time then I would have to answer with a resounding no, the constant intake of audio-visual stimuli had practically made me a veteran in that field. However, if we were to just talk about the experience in itself, then wasn't it safe to say that it was my first time?

But then wouldn't the event that transpired between me and Nemea count too in that case? Personally, I definitely believed that it can't be counted in any way. For all that had happened, one thing was sure and it was that...there was not even a single iota of affection between the two of us.

All in all, I believe there would be no problem in saying that this was my very first experience. Thinking till here, I immediately capitalized on that decision.

"Huh, hmm. Yes, It's my first time too."

"T-Thank god. I was so afraid... So very much afraid that you wouldn't feel satisfied by just how clumsy I was... B-By the way, there... I mean... It didn't look too weird or anything below there.....right?"

“Of course not. Why would you think that? If I had to be honest, you’re so pretty down there that I can’t help but have thoughts of licking you clean. In fact, now that I think about it, that’s pretty much been the only thing on my mind for a while now.”

“H-Huh, what are you talking about? L-Lick it...?! Wha- Euh, heuaah, e-euh...”

Slurp— Slurp—

Sticking out my tongue, I wantonly began carrying out all my inner desires as I constantly lapped around the raised labia of Luna’s beautiful pussy. That and the cute pink-colored bean, that was her cute clit, atop it was basically my primary focus here.

Even though I was a full-fledged virgin and had zero knowledge in the arts of pleasuring women, I still knew for a fact that this region around the pussy lips was extremely sensitive and stimulating for womankind. It was basic human biology, and you certainly didn’t need to be a casanova to know about that.

Gently, I placed the flat upper part of my tongue over the pink quivering skin and began twirling around the sensitive parts in semi-round, clockwise motions. No sooner had I started my ministrations, Luna immediately clenched the inner side of her beautiful thighs and began rocking back and forth with violent trembles. Due to that sudden action, my head was practically sandwiched between the confines of her legs and I was literally stuck shut in that spot. The pressure was too strong, I was seriously experiencing a lot of pain as a result. I couldn’t for the life of me, understand just how such feeble-looking legs could generate enough pressure that it would hurt so much.

“Aaah, whoa... Hang!”

Slurp— Slurp—

And as if I had tasted the most delicious thing, my tongue kept scouring Luna’s pussy, getting a taste of every inch of it.

Like a moth being drawn to the flickering of fire, the redolent scent of Luna’s intoxicating pheromones and the slight minty note that permeated from her pussy lips, and possibly her vagina too, attracted more and more of my attention and senses towards her secret depths.

Moreover, the physical and vocal responses that Luna’s body was showing me were more than enough to make me agitated, excited, and happy from deep within. It seriously boosted my self-confidence and stroked my ego.

“Hang...! Heeuh, haaah...”

Well, even though Luna was giving out such a wonderful and strong response to my ministrations, I wasn’t nearly deluded enough to have the thoughts of me having an

innate skill or instinctive knack for this sort of thing. What I think truly happened was probably Luna's innate physical disposition coming into full play here. From what I had seen, she was quite easy to tickle. That basically meant that she was quite sensitive, far more than other people. Women were usually a very sensitive bunch, but Luna felt special even among them. At least that's what I remember reading in one of my father's books.

"Hiss, so d-deep, Hassan..."

I, who was enjoying the feeling of licking around the region of her hymen inside her fully-spread-open vagina with the tip of my tongue, heard Luna's voice colored in the slightest notes of pain and the calling of my name, prompting me to stop my actions. I retracted my tongue out of her quivering pussy and inquired her about her condition.

"Does it hurt, Luna? Are you feeling uncomfortable...?"

"No, not really..."

"Well, I'm glad then if that's the case. Speaking of pain, can't you loosen your legs a little, please? It's a little uncomfortable being constantly squeezed by your legs like this. Why don't you just hug your thighs and spread your legs open, you know... maybe like a frog or something..."

"B-But, that position is very embarrassing..."

"Hurry up, please!"

Hearing my urging words, hesitantly, Luna hugged the underside of her wonderful thighs and spread her legs in an M-shape as I had asked of her.

Rustle—

Her lovely thighs and cute and thin calves stretched out wide, creating a perfect symmetry with her ankles and the soles of her feet. In this position, I could clearly see the slightly widened pink-hued pussy right in the middle shyly quivering under my gaze.

Flutter—

Soon, underneath her beautiful snatch, I noticed her shyly closed anus fluttering with the quivers of her pussylips.

Absentmindedly, with a sudden desire straight outta nowhere, I tried to reach out towards the small puckered hole, but...

"Nooooo-! N-Not there! Don't touch me there-!"

With a shrill scream and a shout of rejection, Luna closed her legs in a panic so I took my hand back with a sudden instinctive jerk. I was positively surprised by her reaction and was also curious about her sudden and firm rejection.

“What’s wrong? What’s wrong?”

“J-Just don’t touch me there...Hassan-! Please, I beg you-!”

“A-Alright, I understand. I won’t touch it, I promise.”

Well, it wasn’t like I didn’t get where she was coming from. I’d be way more than just being flustered and embarrassed if someone suddenly went on and touched my anus too. Probably, it would be way better if I took the gentle and caring approach with her since this was her first time. It was my first time too, but that’s beside the point here...

Leaving that trail of thought, I resumed by using my thumb on Luna’s clitoris, gyrating around the small bean pole and caressing it with soft touches.

The feeling and texture of her glistening love juices, that were sprouting out of her body, along with the saliva that I slathered her snatch with was simply incredible in a word.

Can it even be compared to anything?

Well, if I were to really try then the closest thing should be akin to stroking a warm mollusk? Maybe, maybe not. Obviously, it should be very different from that, obviously, her pussy could never be comparable to a disgusting mollusk, but that was the only thing I could think of right now, comparison-wise.

“Haah, huu, haeuu, Haang...”

To reiterate, this was no mollusk but, in actuality, Luna’s most secretive spot.

Luna’s small body trembled and shuddered with every move I made with my thumb, her nipples which were previously standing firm, stood up even higher and harder than before, after my careful and arousing ministrations.

“I-It feels weird down there... Ha-Hassan... I-It’s hard to describe... T-Tell me the truth. I-Is it really your first time?”

Luna just spoke some strange words. Did she mean that my moves felt experienced because of how pleasurable it was for her? This feeling, of having my skills recognized, felt oddly good. Did **<Imperfect Dexterity>** affect my bedroom skills as well?

The voice in the back of my head was screaming at me to slide a finger inside her tight vagina and stimulate her quivering insides. To immerse myself in the soft and sensual feeling of her inner walls.

Oddly enough, or maybe not, that felt extremely wrong to me. For Luna, who was experiencing her first time, it would be a disgrace if I used my fingers at the very start. She deserved better than the ministrations of my fingers, she deserved my thick and hard cock.

With that thought in mind, I decided it was time for me to undress and join Luna in her nakedness. So, I removed my shirt and proceeded to remove my pants after untying the belt around my waist.

Soon after, my hard and pulsating dick, which was previously contained inside the confines of my tight pants, sprang up high with a crazy momentum, nearly surpassing my navel.

“Sure you’re okay with this, Luna?”

I made sure to ask again just in case. There was no coming back after this. As stupid as that might have felt, I was basically giving the shaman girl one last chance to back off from this experience. Though, to be frank, I’d be extremely disappointed if Luna withdrew at this moment, after everything we’ve been through.

Slowly—

Luna’s face, which was previously buried under the confines of the blanket, slowly turned in my direction, facing me at last. Her cute and lustrous emerald-hued eyes were sparkling, not unlike real gems, under the dim light of the candles.

Soon, she inquired in a quivering tone...

“W-Will this thing go all the way inside me...?”

While my little brother was rather thick and hard, it was only slightly larger than the average size, at least that was the case by my previous world’s standards.

But I had to agree, for the short and petite Luna this must look far too big and intimidating, definitely not her cup of tea.

Honestly, I was unsure how I should go about this. To begin with, I doubted whether my hard dick would even be able to fit inside Luna’s tight and stiff body. It felt like I wouldn’t even be able to make it enter her small hole. And even if I did, it might just reach her belly button, maybe even go above it, which honestly made me worried and anxious.

“I-I’m scared...”

Luna stammered as she spoke, she seemed genuinely afraid about the whole ordeal. Even her pink twintails were shaking in anxiety.

“But, I-I’ll try putting up with it since it’s you, Ha-Hassan...”

But in the end, Luna gave me her consent, much to my joy and delight. So, without even wasting another second, I grabbed my thick rod and kneeled near Luna’s widely spread thighs.

I didn’t forget to rub and stimulate Luna’s clenched pussy, labia, and clitoris with my bulbous glans like I had seen in those ‘educational videos’. It wasn’t like I was forcing myself to do this, to be frank, I genuinely liked the sensations I felt from rubbing it alongside her sticky and wet genitals.

Slosh— Slosh—

“I-It’s so h-hot...”

My hard and raging boner must have become quite hot from all the blood that rushed to that menace all along. Moments after, I placed my hands on Luna’s thighs and opened them wider to position myself in the middle. Firmly grabbing my rod by its roots, I slowly and gently tried to push it inside.

I could feel something very soft and slippery envelope my sensitive blood-filled glans, as it was, to my surprise and astonishment, sliding inside Luna’s pussy, unimpeded. Honestly, I never expected that I would be able to slide inside her this easily.

“Hu-Huuugh.”

Luna couldn’t contain her groans of pain from leaking out of her tightly clenched mouth.

“Uggheuh...!”

From her reactions, She was seemingly in much more pain than I had expected her to be. I thought I did more than enough to soothe and prepare her pussy for insertion during the foreplay session. Was I lacking in my ministrations?

Anxiety colored my mind, making me think it might be better to delay the intercourse. Having decided that, I promptly started pulling back my throbbing cock out of her vagina, but...

“I-It’s alright, H-Hassan. I-I can take it...”

As though she read through me, Luna spoke with a tone of reassurance. Her words and tone of concern and care, even though the pain and suffering she was going through, were enough to touch my heart. I thought that I may even shed a few tears at this rate from how touched I felt by her small act.

Although, right now, instead of tears, there was something else that was probably going to shoot out from my body any second.

Holding back that urge, I hastily added a pillow under Luna's waist to make it easier to adjust her position and height. What this did was that it created an angle that would make it easier for my penis to slide inside without barging into her vaginal walls, helping her to accept my thing inside of her.

"I'll put it in slowly from now. Take deep breaths, it will help. Like this... Whoo- Whoo-..."

"Whoo..."

I took ahold of Luna's waist and hips with my hands as she continued taking deep breaths just like I asked, slowly penetrating her tight flesh with careful movements.

Penetrated— it felt like an odd word to say. Was there any other fitting expression? My mind was not really in a state to come up with one so I just went with that.

Despite how tight and moist her vagina felt, my raging, stiff schlong was, for some odd reason, able to easily penetrate her small hole. I could already feel the distinct sensations of pleasure as my girthy rod was now wrapped by the soft, sticky, and supple walls of her narrow cave.

"U-Ugh... W-Whoo... Heuu, heuu..."

Lying under my large body, Luna was deeply breathing out loud just like I had instructed her. Even the love that had been lost between two estranged lovers would surely get reignited after seeing your significant other endure so valiantly for you.

"I-It... It's all in...? Whoo... Tell me, it's all in, H-Hassan-!"

The petite shaman girl never stopped breathing as I instructed, not even once. Looking down from my position above, I could clearly witness tears forming around the edges of her eyes. Truthfully, only about half of my dick had actually made it inside of her, but she wasn't aware of that as she was unable to see that due to being distracted by the pain. So, I did what any other man would do— I lied.

"Yes, it's all in, Luna."

"I-It's in! I-I did it..."

"Yes, you did well. Good girl!"

I softly spoke, smiling warmly while gently stroking her hair. Her hair was warmer and far softer than I had expected it to be. But I wasn't surprised much

Smoothly—

Suddenly, the ribbon tying Luna's hair was undone, probably it became loose from all the back-and-forth movements we did. Due to that, her bundled hair fashioned in twintails was let loose, letting her hair messily fall over and cover her breasts and collarbone.

It was an unexpected event, but it didn't matter to me. Even with her hair untied, she remained just as cute and pretty as the first time I saw her. I am always surprised by her beauty, and more so by the fact that such a beauty had become my companion and now even my partner in bed. If it was back in my world, I don't think I would have even been able to talk with a girl of her caliber, much less be as intimate with her as I was now.

"Ha-Hassan... K-Kiss me..."

Hearing her passionate and longing plea, what else could I do but comply... So, I slowly lowered my head and tenderly kissed her for the third time today. If I were to be asked whether I liked it the third time around or not, then the answer would still be a resounding yes. I fucking loved kissing her. Who wouldn't?

Slurp— Gulp—

Our tongues embraced one another as we kissed slowly and softly, we were both moving our mouths vigorously as though we wanted to consume the other.

Seemingly, the shy Luna also had an unexpectedly passionate side to her. I felt moved by that thought and decided to slowly push my now stiffer rod deeper inside Luna's depths.

Rub—

"Euugh, geuuh..."

The next moment, Luna was groaning in pain again. She was waving her arms wildly as though she was about to fall into a pit of never-ending void. Her movements were so wild and exaggerated that the blanket covering us was crumpled up everywhere. Hastily, I held her hands with mine, trying to comfort her and assure her that she would be alright.

"Euuuuuh..."

Scratch—

Luna's sharp fingernails dug into the back of my hands as she tightly clenched my hands for support.

That fucking hurt. But I was sure the pain I was feeling right now was nothing compared to Luna's who was getting impaled by my stiff and searing hot shaft.

My schlong finally went all the way inside. Reaching there, I stopped my waist from making any more motions, I even stopped the act of stimulating Luna's sensitive spots to stop her pain. I stopped everything and just focused on tightly hugging her slender body, keeping her, all of her, in my passionate embrace.

I did it on my own initiative, Luna didn't ask that of me like she had asked to kiss me the previous time around. Perhaps because my lower body was penetrating her tight and narrow insides, I felt as though it was my whole body that was wrapped in something warm and moist rather than just my stiff cock.

"Ha-Hassan... Thank you... I-I like you..."

"M-Me too... Luna, me too..."

Holy shit, couldn't I have come up with a better response? Still, it felt really embarrassing and this was the best I could do right now. And with that response, I put more strength in my hold and hugged her lithe body close to me. We remained in that peaceful state for a long while.

That simple action was enough to make me feel as if I had ascended to the highest realms of the heavens. I could have never imagined that holding a soft and slender girl in my embrace could make me feel so pleasant and happy.

Compared to that, what happened with Nemea could only be considered a better form of masturbation, at best.

Having shared our warmth with each other for a while, we were interrupted by Luna's whispering voice.

"Whoo... You can move now."

"Sure you're gonna be okay?"

"Heuh, hung. Yes, I feel much better, now. It feels less painful when you hug me tightly like this..."

"Then I'll start moving."

"Eu, hung. H-heu, heuu..."

Slosh—

Faint moans leaked out of Luna's lips as I slowly pulled out my hot shaft from her depths. Undoubtedly, she wasn't feeling as much pain as she had felt during the insertion of my penis inside her honeypot. It should feel much better now.

Slosh— Rub— Slosh—

Luna's pussy, which was now drenched with saliva and love juices, with my precum added into the mix, had some blood flowing out of it now. The sound of my dick rubbing with her vaginal walls was so delightful that I nearly cummed from that alone.

"Heu, e-euhh..."

I lowered my head and went on a crusade to kiss every sensitive part of the petite beauty's body, starting from her neck, then slowly transitioning further down along her collarbones, upper breasts, and thin shoulders.

My actions were done with the explicit intention that stimulating and caressing her other sensitive areas would somehow lessen the pain she was feeling and maybe even make her feel pleasure instead.

What I was doing seemed to be effective as Luna's nails which were fiercely piercing my palms began to loosen little by little.

Seeing that, I decided to let go of her palms and decided to focus on her navel instead. Gently, using my thumbs, I rubbed and stimulated the area around her navel where I surmised my thing was penetrating her the deepest.

I did that because I thought that the pain might lessen somehow if I massaged that area. It was a blind guess but it didn't hurt to try. Unexpectedly, Luna's reactions intensified as I started my caresses.

Rustle— Rustle—

"Whoo... Ah, aaah, hang... Aaaah... Hang... Hah...! Euh, S-Stop... S-Stop d-doing that-!!"

Gush— Rub— Rub—

Whether the massage was effective or not I didn't know for sure. What I noticed, however, was that her voice would reach a higher and higher tone each time I accelerated my waist movements.

"Heu, haah, Ha-Hassan... Eu-Euuhh..."

Luna's previously wide-opened thighs were now tightly wrapped around my waist and hips, sticking our bodies closer together.

I stayed quiet after that, my main focus shifting only to ramming my dick deep inside her snatch. I particularly focused on the feeling of my dick rubbing against the walls of her narrow hole.

Splash— Splash— Rub— Slosh— Slosh—

The warm and humid air, that could only be produced when two bodies exchanged their warmth, along with the stench of sweat and bodily fluids filling the entirety of the inn room.

The feeling of our sticky flesh rubbing against each other was making my spinal cord tingle with pleasure. No words were exchanged between us, only the groans of pleasure remained in the inn room.

“Hak, haah, hang, aaaah... H-Haah, heuuh, haaa, hang, hang, hah, hang, hang, hang, hang-!”

Sosh— Sosh— Sosh— Rub—

My hard shaft and enlarged glans kept scratching and poking Luna’s smooth insides. I could feel her insides clamp on my throbbing dick as if they never wanted to let it go. It made me feel like I was about to cum at any moment, the pleasure was just that intense.

These thin and slender shoulders, small but reasonably sized breasts, that felt oh so soft and supple in my palms, her waist that was thin enough to fit in the confines of my large hands, smooth thighs, and pinkish pubic hair of hers.

Most of all, her beautiful calves and cute soles were mine, all of her was mine and mine alone. The speed of my thrusts kept getting faster and faster as more and more possessive thoughts filled every corner of my mind.

Rub— Rub— Squelch— Slosh— Rub—

“Hah, hang, hah, euh, hah... A-Ang, Ha-Hassan....”

Luna suddenly hugged me tighter, even more than before, even her legs and thighs tightened around me further and further. Finally, her vagina began contracting as though it wanted to suck everything out from my balls. Thanks to that, I could feel even more of her soft chest and smooth skin, raising our shared corporal warmth even higher.

While it became a little harder to move, my arousal had gone through the roof. I didn’t care anymore whether she was feeling pain or if she would feel good enough to cum or not. The only thing on my mind was how much I wanted to shoot my seeds inside her womb.

Rub— Rub— Rub— Squelch—

“Heuaa, Aeuu, euuuh, ang, aah, heeuuh, heuaaah...”

I could feel Luna’s pussy tighten more and more with each of my movements. She was probably feeling more pleasure than pain right now.

I could see tears falling from her eyes, saliva flowing down from the sides of her mouth, and small beads of sweat flowing down her collarbone and thin neck.

I lowered my head and licked them all like a thirsty dog, moving my waist even faster with each passing moment. I have never done something like this before as I practically had no experience whatsoever, but my instincts were screaming at me to move along this path, so I obliged.

“S-So tight... You’re sucking me in... You’re sucking me in so tightly.”

“Aah-, aeeuuh, euang, haah, ang, aaah, euuuh, haaang, haaah...!”

Rub— Rub— Rub— Slosh— Splash— Splash— Splash—

Luna didn’t seem to be even able to speak anymore. Her insides were tightly undulating around my schlong, keeping me completely inside her. Well, even if they didn’t, I didn’t have nearly enough restraint to pull out and finish outside.

Wanting to feel more of her damp and soft warmth even a little more, I clasped her slender body even more tightly inside mine and pushed my stiff rod inside as much as I could, completely crushing the entrance of her womb with my repeated thrust.

Shoot— Shoot— Shoot—

“Heuu!!! Eeuh!! Eeuhh-!!!”

As though in complete sync, Luna’s body began trembling at the same time I came inside her. Her insides were throbbing and repeatedly contracting as if it was going through a violent seizure.

“E-euu... Heuaa, heeuh, euuuh... Hah, haaang...!”

“Whoo...”

Damn, that was much faster than I expected it to be. I could do nothing but blame my lack of experience and the tightness of her pussy for my early release.

Pop—

I then slowly pulled my rod out of her vagina which was still tightly latching onto it, as if unwilling to let it go out of her. A loud popping noise was made as a result. My schlong was naturally covered in a bit of her blood, proof of her recently lost purity, it looked kind of scary if to be completely honest about it.

At the same time, Luna's slightly open pink pussy was overflowing with my semen which was mixed with a bit of her blood to form a pinkish puddle below.

The manly sense of accomplishment along with the desire to completely conquer filled my body and soul at this scene.

So I used my fingers to push my flowing semen back into her vagina and tried to keep it there.

Push—

I didn't mean anything by this gesture, I just felt like doing it, so I did. Regardless, the situation right now was that Luna was silently trembling and I was completely clueless as to what to do now.

“Heuuh, Ugyeeuuh...”

With nothing coming to mind, I just thought up about doing what I could do best in this situation. I had Luna lie face down and then massaged her back and waist with my hands. I could feel a lot of tension in them after staying in the same position for a long time throughout that strenuous sex session.

Ding—

『Luna Knoxdotty's growing pains have been cured.』 『Task Number + 10』 『Current Task Number: 37』

“Whooooo...”

Luna began slowly panting out loud.

I wanted to ask her if she was feeling alright or if she was feeling any pain, but I, myself, was feeling so muddleheaded that I couldn't even formulate those words with my mouth. So, I just let my mind drift to the nearest thought that I could find and enacted it by hugging Luna's body under the warm embrace of the blanket covering our naked bodies.

Nothing could feel better than the warmth and softness of her body right now.

Holy shit, this was hard to do ngl. 4.7k words of seggs is something else. I hope you guys enjoyed it, any kind of feedback is appreciated. Thanks for reading.

Wanna unlock all premium chapters? Check the Membership Chapters will seamlessly unlock no need to bother buying coins anymore.

Chapter 50: Hassan – Sodomora's Rising Star (1)

☞ Hassan – Sodomora's Rising Star (1) ☜

After waking up, all around me, the vision of a landscape completely dyed in a deep shade of black greeted my eyes. Confused, I couldn't help but muse... Wasn't I sleeping with Luna in the Interlude room mere moments ago? How the hell did I end up here?

Let alone the bed and the inn room, I couldn't even spot the source of my warmth and affection, Luna, around me, as I glanced at my surroundings, looking for her. Only a cold and somber sense of pure darkness greeted me wherever my eyes went.

The somber darkness and the eerie silence didn't last for long as something in the shape of a round ball, softly glowing in the middle of the ever-stretching darkness, illuminating the area around it, suddenly floated in the air in front of me. Thanks to the illumination of the fuzzy, glowing ball of light, I could now see my body and the surrounding scenery.

Ripple—

With the entrance of light, I was able to notice that I was buck-naked. It was funny that I wasn't able to notice that until now. Moreover, now that I focused, my body seemed to be submerged underwater, well, part of it. The water was shallow so only till my ankles were underwater. The water around my ankles was softly rippling in a constant pattern.

Was this a dream? No, I don't think so. I was too clear-headed for it to be a dream.

Damn, just what in hell is happening here?

Inevitably, I felt very flustered at this unexpected and sudden situation I was thrown into.

I wasn't able to ruminate much on that thought as soon I felt something, slowly creeping under the depths of the ever-stretching darkness, abruptly appearing right under my nose. It was... it was an existence with a kind of indistinguishable, and utterly indescribable shape.

No that wasn't just it, the thought of even terming it as indescribable felt wrong somehow. It looked curved yet straight, soft yet hard.

In fact, its shape denoted its existence to be close to a weirdly wriggling monster. I was so confused by its abstruse form that I didn't even have the time to feel afraid, the

primal fear I should be feeling from confronting such a being of horrors. Damn, What the hell even is this fucker?

Little Night.

Little Moon.

Little Knox.

You sought me.

Worship me.

Sing my praise.

Your destiny.

He opened his mouth, well, assortment of mouths, and whispered in a tone that chilled me to my core. There were more than ten of them and each was saying a different type of word, constituting a sentence and consequently a series of sentences. It was honestly scaring me out of my wits.

Worship me. Little one. Kneel before me and worship me, I'll give you all of it. Everything you desire.

Damn, why the hell do you want me to worship you all of a sudden? Give me what exactly? What do you even mean by everything, huh?

Abruptly, out of nowhere, a podium rose within the darkness in front of the utterly confused and terrified me.

I could see three fruits resting on it with a soft luster. There was a pomegranate, an apple, and a grape.

Pick.

One.

Up.

I picked up the most-ordinary-looking apple at the enthusiastic urging of the creepy voice.

Rustle—

The apple was cold to the touch as if it had just been taken out from a refrigerator. I then heard a familiar *Ding*— sound.

Ding—

Apple of the Darkest Night》

『Along with Gaia, mother of earth, Knox was called the mother of all things and beings. This is an apple she cultivated in secret, not even Jupiter, Lord of the Skyes, ignores its existence. It's her own little private secret. Well, no one has tasted it, so the taste can't be guaranteed, however.』

『After ingesting it, “Night's Curtain” can be strengthened by consuming accumulated karma.』

『Would you like to upgrade “Night's Curtain” to “Night's Cloak” by consuming 1 strength stat?』

『Caution: 20% chance of Acquiring “Nyctalopia”』

Using your karma to strengthen a blessing, a ludicrous concept no matter which way I spin this matter. This is the first time I have seen something like this.

I wouldn't have been surprised if it was the usual jargon along the lines of “Consume task points to...” etc etc, but it wasn't the case this time around.

Holy Shit, I didn't expect anything remotely similar, at all, when I had decided to pick up the fruit. Using my stats to boost my abilities? This was a little baffling concept, but, more than anything, the word ‘Caution’ gave me the chills.

What am I supposed to be careful about? What risk? Damn it, I need some answers not more and more questions like this...

Eat it.

Accept it.

Little one.

That strange-looking eldritch abomination, standing silently without any sort of movements, in front of me was urging me to eat this apple. I wasn't nearly air-headed enough to let it fool me into absentmindedly eating it, however.

I carefully returned the apple back to the center of the podium above and now took up the pomegranate-looking fruit that was next to it. It felt warm, akin to a hand warmer and a sizable chunk of it looked shattered as if it had exploded from the inside out.

Ding—

Sunfilled Pomegranate»

『This pomegranate was carefully cultivated by the priestesses of Delphi in the garden of the Great Temple of the Sun God. It was, however, so ripe that it ended up cracking on its shell, showing its insides. While Pomegranates are usually said to be good for women, Delphi's Pomegranate worked best for men instead.』

『After ingesting it, “Imperfect Dexterity” can be strengthened by consuming accumulated karma.』

『Would you like to upgrade “Imperfect Dexterity” into “Hearty Hands” by consuming 1 dexterity stat?』

『Caution: 90% chance of acquiring “Weakened Capilar Roots”』

Weakened Capilar Roots? Motherfucking bitch. This has to be avoided at any and all costs. Even in the modern world, where I hail from, hair loss was an incurable disease. There was no going back from this shit! I'd rather die than be faced with that situation.

I can't help but wonder, would the scientist who would eventually cure hair loss feel guilty if he got a Nobel Prize? Wouldn't it be a slap to all the previous winners?

Quickly forgetting that nonsensical thought, I hurriedly put the pomegranate down with such force and movements that one would think that I had touched something extremely filthy. I then went and picked up the grape next to it, it was purple and full of grains.

Ding—

Ding—

Diana's Secret Grape»

『Athene, the city of philosophy and politics, is famous for its annual production of high-quality grapes. Among them, the highest-quality grapes of each batch were said to be offered to Minerva, Lord of the city and the goddess of wisdom. This is one of such grapes that Diana, goddess of the moon, stole to eat secretly.』

『After ingesting it, “Imperfect Dexterity” can be strengthened by consuming accumulated karma.』

『Would you like to upgrade “Imperfect Dexterity” into “Nimble Fingers” by consuming 1 agility stat?』

『Caution: 80% chance of Acquiring “Hand Tremors”』

Well, overall, this looked to me like a chance to strengthen my abilities albeit selectively. It was still quite hard to choose though. Couldn't there have been more explanations regarding the effects and the drawbacks?

“Is this the end?”

...

The eldritch monstrosity, which had been making a lot of noise until now and was spouting random bullshit like “Worship me-” and other similar crap, suddenly stopped speaking altogether, having closed its innumerable mouths.

Well, I didn't expect it to just stop its mouth, or rather mouths, shut like this.

Anyway, inferring from what I've just seen “Hearty Hands” will probably make my hands warmer... I think... It doesn't seem outlandish to also expect that it would improve my dexterity.

Night's Cloak sounded very mysterious from the get-go, I have no clue whatsoever as to what it might do with how cryptic the prompt was. Even the description of the fruit was obscure and veiled in mystery. It was worth noting that it had the great perk of being the least risky one among the lot. Only a 20% chance of getting a debuff was far more desirable than the other two.

Damn, I'm getting a bit worried now. Do I really have to choose one among these fruits?

With thoughts of escaping pervading every corner of my mind, I decided to look around for any form of exit. My gaze, however, happened to land on the eldritch being standing silently in front.

Wriggle- Wriggle-

...

This...thing...looks so weird, it was giving me the creeps, not gonna lie. No matter which angle I look at it from, I could only describe it as horrible to look at. Just being in its presence was enough to terrify me to my very core.

With a cursory glance at my surroundings, I eventually came to the conclusion that I won't be able to get out of here unless I choose one of the three fruits placed on the podium.

I chose to go for the apple. I don't know what Night's Cloak was but it seemed to be the one with the lowest risks, safety was my first priority, after all. In the first place, I was even picking up these dangerous fruits because I wanted to get the hell out of here.

Knox's apple.

Eat it.

The power of the Protogenoi.

Hesitantly, I took a bite out of the mysterious apple while being mindful of this blabbering monster.

Crunch—

Unlike what I was expecting, its hard pulp tasted oddly refreshing. Abruptly, my eyes widened. I felt a jolt had passed through my brain. It ended up tasting so delicious that I stuffed it completely down my mouth, straight into my stomach, in a single mouthful.

Come back again.

Little one.

When I opened my eyes the next time around, I was greeted with the sight of a ceiling made of densely stacked wooden planks and ocher-colored wallpapers.

The ceiling was rather familiar to me.

If I recall correctly, this should be the ceiling of the Interlude Room of the Nymph's Wing Inn. The windows were wide-opened letting the sunlight and the chirping of the birds in.

When did it become morning again? It was such a weird and mysterious dream if I say so myself. What did dreaming of eating an apple mean?

My father often did dream interpretations and fortune-reading for the old people that would visit the clinic, but all of his spoutings sounded like a load of bullshit to me, even by my father's standards, so I never paid attention to his ramblings at all.

As a result, I wasn't sure what the dream meant. Damn, I'll just ignore this silly dream. Better to leave it that way.

According to what I had learned in the liberal art classes, dreams were merely a manifestation of your subconscious, was my subconscious telling me it wanted to eat fruits now?

I muttered the usual incantation just in case. There was no way all of that absurdity happened to be real, but it didn't hurt to be sure.

“Long Live the Chaos...”

The usual words appeared in front of me with the usual sound.

[Stats] Name: Hassan

Level: 9 → 8

Strength: 4 → 3

Agility: 2

Stamina: 3

Task: 37

Blessings: Blessing of Chaos » Imperfect Dexterity » Night's Cloak »

Damn, it was real! It was not a dream! Holy shit!

My Strength was actually reduced by 1, consequently, my level was also reduced by one. And just as I frowned at the term Night's Cloak. Words began appearing in front of my eyes.

Night's Cloak»

『Increases the probability of not being caught when moving covertly in the dark.』

Ooooo-

There was even an explanation for what the blessing did. I tried doing it on my other blessings, but nothing appeared this time.

Anyway, just as I tried getting up from the bed, I noticed that the other side of it was now empty. Did Luna wake up first and leave the room?

Sleeping alone in this king-sized bed felt very lonely to me. Where did she go? Did she leave to eat? Why didn't she wake me up then?

Just as I was immersed in all kinds of thoughts revolving around Luna.

Creak—

The door of the Interlude Room opened and a familiar pink-haired girl barged inside the room.

“Ha-Hassan, you’re awake...!”

Luna talked bashfully as if she felt very embarrassed. Her lovely face turned crimson as soon as she faced me.

Well, I was very embarrassed too. I could feel my whole body becoming hotter and my little brother hardening every time I thought about what happened yesterday. How did lovers put up with this feeling every day?

Trying to avoid this shameful and awkward situation, I decided to take the lead and talk about something else.

“Where did you go? I thought you left already.”

“I couldn’t wake you up, Ha-Hassan, you were sleeping so d-deeply. I just went out to get some fresh air. My body feels very light you know? O-Of course, I feel a little sore between my legs...”

Luna stopped talking after saying that line. The pain between her legs was probably a constant reminder of what happened yesterday.

“A-Anyway, take this.”

Luna gave me a wooden cup after gathering her bearings.

After accepting the cup and looking inside, I noticed a gold-colored sparkling drink inside. Barley tea? No, it was too bright and smelled a little too sweet for it to be Barley tea.

“What’s this?”

“This? It’s honey water. I picked up some from the Bashkir bee house. You looked very tired, Hassan... So, I thought I’d get you something to drink...”

It was really honey water. I couldn’t deal with my thirst anymore and gulped it so fast that the sweetness almost made me a little dizzy.

The sweetness was so intense it made my mouth numb, and the sleepiness and tiredness that seemed to have seeped into my body directly disappeared with a single mouthful.

“It tastes really good.”

It really tasted way too good. Sweet things were a luxury in this world. When was the last time I tasted something so sweet? I can't even remember, damn it...

Anyway, it had been time since I had a decent intake of sugar and my whole body was now energized.

“It's delicious. Thank you, Luna.”

“R-Really? That's a relief. Anyway, the sun is already up high in the sky. It's almost lunchtime.”

So late already? It's been a long time since I fell into such a deep state of sleep. It was probably the accumulated fatigue after the expedition and all the night watches that I had to go through.

Anyway, me and Luna went down to the inn's first floor and had a simple breakfast followed by a light brunch.

It was a simple meal with sausage and corn porridge. I wasn't really concerned about the taste. I was honestly more concerned about the awkward silence between me and Luna rather than the taste of whatever we were eating.

Should we talk about what happened yesterday?

I directed my gaze towards Luna. I could see her round lips blow cool air through her mouth to cool down her soup.

Did I actually kiss those thin, soft, and glistening lips just yesterday?

I felt my schlong become stiffer every time I saw Luna bite the thick sausage with her small mouth.

I felt like I finally understood why so many men sought girlfriends and lovers, be it here or in my previous world.

The world felt drastically different. Did all couples in the world feel the same?

What was my current relationship with Luna? Couples? Girlfriend-Boyfriend?

I don't know. And I feel like I won't be able to get the answer to that anytime soon.

Needless to say, I wanted to do it again. Have sex, I mean. But considering what Luna previously told me, it seemed to be a one-time thing only... Didn't she say her life would be at risk if she broke her vow of chastity?

Just as I started fretting alone in impatience, hesitation, and anxiety.

"...Hassan, what are you gonna do today?"

"Today? Today..."

What are we going to do today? Should I give her a massage in the inn today as well? Damn, My mind is filled with all kinds of improper thoughts, I can't think straight, fuck!

I heard there were a lot of people who never had sex but never who had only done it once in their entire life. I now understand why.

Whoo—

I let out a short sigh, took a deep breath, gathered my thoughts, and then spoke out the thoughts that I had gathered through my mind.

"I have to get to the guild to fetch my payment.

"I have to go to the guild too. So...let's go together."

Wanna unlock all premium chapters? Check the Membership Chapters will seamlessly unlock no need to bother buying coins anymore.