

## Master 251

### Chapter 251 - 251. Balcony Seats

"Alice says not to worry about it, she would prefer to talk to you in her own way. She feels bad that I would have to work to translate. But miss. Alice I do not mind at all. But I will respect what you want." Onyx went silent at this, it seemed like he had gotten a small talking to from Alice in their minds. It was only fair that Alice had always wanted to speak with her own voice and did not want anyone else speaking for her.

This made Walker a bit sad knowing that she would not be letting Onyx talk for her so that they could have longer conversations but he understood. "I won't push you, but if you ever want to say something I won't be upset if you ask Onyx to help."

Alice just shook her head with a smile, "But since you won't let Onyx say anything I guess I can't tell that you don't want to go look at that bracelet." Walker hooked her arm and started to pull her to the corner of the room. She had no way to protest and let herself be dragged off leaving the rest of the party eating and looking around themselves. Midnight was a bit annoyed that her friend was being pulled off but chose to get Remey to give her more food. This was not as easy though since Remey had built up an immunity to the pleading look Midnight used. Her siblings had used it so often that she developed the immunity almost instantly.

The bracelet that Alice had been looking at was a simple one, it was inlaid with ten different colored gems. The metal that these gems were set in to shined with the reflection of the light within the room. It had been made from silver and polished so well that the two could see their reflections within it. "The paper here says its called the rainbow bracelet. It was crafted by a jewel smith that wandered throughout the kingdom and sold it to the auction house. I wonder what else it does, it's not written in the paper." Walker decided this was the perfect chance to use his all around appraisal skill.

'Rainbow silver bracelet

+2Matk

Mana storage 0/10

The gems used to create this bracelet were taken from a high altitude mountain peak. They sat in the first rays of sunrise for many years allowing them to gain the ability to absorb light in many different frequencies. The silver metal used to craft this naturally repels poisons.'

"Oh, this would be perfect for you, it absorbs different kinds of light elements so it can store some mana. It also says it resists poisons, if you are healing anyone who has been poisoned maybe it will help. I will bid on it." Alice tried to shake her head more but Walker was conveniently looking away. Alice reached out to grab and turn his head toward her so he could see her shaking her head.

Walker closed his eyes refusing to see it making Alice just hold his face defeated. " Ehm, I do have to remind you, you're at an event." The high priest was standing there a mischievous smirk on his face, he had seen the whole thing unfold but still wanted to raise the two a little. It was his job as a father after all. "I do agree with Walker though, since you always run out of mana when you sing I would feel much more at ease knowing you have a little put away for safety. It also matches the colors you make with your skills. If he does not win it I will be winning it for you." Alice wanted to argue back with him but knew that once the decision was made she was outnumbered.

"Sounds like a plan to me!" Walker gave a big thumbs up with the high priest pretending that his face was not very very red from how Alice had grabbed his face just a moment ago. "It looks like chairs are being brought out in front of the stage and the armors and other things are being put away, should we find out seats?"

Looking about the high priest saw the attendants starting to make the change in the hall. "Yes it looks to be about time, let us collect you other members and ask an attendant to show us up the stairs."

While Walker beckoned for the others to join them the high priest flagged down an attendant who was more than happy to leave the chairs to another and show them the way. They had definitely given the attendant an easier job then to lug around chairs. "You will have one of our five balcony seats tonight. The auctioneer on the stage will have an eye on you at all times for a bid so do not worry about missing anyone. We heard that the high priest would also be bidding and placed an extra chair to the front so that it can be easier for you. Your number will be seven and his shall be eight. Today there are only thirty bidders."

The group was shown up a set of marble stairs and through a smaller hallway. The door that was opened for them was a very beautiful gold and brown color most likely hand crafted. The balcony seating they now laid eyes on was showing quite the scene. There were two larger chairs right next to the railing of the balcony that faced the stage directly, they would have a very good view of any items on display,

much better than if they were on the main floor. The other chairs were set behind the two others close enough to see and relay a message to the one that was bidding.

Small tables were against the walls with some refreshments and more appetizers, this seemed to be a benefit of the upgraded seating. There were also a set of curtains that could be closed at their own discretion if they wanted more privacy. In addition there was also a pamphlet of item names and the order they would be auctioned, this was yet another bonus for them in the upgraded seating. Walker skimmed the pamphlet finding it was only the items that were already displayed on the floor. This was not very helpful since he wanted to bid on materials or new additions to the auction that night. However he saw that the rainbow silver bracelet was being sold at a starting price of three hundred gold. It was a little high of a price but Walker was not afraid of this. He would pay much more to buy a gift for Alice, especially one that could be so useful to her.

Walker and the high priest took the seats near the railing and surveyed the first floor, it was already full of chairs and free from auction items now. The switch over was extremely efficient even with their group asking one of the attendants away to lead them to their seating. "This is your first time in the balcony seating right? What do you think? Everything you thought it would be?"

"This is really the best seating here. I can see the stage much better, plus if the auctioneer is looking at us more closely I know my bid will get seen. They really outdo themselves setting this room up too, there are so many extra details." Walker did not hold back his praise when he spoke on how impressed he was.

"Most people like the pamphlets they put out. It really helps them strategize, not that I will be bidding on any of the things on display, the good stuff comes after them." The high priest was going to leave the bracelet to Walker in the worst case he would step in.

"Hello and Welcome to this month's VIP auction. I congratulate those of you who have procured tickets and welcome those who are new. We will begin with the previously viewed items from the floor and then move in to some other products. Tonight our first item will be..." Walker saw that the armor being brought out was nothing that they were after and decided to make small talk while they waited for the bracelet to make its way on stage. No one in the party had let him know they wanted anything either so he assumed that they were waiting for the better items that they could use for forging.

Some items later the auctioneer finally brought the bracelet on stage, "Here we have a very beautifully crafted rainbow silver bracelet. This can store mana and also increase the attack of the wearer. It would make an exceptional and practical gift for any young woman. The starting bid will open at three

hundred gold!" The auctioneer on stage showed off the bracelet on a small pedestal. The lights focusing on it were reflecting off of it making it seem even more brilliant.

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## Chapter 252 - 252. Bidding War

Walker saw no reason to wait around, he raised a hand with the number card that had been on his seat when they walked in.

"Number seven three hundred starting bid."

"Number twenty five, three fifty."

"Number fourteen, four hundred."

Walker did not expect such a fast paced competition the bidders were already jumping in to the fray.

"Number eighteen, five hundred."

"Number five five fifty."

"Number eighteen, six hundred."

"Number seven- oh number twenty five seven hundred." Walker had been outbid faster than the auctioneer could rattle off the number, this was going to get pricey. However if they thought they could beat Walker so easily that was a problem. He decided to bide his time and watched the three other bidders fight over it. The price soon reached eight hundred and fifty gold. This item was mostly popular because of its ability to store mana, now that the price was high only those who could use the boost it gave and the storage of mana would be left.

"Number seven nine hundred gold." Walker threw in his bid since the pace had slowed down leaving number twenty five left.

"Number seven going once, going twice, Sold! For nine hundred gold to number seven. Congratulations!." The high priest was looking at Walker rather impressed, he had almost thought himself that Walker had given up. But just as he almost places a bid he saw that Walker was tightly gripping the number card and intent;y looking around at those below. He was analyzing the situation and waiting for the moment where his opponent bidder would be willing to give in.

"The next item will be one of the most unique armors we have ever had in stock. This armor started its life out in the dwarven lands forged and reinforced. There was plenty of trading that placed it in the hands of an elven rune carver and later in ours. This steel mana armor has the ability to attract natural mana and also block strong attacks. The bidding starts at nine hundred and fifty gold." The armor was the one that Su had been looking at with such interest.

"Su are you sure you don't want that armor? We can have the blacksmith change it I have seen him use some rune carving skills." Walker was sure she may want it.

"No leader, If I use that armor it will not be to its fullest. I do not have the proper skills to use it with natural mana. I can have better armor made from scratch." This did not stop her from ogling the armor from the balcony. Walker told himself that he would make sure to ask the wandering blacksmith about adding some runes to maybe fill its mana storage capability with natural mana. If the blacksmith was able to work his it might help Su in the long run.

Watching the bidding for this armor they could see a few of the well dressed individuals bidding for it. They were wearing the same uniforms that army officers would. This was most likely because any number of their defenders could make use of this armor. Just the reinforcement from the dwarves was enough to keep it at a high priest. However the addition of mana being attracted naturally made it much more tempting. Most people could go their whole entire lives without seeing a piece of equipment touched by two different races.

The elves and dwarves did not dislike each other by any means but they were far away and when they did come in contact have different cultural values. These two facts made partnerships much rarer. Some people here would bid on it just to keep it in a collection. After some time a larger gentleman that was completely alone was the only person bidding against the army officers. The bidding had gone well past

two thousand gold coins. The onlookers were caught up in this bidding war. If any of them were to breathe they just may miss the deciding factor of who may win.

The larger man stood up after another three back and forth bids. However his gesture was not unnoticed as one of the slightly taller army officers stood up as well. These were the two in competition. They were going to bid until they could not bid anymore. The auction was still early having not even gotten to the new items or the materials or monster parts that would be auctioned. This was incredible to see a showdown so early, eventually the army officers that were seated started to pull at their standing friend, it seemed he was about to go over their budget for bidding. The larger man took this in stride bringing his bid an extra fifty gold higher than the previous bid. The total had reached three thousand two hundred gold, this bid was what ended it.

There was an audible sigh from the entire auction house as the bidding finally ended. The man sat down when his bid was named the winner. The army officers were not too happy but had their eyes left on many other pieces that night. The party was happy their first bid had not ended up in that situation, however since the fire had been lit everyone was getting hungry for more competition. The rest of the auction would become much more lively. This would be good and bad for the party.

The art pieces were filtered through by the auctioneer, most went with out much of a bidding war. Markus Raven was the most notable participant in the art portion taking away almost ten paintings himself. The bidders seemed to be gossiping about his actions on the floor but he paid them no heed at all.

The next few items also went fast as they were a few weapons and shields that had been on display, surprisingly Su had little interest in the shields after she had looked at them. She had already taken what knowledge she needed from them and was it interested in having one herself. This was due to the simple fact that she was more interested in having the shields that would be custom made for her.

This was what they had all been waiting for, the items in the pamphlet had all been sold, now they would fall in to the new items that were brought in today and the items that could not be displayed.

"Next up we have a large batch of potions created by one of our kingdoms master alchemists. They worked hard to experiment and create this new high health potion with less ingredients. This is a revolutionary formula which still holds the same strength. It is rumored that they used pure water in the potion to boost effectiveness. The starting bid for these potions in a batch of ten will start at one thousand five hundred gold."

Remey knew instantly that this was the old man's potions. "Walker, don't go bidding on those, they were made by the old man. If you can drive up the price he will be happy. He must be after some extra gold so that he can make sure all the pure water we have is his." Remey said this in a lackadaisical tone but her eyes were locked on the table full of potions. Hearing that he had used the pure water to make a batch of potions that used less ingredients with the same effect was no small matter in the alchemy world.

"You got it, I will throw in a bid here and there to try and keep it flowing." Walker was also impressed by the fact that these potions had been tweaked to use less ingredients with the same effect. Even though his knowledge on alchemy was limited he was no fool that would think they were the same as other high potions.

"Hmm maybe I should bid on those." The high priest was interested in them but Walker had other plans.

"If you are interested then Remey can take you to meet with the alchemist that made them. He put them up on the auction so he can make some more money before the pure water we are auctioning." The high priest raised an eyebrow and looked at Remey surprised that she had such connections. He himself had only been in contact with a few master alchemists and had a tough time building relationships due to the fact that the church normally relied on mana potions and healing skills instead of other potions. The church was simply not a huge buyer for the alchemy building.

"Yea what Walker said, I can introduce you to him for a deal. Just don't bid and scare anyone off." Remey said this but had a flushed face a bit embarrassed that Walker had worked her connections in to a deal. The high priest looked at her more carefully before smiling and nodding in approval. It looked like he was more than happy to do just that.

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## Chapter 253 - 253. Selling Pure Water

With the agreement not to bid they all turned their attention back to the auction. The four military officers bid on the potions edging out any competition. They had all started to talk to a fast extent when they were presents. This was one of the main things that they had been sent to the auction to gain. Potions could easily be ordered in bulk by the military or they could be bought at a regular auction,

however the newer potions would normally hit a market first. This put the military in the same position as everyone else in the kingdom, they needed to put in the leg work to get new potions.

Having purchased one batch of the high healing potions each the mood of the officers significantly increased, they knew that they would be praised for bringing back such a thing to their commander.

Keeping up with the theme a familiar set of crates were brought out on to the stage. "The next item is being sold in four batches of fifty vials. These vials contain pure water from a snow golem and lack many impurities that normally exist within water used in the alchemical process. This water was stored while frozen and is of an extremely high quality! This bidding for the first batch will start at a discounted price of two thousand gold!"

Walker thought that the elder of the Garnet family would offer them more, but discounted? "What does he mean discounted? This is pure water, it is way too valuable for them to discount it." Remey said exactly what Walker was thinking. He was equally annoyed that they would discount it.

"Just you wait, I think you will all see why it was discounted." The high priest raised a hand being the first bid.

"Number eight two thousand"

"Number twenty nine three thousand"

The bid jumped a thousand gold just now! The high priest was smiling again giving the whole party the look he told them to look. "The discount he gave you will get the alchemists on edge, and they will bid more faster trying to scare off those lower bidders. Should be a nice show. I will be buying the last one though." The high priest was sure that he would win the final batch of the vials and worst case if he gave in he would convince the party to hand over any extra they had.

"If that's how it is it's fine, but if they had not gotten higher that fast I would have needed to go have a word with that appraiser." Remey was a little put off because of the discount but watching it jump thousands of gold in a minute she calmed down.

"Number twenty nine nine thousand two hundred!"



The number was extremely high now that a few bidders had started to go against this number twenty nine.

"Number two ten thousand gold!"

Seeing the number of gold hit ten thousand the entire party nearly fainted on the spot. This price was so much more than what they had sold the arm of the snow golem to the alchemist Remey knew. "Don't look at me, we sold it to a fair price. This is just insane, the alchemists down there have a rivalry and don't care about gold." Remey went back to pretending she did not care as much but Alice who was looking right at her saw the smile spread on her face.

"Alchemists do indeed make a lot of profit from their potions, It's why they have never formed a guild. If they did they would loose personal income and need to set up rules. They would also need to pay more taxes to the kingdom the resided in." The high priest joined in the conversation a little bit disappointed.

"So the adventurers guild is limited by the kingdom in a way since they need to pay for the building and taxes?" Gil was clueless about these things and decided to take the chance to learn more.

"Yes and no, since the adventurers guild has so many members they are well off, but the alchemists are few in number. Not many will have the proper systems to pursue it as a career. That paired with how tough it is to get the right ingredients and learning makes it harder to properly function as a guild. I would guess that if they formed a guild they would produce half the potions they do now for the kingdom." The high priest knew that it was better to keep them in the format they currently were but he also wished that they could do something about their rivalry. The sheer disregard for how they were acting in front of the high class crowd was disappointing. Someone should never throw around their gold like this.

"Number twenty nine twelve thousand gold, going once, going twice, sold to number twenty nine for twelve thousand gold. Congratulations!."

The first batch had just sold for an astounding amount of gold, the party was wondering how they could ever spend the insane amount of gold growing in their party bank account. The alchemists hadn't even slowed down when the high priest threw the first bid out, nothing would seem to stop them.

The second and third batches went for eleven thousand gold and nine thousand gold. The price seemed to decrease as the batches went on showing that the alchemists were running out of competition. Now that the price had lowered the priest smiled and watched the fourth batch bidding start. He was biding his time and had not bid on the others, a few of the crowd cast glances up at the balcony seeing that the priest was still there. They had the impression that the high priest would have been bidding on every single batch but it had yet to occur.

"Number two, seven thousand gold!"

The bids had reached a decent amount but still lower than the previous batch. The bidders were silent and the auctioneer was about to start the count when the high priest raised his number.

"Number eight, eight thousand gold!"

The high priest himself had just raised a thousand! This was crazy, the party knew that the church would have deep pockets but they still thought the high priest was a frugal man. Instead he was ready to jump in and fight the fight with any other bigger, Rising to the challenge the other bidder did not want to let go.

"Number two eight thousand five hundred!"

"Number eight, ten thousand gold!"

The high priest jumped up the price again by a huge amount, the onlookers were viewing the balcony realizing that a fool was trying to compete with the church. Not just the church but the high priest who could make such financial decisions without worry, he was the one that set the budgets after all!

"Number eight, going once, going twice, sold! Number eight for ten thousand gold! Congratulations!" Everyone including Alice and Midnight were looking at the high priest.

"What, I said I would be winning this last batch. Just because I am a bit older now doesn't mean I am willing to let something I want slip away. Just think of what the healers can use this for. Those swamps and their blasted poison will be cowering from our healing." hearing this they totally believed that if the

high priest wanted to he could keep a calm face and declare war on all injuries. They were speechless, even Alice scooted away from him a little wondering if she truly knew the man in front of her.

The auctioneer brought out various other alchemy herbs and tools, none of which were interesting to Remey. She was the group's expert on the subject so Walker was looking to her for what to bid on or not. "Just leave those all be, if we need ingredients we can ask the old man. After tonight he will want to sell things to stock back up on gold. Plus his are better quality than those." To Remey the things being sold were just too low quality to be used in any of their potions.

"Well, if Remey thinks so I'm fine with it. I can see that they all look a bit older from here." Gil backed things up, his sharp eyes catching the small details like dried out roots or curled leaves. He also had the knowledge his mother had passed down about plants and what to look for in a sick one. This knowledge just helped to hold back Walker's hand no matter how rare the auctioneer made the ingredient sound.

"We will be moving on to our monster and crafting materials portion of the night! I know many have been waiting to see what rare and unique ingredients have come through our doors recently. I can only say that you will be very surprised!" The auctioneer gestured for the attendants to bring out an large amount of bones. These were familiar to the party since they were the bones of the greater Ice imp. Their other item was being sold as the first item, how lucky!

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Chapter 254 - 254. Mystery Bidder

"These bones come from a younger greater ice imp. The adventurers that hunted this monster had some trouble but managed to prevail and bring back the bones just for this auction. The starting price will be nine hundred gold!" This price was more than what they expected.

"Well I am glad it's not another discount." Gil breathed a sigh of relief.

"I do not think they would discount something that can be used to craft. It would make the value of the other materials they sell later seem too high or too low. The price is based on rarity." Su chimed in sharing her own opinion. The logic was sound and no one had any reason to argue. Gil thought on this himself and came to the same conclusion.

"Number thirteen four thousand gold!" There was a wave of whispers, the high bid from the start had unsettled everyone. This high of a bid on something like this was completely uncalled for.

"Who just bid so much on our greater ice imp bones.?" Walker was leaning almost over the railing looking for this number thirteen bidder. The others were also right next to him trying to get a look at who was willing to bid so much at once. They had only expected the total to hit two thousand gold if they were lucky but this bidder had blown that out of the water.

"To the left there in the white robe, he is hiding his face." The high priest was similarly intrigued. Out of the corner of his eye he had seen that this man raised his number card then lowered it very fast to keep attention away from him.

The party locked in on the man who was keeping all of his features hidden very well, not a single one of them thought they would be able to do anything if they wanted to talk to him later. "Walker, can you get an appraisal on him from up here?" Gil was similarly interested in who this person was.

"Let me give it a try, we should thank him after he stays around. His bid is very out of the ordinary." Walker looked carefully and tried his all around appraisal skill.

'Target distance is too great, some information is unable to be discerned.

Grey

Level???

Golem builder system

Race???'

"The distance is too far to get much but his name is Grey and he had a golem builder system." Walker wished he could get closer but if he went downstairs he could risk bidding on something else. Not to mention he did not have enough reason to pry in to this person;s business.

"Golem builder? That is usually a dwarven system right leader?" Su could swear she had seen this in a book once.

"Yes, I think one of the forging books in the library has a chapter about the kind of system that can create golems. They are one of the biggest forces in the dwarven army. What would one be doing here." Walker's question would go unanswered since the auctioneer had already pronounced the item sold and the next item was being brought out.

"The next item we have is just as rare as the last. We have the shed skin of a steel worm! These monsters live in mountains consuming various metal ores to create stronger and stronger skins. When they grow a stronger one they shed the outer layer of skin leaving it behind. This material is tough like metal but flexible like leather, only the best blacksmiths can form it in to a good armor! The starting price will be four hundred gold!" Remey had shot up in her chair hearing the properties this material had.

"Walker, get that for my new armor, it's perfect."

"I was just thinking the same thing." Walker had his eyes glued to the forty foot long silver steel like skin. It took ten attendants to bring it on to the stage due to the large size of it alone. They were quick to show that they could bend and twist the skin easily but also could not pierce it with a simple knife. With any of the bidders' doubts taken away, a decent amount of attention was drawn to it.

"This is just a theory, but if that man that just bought out bones has a dwarven system, do you think he is selling this skin?" Su broke the thoughts and kept Walker from making the first bid.

"This would be too much of a coincidence if it wasn't true." Walker echoed her thoughts before he prepared to place his bid.

"Number three one thousand gold!"

Walker waited a second seeing that there were four other bidders that looked to be about to bid then held up his sign with three fingers. "Number seven three thousand gold!" The bidders were hit again with a wave of whispers, another crazy bid right after the other. The man in the white robes shuffled a bit as they glanced up towards the balcony. Walker looked down at him with a smile on his face. He could not see the white robed man's face but could tell that his look had been seen. With a little luck he may be able to talk to this man later.

"Going once, going twice, sold for three thousand gold to number seven. Congratulations!" Walker was happy with his purchase but Remey was a little less happy now.

"You didn't really need to spend such a crazy amount on me you know." She huffed a little but Gil knew she was happy to have her own unique material for armor.

"Well he needed to make sure our brawler would be well protected right? Can't fault our leader for doing his best." Remey's face grew red when Gil said this, so much so that she got up and grabbed some water farther away from where they were all sitting. Gil had scared her away a little.

"I also think I want to try to talk to that golem builder. I may have something he is interested in." Walker had a mischievous smile himself. The gears were turning in his head, he happened to have three golem cores and nothing to do with them.

The others gave him a look but the high priest seemed to catch on that he was looking to build another connection. This young boy was starting to catch on to the real reason these VIP auctions were held.

"The next item we have is much more unique. There was an adventure group that was out by the sea and was lucky to find a dual elemental crystal growing out of the side of the sea cliffs. The light element and the water element are perfectly balanced in this high crustal and normal crystals. The fifteen dual elemental crystals and the one high dual elemental crystals will start at a price of three thousand gold!."

This was the item that Markus Raven had told them about, they would want to bid on it to try and make it theirs. They did not have much use for the dual elemental crystals but that was not the biggest deal. If they could procure it then they would be able to hold on to it for when they needed it. The light element and the water element were not Walker's strongest elements but one day he would need them to be up to par with his fire element and earth element.

"I will bid on this one, if I can get it maybe I will have to find other crystals to work toward a new staff with all the elements affinities." Walker was talking to himself but everyone around thought it was a good idea.

"If you are able to get the dual and high elemental crystals for such a staff I believe that you will have a very good weapon leader." Su was right there to support this. She had seen what the elemental s had the possibility to do and could only see merit in having a staff that was aligned for every element.

"Do what you want, I have what i need." Remey was still in a happy zone after getting the steel worm skin for her armor so she would not have any opinion on what the others wanted.

"Go for it, I think it is a good goal to have for our only attacker." Gil also had no qualms with this. They had the gold and Walker should have a staff that would make use of all the elements. If he used his current staff to use light spells it could be harder for him since they were opposite elements. So far it had not been a problem but if Walker learned stringer spells the fine tuning that was needed may be disrupted.

"Good luck, this bidding war will be very tough, many will want those crystals." The high priest had nothing to say on what they bid on but he already knew that any of the bidders there today were there just to fight over this one item. The adventurers that had found these crystals had gone right to the auction house and after dropping them off spread the rumors about them to every high class individual they could.

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#### Chapter 255 - 255. Crafting Portion

"Number twenty two, seven thousand gold!"

"Number seven, seven thousand five hundred gold!"

"Number one, eight thousand gold!"

The pace was fast, as soon as one bid would be said another was already being spoken. The auctioneer could barely keep up. The price was going back and forth raising by five hundred gold each time. The bidders that were not bidding half expected another outrageous jump by thousands of gold. They relaxed realizing that this was not happening this time.

"Number seven, with thousand five hundred!"

"Walker what is your cut off for this?" Su whispered in his ear not wanting to say anything too loud even though they were in their own seating.

"Twelve thousand sounds about our limit, I don't want to get too far ahead of myself. We may encounter such crystals again in the future." Walker knew that if he let all the gold get sunk in to this one thing they could end up stuck in the future if they wanted to get something. There was also the fact that there should be a few more items after these crystals so he did not want to get too bid happy.

"Number twenty, ten thousand gold!"

While he was distracted the price had been pushed up much higher, it was getting too close to what Walker was willing to pay.

"Number seven, ten thousand five hundred gold....going once, going twice- Number twenty eleven thousand gold!"

Walker thought he was about to get lucky but this number twenty had jumped in at the last second to try and secure the bid for themselves.

"Number seven, twelve thousand gold!" This was it Walker had placed his last bid. The auctioneer was looking around "Going once, going twice, sold for twelve thousand gold to number seven! Congratulations!" Walker let out a huge sigh, he had not realized he was holding his breath the entire time.

"Are you sure you never unlocked a luck ability? I swear I saw the man that was bidding against you drop his card at the last second and miss out on the final call." The high priest was looking at him joking but Walker himself was wondering just how lucky it was that he put his max bid at twelve thousand and somehow got twelve thousand.

"Now what are we looking for? Think anything better than that will show up in the last items?" Remy leaned forward now much more invested after the last items. She wanted to see if anyone else could get something for their gear.



"Brother, I would like that." Onyx who had been silent was now slithering off Walker's shoulder and poking his head over the balcony. His eyes were transfixed on the item being brought on stage.

"This item is a rare crafting material. It is found at the edges of deep chasms and often in dark caves. This is known as dusk stone. This dusk stone possesses the strange ability to attract light elemental mana and can be used for a wide variety of crafting potential. The starting bit will be four hundred gold."

"Why do you want that? Can't you absorb enough light elements by yourself?" Walker was lost to what Onyx was thinking when it came to why he was so interested in the item.

"I can sleep with it and absorb more light mana while I rest." This was his short and sweet answer. Since light elemental mana was basically Onyx's source of life Walker had no reason to ignore the stone. Not many seemed interested in the dusk stone at all.

"Hmm if your little friend is so interested then I will split the cost with you if you are willing to split the stone in half. Some of my younger nuns can use this stone in a necklace to help them practice their light healing skills." This made the bid even easier to make.

"Perfect plan for me, how do you feel Onyx?" Onyx just bobbed his head refusing to take his eyes off the dusk stone.

Walker raised his card jumping in to the very slow bidding war that was happening on the floor. It looked like there were a few interested in it just for the sake of grabbing an item, the normal fire that existed when the item was sought after was nowhere to be found.

"Number seven, six fifty!" His bid was the most recent and only ended up raising the price fifty gold. This item was much less popular than was planned. "Going once, going twice, sold for six hundred and fifty gold to number seven. Congratulations!" The auctioneer was obviously glad to be rid of the item, she was looking at it with a sliver of hate in her eyes. It had slowed the pace and energy in the auction way too much.

"Lend me your plaque here." The high priest reached out and accepted Walker's adventurer's plaque and tapped a pendant to it. There was a slight glow as the bank transfer was made. "I really do envy this, when I was a child this was still too new and only a few used it. Now it is everywhere and I can not

believe what things would be like without it." The high priest reminisced as he gave back the plaque to Walker.

Walker noticed that there were many patterns on the pendant that the high priest wore and assumed that they were symbols of his standing in the church. The church didn't have many symbols that they used to identify them. Instead it was often just the white clothing they wore and sometimes gold embroidery to show the reflection of light known for healing.

"The next item we have was grown by a hermit in the mountains. These sparkling moss have been known to increase the purifying ability of flames when making armor from poisonous materials. The starting bid for this crate of sparkling moss will be five hundred gold!" The bidders started to jump on this but to Walker it was not very interesting at all, they did not have any poisonous materials at all.

"We are never going to the swamps so we will never have any poisonous materials that need that." Remey spoke but was supported by Su. They both hated the idea of going somewhere with deep slow mud. For Su she feared she would sink in to quicksand instantly with the weight of her armor.

"Yea, I don't need it and we definitely won't go to the swamps any time soon." Gil was fine with avoiding the swamps too, it was tough for him to hunt there.

"No never!" Remey argued a bit with Gil The two of them getting in to their usual routine.

"You all may not like the sound of the swamps but there are many useful things that grow there. The monsters produce poisons that can be refined in to medicine and some plants that grow in the tough environment are actually very useful in crafting." The high priest charmed in, Walker listened and held back his one judgment. Talking on places he had never been was something he tried to avoid unless he had done some research.

"Oh, looks like that last one finished up, I wonder what's next." Walker's attention was drawn back to the stage seeing that there were a few new items on display.

"These here are shell bug spikes. They come for the desert lends past the mountains. They are rarely found here and are known for their tough exterior and nearly hollow interior. These spikes were expertly trimmed form a shell and are very easy to add to armor, shields, and even as an arrow head!

They easily hold poisons or mana crystal within them and can be reused due to their toughness. The price for a package of one hundred will be starting at five hundred gold!"

Gil had dropped his skit with Remey and was currently staring down the spikes. The comment the auctioneer had made about them easily holding a mana crystal or some form of poison greatly attracted him.

"Oho, not a bad price, we purchase those from a traveling caravan. They bring us the thin spikes from the younger shell bugs because they can be used for acupuncture or to administer medicine under the skin." The high priest was not surprised to see these at the Vip auction. The real buyer would be looking for this item on their own. It was obviously someone trying to make some quick gold before the end of the auction.

"I think those will be my arrow heads, if I can fill them how I like I think I will be able to be much more versatile in battle." Gil had thought a long time about the arrows he wanted to make with his withering wood arrow shafts. This combination fit just what he was after. "I'm sure of it, Walker please bid on those, they will be perfect." Walker did not hesitate for a second. If this was what Gil needed he would get them.

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#### Chapter 256 - 256. Old Patient

"Number seven, five hundred and fifty gold!" The auctioneer announced this lacking the same fire she normally had, this time was less impressive than all the other items. She knew this should be sold in the general auction but since a guest brought the, today she was stuck selling them. She could see that there wasn't even going to be any competition for them.

"Going once, going twice, Sold for five hundred and fifty gold to number seven!" She even dropped the congratulations at the end.

"Well that was easy, we were the second bidder and got it." Walker just looked at Gil who slowly sat back down, he had jumped up watching for any opponents to bid against them.

"Hehe, you got pretty excited for your new arrow heads oh party ranger." Remey mocked him much like Gil had before. Gil pretended not to hear her and looked off at the wall. The party had taken in a significant number of items so far and there was still a few items left from the other things left to be sold.

"The next item tonight is a very rare item indeed. This was taken from the deepest part of the deserts over the mountains, sunshine honey! This had the ability to purify one's body of the toughest of poisons and even assist in the healing of burns. The sand stripe bees that create this honey will hunt anyone that harms their colony so it is very hard to obtain. These four jars will start at seven hundred gold!" The auctioneer looked to be happier with these items and tried to push just how rare this item was.

The effects were very good and Walker could tell that it had taken root in a few of the other bidders. "Number eight, seven hundred!" The high priest had been the one to bid on this immediately. He was hyper focused on getting this honey to use in the cathedral for burn patients.

The bidding war had come back in an intense way. The high priest was being pushed higher and higher on the price and it looked like it was not going to end easily. The last bid that opposed him pushed the price for the sunshine honey to six thousand gold. Not wanting to let it get away from him he stood up and leaned on the balcony. "Seven thousand gold in the name of the church!" He raised his hand with his number. The entire hall had gone silent, the high priest had just used his trump card to obtain the sunshine honey.

"Number eight, seven thousand gold, going once, twice, sold to number eight for seven thousand gold! Congratulations!" The auctioneer was startled by the sudden interjection but she rushed the final words to make sure it was harder for anyone to oppose the high priest. She knew that the high priest and the elder that had personally appraised every item tonight were good friends. She would lose respect in the family if she did not take care of this as best as she could.

The high priest sat down with a warm smile on his face, he felt no shame at all for using the name of the church to stun every other bidder in it letting him win. "That is definitely a good strategy, remind me to have you bid on something if I am having trouble in the future." Walker spoke without looking at the high priest. The lesson had been learned, this was a way to use one's political power to their advantage and Walker would not soon forget it.

The final auction items were nothing impressive, they were all things that specific systems could use or that would not be of any help to the church or the party. They had gained a decent amount of items anyways and Walker decided that he was content. They had some extra gold in the party bank and some new things to bring back to the blacksmith for their gear. It was safe to see they had come out victorious.

"Thank you all for coming to the VIP auction this month, I wish you good luck in gaining tickets to the next and hope to see the amazing items you bring with you. Please remain for the final hour and enjoy drinks provided by the auction house." With the closing words said Walker noticed the man in the white robes moving to the exit.

"Hey I will meet you all outside, I have someone I need to talk to!" Walker ran downstairs the way they had come and reached the corridor leading to the entrance. The man in the robes was only a little ways ahead of him and Walker easily caught up. "Your bid tonight was very bold, I would expect a golem builder to have such courage." The man in the white robes stopped dead in his tracks.

"You know me from somewhere?" His voice was cold and raspy, not used to speaking to others.

"Not at all, I have a skill that gives some details. That's not important, I would assume that a man with such a system would be after some golem related materials? Like an undead golem core, a snow golem core, and even a steel golem core?" Walker was trying to hook him in to buying these cores so he held nothing back.

The white robbed man started to turn but then stopped himself. "If you ever find yourself in the mountains I will expect you to visit the high forge, ask for grey." The man rushed off and out the door. Walker could only feel like he had failed, but there was the chance that he would end up in the mountains one day. The underground city of the dwarves was there, and so he was sure it would be the high forge.

Walker stopped by the desk and entered the same room he had dropped off his items for auction. An attendant led him to all of them and he stored them away in his inventory. The rest of the party and the high priest made it to him with no problem, the high priest gave him a knowing smile.

"What was that all about? Did you think the stuff we bought would run away?" Gil was curious at what could make Walker run down the stairs so fast.

"Oh, you know just trying to talk to an interesting guest. I have a place we can visit if we ever go to the mountains." Walker left it at that and helped the high priest with his winnings. When they got outside they found that there were some young priests in training waiting for them.

"Walker, if you could please pass them my items so that they can take them back to the cathedral?" Walker did as he was asked and the priests in training eagerly took them. They had been waiting outside conversing with each other on moral values and their lessons, it had been a long wait.

"There you are kid! It would have been nice if you told me you had the balcony seats, I would have joined you all." The old man was walking briskly to the party giving Remey an intense glare.

"Well if you had told me you wanted to sit with us I could have had something arranged but guess who didn't, you." The two gave each other their normal not so nice greetings but there was no real anger or distaste in their tones.

"Ah yea old man, this is the high priest. He is very interested in those potions you made with the pure water, I am certain that if you made some more with the pure water you bought tonight then he will purchase them for the church." The high priest was surprised that this old man that had rushed up so fast, this was the master alchemist she wanted to introduce him to?

"You want me to meet the high priest?" The old man gave the high priest a once over, "You look familiar, have you ever healed a man who burned his left leg on a spilled cauldron?"

"Was this in the summer a few years back?" The old man lifted his robes showing the faint scars on his left leg.

"Been a few years but I can walk pretty well again. I have made some decent burn salves since then, I can try and make that Honey you bought in to them to stretch your supply." The two fell in to step with each other as they walked behind the party. They were becoming fast friends after remembering each other from an unfortunate accident.

"Guess I didn't need to introduce them..." Remey was a little miffed since her efforts were lost but at the end of the day they would both still have what they want so she dropped it and moved on.

Their walk took a little longer since they were limited to the pace of their new additions. Walker had been pretty quiet but still managed to match pace with Alice. The two of them walked slightly red face shoulder to shoulder.

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#### Chapter 257 - 257. Shock In The Garden

The garden was dark since the sun had long set, but there was enough rising moonlight to show off the many young sprouts. In just a small amount of time the most impressive growth were the oozing vines which were almost over a foot tall. The old man Was looking at these inquisitive;ey. He had been a master alchemist for some years and had never laid eyes on these veins. He stopped and looked about in the garden even more finding there were more things he had never seen. "What are these plants you have here? For the life of me I can't identify them, even with my alchemist's almanac skill. I should have all the herbs I have ever used or studied saved in my mind with it and I have nothing when it comes to those vines that sprout by the wall, and this tree that looks like it's about to fall over."

"Eh just some formerly extinct herbs we got from an adventure to the ancient ruins." Remey's voice was so casual and relaxed.

"Oh, just formerly exti--What! What do you mean formerly extinct!?" The old man yelled much louder than anyone had expected him capable of. Remey had already become used to knowing that their garden was home to herbs that grew nowhere else any longer. Jane was going to be sure that they would grow and become some of the nest specimens they had ever been seen.

"What can they do? What are their names? Can they be used for any potions? Are they poisonous? What part of the ancient ruins did they grow?" The old man rattled off questions with energy that he did not seem to possess earlier. His chat with the high priest had become completely forgotten.

"Calm down, we will send some over to you later. Gil's mother is growing them with us. She will be more than happy to tell you all about them. After hearing about them you might even want to come help grow them too, we do have an alchemy lab here too." This was the hook she had baited for him. She was going to make sure that the old man made trips to their mansion to not only help keep the herbs growing well but also keep the alchemy lab maintained.

"I'll be here until you can't stand me. I need to research these herbs until I have seen every possible outcome." The old man cared not for anything in return, this knowledge was more valuable than any amount of gold. They could ask for his very soul and he would give it to them. Herbs that no alchemist had laid hands on were to be sought after and hoarded by a master alchemist.

"Well we do need some help growing those angel wings, so I guess you can do as much research as you want it, you will help us out with that." Walker jumped in seeing what Remey's goal was. She was pretty sly at times, Walker would need to keep this in the back of his mind.

"Done, I can use some of them too right? There can only be me though, I won't allow any second rate alchemist near here to cause any damage or trouble to these seedlings." The old man wanted to make sure there would be no other plans to let another come near what he wanted to research.

"Yea yea, no one else is allowed to research them but for you and Gil's mother. Oh and you should send some of the oozing vines over there to the church. If I remember Walker's appraisal right they can be used for pain somehow..." Remey pretended not to remember the details which drove the old man crazy.

"Come on, I can smell the food from out here!" Gil had reached the door first and was about to leave the rest of the, behind. The second the door cracked open the smell hit them all like a wave of pleasure.

The herb and spices used to roast the vegetables and horned rabbit penetrated their sense of smell. There was not a more amazing scent in the whole world from what they all could tell. Midnight was the fastest to act and rushed toward the dining room with Onyx on her back. She would be crushed if she was not the first to sample these new tastes, she was Hilda's number one fan and taste tester.

"Would you like me to lead the way?" Walker looked at the lost Alice who was still trying to take in the views of the mansion. The strange new plants in the garden coupled with the recently cleaned entry way were enough to captivate anyone. Walker himself wondered who had done all the shining and sweeping, he would be thanking them later for their amazing work.

Alice smiled and latched on to his arm, she was just as excited for the food as well and lost herself to her emotions. Walker felt his face flush but led her toward the dining room. Remey was giggling behind him while Su held her back. Su was earning major brownie points in Walker's book.



The scents of roasted horned rabbit and vegetables only intensified until the magnificent sight of the table took their full attention. Hilda had outdone herself roasting the entire horned rabbit. It was the center of the table, all the sides of roasted vegetables and fresh fruits added to the feast. Glistening glazed fruits were placed on top of cream filled tart shells. The apple pies that Hilda was famous for were made in to small personal sizes for everyone to enjoy. There were even multiple versions of baked quiche in different pans, this was definitely multiple successful experiments she wanted to show off. The scene was much like one would expect from a mansion in the upper tier housing. Any noble would be proud to call this meal theirs.

"Ah! You're earlier than I expected, let me go get the drinks I made. Gerret, go greet our guests!" Hilda yelled at her husband to get him on the move. Su's Mother and Father also stood to greet the high priest and the master alchemist that had come with them. The flurry of greetings did not seem to end as Gil's parents joined in. This left the party and Alice out of the loop, it was a typical adult move at any party or event.

Claiming their seats Walker and Alice chose seats towards the end of the table closest to the fire place where Midnight and Onyx had already laid claim to a platter of food. Walker still thought it strange that Onyx was eating when he could get what he needed from light elemental mana but he had most likely been infected by Midnight. She could convince even those on the strictest diets to give in and eat something delicious.

"Here you all go, my friend makes the most wonderful peach tea blend. Just a couple hours of steaming and then chilling it down with some honey and you have a refreshing beverage." She poured glasses for everyone accompanied by a lemon slice. Walker was caught in awe to see that she was wearing a dress instead of her normal kitchen attire.

"Wait, father, did you comb your hair?" Garret was sticking out like a sore thumb. The man never combed his hair and would usually fight tooth and nail to let his bed head be. Hilda had never been successful but for one or two times in getting him to comb it, their wedding day and the day that he met her parents. This would be the famous third time he had ever properly combed his hair.

"What? No it must have been this way when I woke up today." Garret avoided the subject telling Walker everything he needed to know. His mother must have used some tricks to get him to comb it.

"Now tonight we have some delightful guests. Master alchemist, and high priest welcome to our home the former Amethyst family mansion. Alice welcome as well, feel free to enjoy a tour after, I prepared

some cocktails for after dinner." Hilda had thought of everything. There was the full feast in front of them all made to perfection and then the dessert which was her best work. On top of that she had managed to get the beverages from a friend and made a cocktail. Walker was tempted to ask for a sip but knew that he was still too young to drink in the kingdom.

"Ah man, that's what we should have tried while in the demi-human kingdom, one can drink there as soon as the turn fifteen. Here we need to be eighteen." Gil facepalmed while realizing they had missed an opportunity that they did not have at home. Naturally his mother heard this and a smack to the back of the head solved his desire to try alcohol.

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#### Chapter 258 - 258. Reading The Night Away

The table was much more lively than usual, the old man was picking Jane's brain for all the knowledge on the new plants they were growing. The details she had were better than any book Walker had read. With her skills she was able to take away growth rates and nutrients needed for each sprout she saw, it was the farmers version of an appraisal skill. With every small detail learned it was almost compared to an earth shaking presentation for the old man. There was no doubt in anyone's mind that he would be spending a very large portion of his time at the mansion, and more specifically in the garden. With the way Jane acted it would seem she had found herself a new friend. The two would be the perfect gardening duo.

When Gil's father chimed in about bringing natural herbs for the forest he was bombarded by the demands of the two. He had stepped in to a dangerous trap of fulfilling their orders. He almost wished he had taken the opportunity to run away and hide before they realized he would go there to hunt and gather.

Hilda and Garret had become intertwined in the conversation with the high priest and Su's parents. Since Su's mother had seen so many different healers she was well acquainted with the church and some of their more adventurous healers. The high priest took advantage of this and asked for every detail from the past so he could evaluate their growth since they last saw their patient. He was dead set on making sure that those wandering healers that rarely returned to the church for reports or training were still doing their best. He was much more overprotective than they had expected.

"Since they are going to be talking all night do you want the grand tour?" Alice was all smiles when she heard that Walker was willing to give her a tour. She had only really been in the cathedral and a few other nobles' houses due to healing. She had never really been a guest somewhere.

"Then let's get on our way." Gil made kissing faces at Walker which made Su accidentally elbow him. Walker gave Su a smile knowing that he owed her one.

Walker's main destination was the library since it was the most impressive room to him in the mansion. He could not wait for the garden to take root and become the wondrous walking path that he could show off as well. He decided that the forge and alchemist lab were not worth the trip either. Alice had never shown interest that he knew of in either, although it may be something cool to show her when the old man had his way with their lab. He did not add the training field in to the tour either, mostly because it was not much to see at night and he was afraid that they may accidentally disturb the growing spirit lotus.

"This is our library, it took some time to organize it but there are enough books to keep someone busy for a lifetime!" Walker held out his arms wide as he entered the door first. The scene was astounding to the average person who would rarely see many books in one place let alone enough to make up a library. Alice approached the first shelf she saw and started her search through things. "You know, I am the one who organized it so if you want something on history, light elemental mana, monster, forging, anything you just need to ask." Walker wanted to get her to say something too, her voice was so rare that he had started to yearn for it.

Alice just gave him a look and kept on looking through the shelf she was on. With some small effort she was looking through each and every single title to see what they were about. Traveled from shelf to shelf eventually figuring out the organization of their books and was soon on the second floor checking through the books on the arts. She was taking a stack of five books all on the art of singing and performing. "Ah I should have guessed you would be after those." Walker spoke this out loud, she was a songstress after all and it was part of her system to sing. She would obviously want to learn more about singing. These books that she had not seen before would make her develop new ideas for songs and even new techniques.

Walker found a book on the uses of water in healing. He decided that since he was going in to a forest he may as well start to develop his water , the fact that it could heal and also attack would widen his variety of useful skills for all situations. He also would have some time between helping in the forge so he wanted to make the best of his time. This would be an ideal prelude to his next challenge which would be to learn to use a war hammer in battle.

The two sat down on one of the couches that were in the library for reading, there was not much light so Walker used the yellow light orb to give them a soft glow to read in. The two became absorbed in their books soon falling asleep where they sat. Not a single person came to disturb them.

Walker woke up to a heavy feeling on his shoulder, the sun had started to push through the window as it rose illuminating the library in all its glory. Walker tried to move his arm to wipe the sleep from his eyes but found it to be trapped. He looked down finding that a sleeping Alice was snoring ever so slightly while on top of his arm and shoulder. The two had fallen asleep reading, Walker was frozen. He had never been in such a situation and was completely unable to move for fear he would wake Alice up.

He sat there completely frozen but captivated by the light coming through the window and resting on Alice's face. He swore that there was not a more beautiful sight in the world. The sun rose slowly but soon reached Alice's eyes causing her to stir. She moved trying to get away from it but realized something was off about where she lay. She opened her eyes and found Walker smiling like a fool looking at her where she lay; on his shoulder.

She pushed up embarrassed of where she was and how she had slept, "emm good morning..." Walker had nothing else to say to break through the awkward morning. Alice lightly tapped his arm in response to this. She was redder than a tomato. The two eventually roused themselves and started their way to the dining hall for breakfast.

"Hey look the two bookworms finally got out of the library! Did you manage to read every book there in one night?" Gil was the first to see them enter the dining hall. The high priest sat with Hilda drinking tea and chatting about food.

"Walker, I was just talking with the high priest on some possible baked goods I could send over to the cathedral to help those with upset stomachs after they are healed. I will have you take them back tomorrow for them." This was the first on a list of chores that were already starting.

Walker did not see this as a bad thing though, it would be a good excuse to help out and heal a few people. Plus he was sure that Su would want to go as well, she had made a few friends while there the last time. "If you want to bring the books you didn't finish reading with you I don't mind. You will make more use of them than if they would be when sitting here." Alice nodded very happy with this proposal. She had fallen asleep halfway through her first book and still wanted to read the others she had taken for the shelves.

"Should I take it they had some interesting books on singing?" The high priest knew his adoptive daughter well. She had long memorized every single book of song in the entire cathedral and always hunger for more. Since she was at risk of using up her mana if she talked all the time she spent more time reading and even writing her own songs. The fact that she could not speak freely was a blessing in this way, she had branched out in to many more creative outlets than a child normally would.

Alice was nodding her head so much so that Walker wondered if it was properly attached. "Well then you are welcome to visit any time, even if this one is off on some adventure." Hilda smiled a bit knowing that she could get the girl alone and learn some more about her. She would be blind to miss the fact that Walker was treating her differently than others.

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#### Chapter 259 - 259. Splitting Stone

The high priest soon was saying his goodbyes along with Alice, the two were expected at the cathedral for the normal healing. Expecting them to stay longer would just end up hurting others in the long run. Not wanting to make them feel Guilty Walker saw them out. The high priest was the first out the door, "I will be coming again to visit another time. I think that in time your garden will be a wonderful place to meditate and rest my old joints." He was very impressed with the way it was already mapped out and was eager to see the final beauty.

Alice lingered slightly at the door with Walker, she was conflicted and obviously did not want to leave, but her responsibility was to the church. She had practiced and trained herself for years for the goal of helping others and she would not give it up so easily. "I will bring the books you were reading by tomorrow for sure, and we will stay to help with some healing.. This made her cheer up, "Oh and before you leave." Walker pulled the rainbow silver bracelet from his inventory. He smoothly grabbed Alice's hand and slid the bracelet on.

She nearly teared up since she was overjoyed at the first gift she had gotten from someone who was not trying to pay for healing or from the high priest. "Thank you, I love it." She spoke the most Walker had ever heard from her. The sweet and smooth voice making the sunlight dance with a few rainbows. Walker was almost captivated by the scene but before he could respond she had kissed him on the cheek and ran to meet the high priest's pace.

Walker was stunned and stood at the door for a decent portion of time. He had never had such a thing happen and his emotions were in turmoil. Part of him wanted to rush after her again while another part wanted to curl up and hide away in happiness. Tomorrow could not come soon enough, he would need to try very hard to rush himself to bring the books he had promised her to the cathedral. With this on his mind he started off through the mansion to make sure that he told Su about his plans, he was sure she would go with him.

"Leader, what are you running around for?" Su had just come out of her mother's room after checking in with her which was a long time habit of hers. She was doing it less often but still fell in to the same old routines at times.

"Ah, well I wanted to know if you would like to head to the cathedral tomorrow to help with the healing? I need to bring Alice some books too so I thought it would work out pretty well." Walker was slightly red faced but was not as embarrassed to be more open to the always supportive Su.

"Of course, they always need extra hands to get everyone healed. We can do so much to help them and since we have the time it is only right that we do. We should be bringing Gil and Remey too, they need to act a little more like heroes or else we two will be the only ones that the kingdom knows....Well Midnight should come too, but i think she might not be as helpful." Su had her worries that Midnight would just find a warm place to curl up and nap.

"You never know some of the elderly there may find her adorable. If they bring her any food she will do whatever they ask of her. Plus how many people can say they have seen a dragon in their lives? Just having her there would be something to take away their pain with distractions." Walker made some good points that it would still be beneficial overall to bring the whole party. "Yea that settles it we are going to bring everyone whether they like it or not." Walker was determined. Everyone would be helping and he would be able to complete the task he wanted to get done.

"By the way, do you need me to come with my designs and the materials for my shields? I really want to try and help if I can." Su had been finishing up her design ideas and had a much more clear vision of the shields she would be using. She just needed to convey the, to the wandering blacksmith who they were all sure was asleep in the forge from tweaking things all night, he was a perfectionist.

"Ah, I almost forgot! Let's bring him the materials we bought, If you can go get Gil and Remey we can start crafting or at least make design changes. The steel worm skin is so big that i think we will be able to use it for more than just Remey's armor." Su was happy with this idea and in her excitement went on

her mission to find the other two. She had a sneaking suspicion that Gil was still asleep and that Remey was off trying to punch something.

Walker went down to the front and around the house to the forge. There was a small amount of smoke rising from the smokestack which showed that the forge was already heated and ready. "You must have a sixth sense to know that I was on the way." Walker announced his arrival only to find that the wandering blacksmith had cleared the table for the new materials Walker was bringing with him. "First we have this crate of fifty shell bug spikes, Gil wants to make arrowheads with them. I think he will ask you to make some adjustments so that they can more easily hold some paralyzing poisons or some elemental crystals."

Walker put the crate down on the table and the wandering blacksmith did not wait even a beat to open it and start to look at them. He pulled out six of them and tossed them in to a pile on the ground. They had small cracks and one was even missing a point. With just a glance he had taken out the worst parts. "This is a dusk stone, if I can ask you to split it in half so I can deliver half to the high priest tomorrow and keep the other half for Onyx to use to absorb some light elemental mana I would really appreciate it. I thought you would have more fine tuned skills to make it happen without breaking it completely." The wandering blacksmith added to this and was more than happy to help in this matter. He also decided he would make a few adjustments while at it.

Walker pulled the bronze dragon scales and Orichalcum ore out of his inventory placing them down as well, the wandering blacksmith did not flinch as he already knew of these materials. He had planned on using them the entire time and was more interested in what other new material there was.

Walker started to pull the forty foot long steel worm skin from his inventory soliciting an immediate reaction from the wandering blacksmith. With some help and a little bit of effort the entire skin was rolled up and placed at the foot of the work table. The two of them were looking at their materials. The wandering blacksmith had poked and prodded the steel worm skin a few times seemingly happy with the item. He saw that it was strong and flexible which would make it perfect for the conjoining parts of armors.

The wandering Blacksmith took some time to analyze each piece of the materials he had at hand. As part of his job he needed to make sure that any imperfections or damaged materials were not used or were fixed in a way that would not put the final product at jeopardy. He was extremely careful in his actions and would every once in a while grab a nearby tool to scrape or cut away a piece of the steel skin.

Once he had looked over every material he took hold of the dusk stone and a chisel. With a hammer he placed the chisel on the stone and swung his hammer being careful with his force, One swing and the dusk stone spit in a perfect half. The inside was smooth and had a very small amount of glow to it. Walker was amazed at the skill the wandering blacksmith used to make the stone split in two so perfectly. With the two halves separated he was able to take some other tools and started to carve them in to shape. The pieces and dust that came off from his work were put in to a small dish he had and would be used for other things later. Walker watched the speed of his hands trim and shape the dusk stone halves in to perfect shapes. They both now looked like pieces of perfectly shiny black stones. Onyx was sure to be happier with this than what they had before.

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#### Chapter 260 - 260. Ordering Gear

"Walker, I found them!" Su yelled for Walker as she came around and in to the forge. She took in the sight of all their materials and eagerly held out another paper with ideas and design to the wandering blacksmith. He grabbed them with excitement plain on his face. He had been waiting to see the finalized ideas so he could make their dreams in to realities. The challenged that were presented to him in this way were his reason for smithing.

"The two shields I am looking at should be balanced and easy to move. But they need to be strong against and physical attacks. I can't have them just blocking though they need to be able to deflect. If I need to hit an opponent then I want the bottom to be pointed, I can also use that to hold myself in the ground to stop some push back. No spikes, what if I hold up my party with them?" Su could no longer contain her excitement and rambled off everything she had bottled up until now.

"Walker? Su?" Gil and Remey called for the to of them, while coming in to the forge in a slightly curious and dazed state. " Why is Su so energetic, she told us to get ready and come to the forge as soon as possible." Gil was still half asleep trying to make sense of why he was dragged from bed when he wanted to stay there all day to relax.

"Did you two forget that after our trip to the auction we would need to finalize out gear decisions and start to forge them? Our blacksmith friend here needs to hear and see the final details so he can start making the best of the best." The wandering blacksmith had easily absorbed the ideas from Su and was already sitting waiting for the other two.



"Yes, I should have known it was time to get my new gloves and armor!" Remey had nearly forgotten but having the wave of memory come over her she was more energized than anyone else had been, the only person who rivaled her energy was Su who rarely lost her normal cool and collected state. "Alright so my gloves need to be able to cover up to my elbow so when I use my elbow to attack they don't get all cut up. Then the gloves need to be thinner here so my spiked crystal knuckles are comfortable. I really don't care what my armor looks like as long as it is flexible and strong. If I can't stretch out when I land hits then I will be slow and if I am slow I will die. So make sure it is flex-i-ble." Remey enunciated every syllable in the word flexible to make her point.

The wandering blacksmith pointed towards the steel worm skin and to one of the bronze dragon scales. Remey understood that he was planning on using both of those in her gloves and new armor so she had no arguments. Out of everyone she was the least specific when it came to design. Gil was going to be the most challenging.

He was still waking himself up but was starting to feed off the energy and momentum of the others. "These spikes are perfect for arrow heads but I can't just attach them as they are. I can put the parts together myself and fill the arrow with what I need but the insides of those spikes aren't right. There are still some pieces of shell that keep me from putting a mana crystal in them and there is nothing to keep the poison I use there. So basically I need you to develop a metal that can coat the back half of each spike and seal them. From there I need a way to fill them easily, basically an opening and shutting method." Gil was not overly detailed but he knew exactly what he wanted. The wandering blacksmith felt that this was one of the most challenging requests he had gotten recently and was ready to jump on it.

His eyes turned to Walker who was standing in waiting with his own ideas. "I just want a hammer, well three. One large hammer for smashing, it needs a pointed end too so that I can pierce something too. Also it should have balance. Then I need two smaller hammers that can be used for smithing or battle. I plan on learning some basic repair skills if I can along with a dual wielding skill. I already want to practice with dual wielded swords so I think trying out hammers could be interesting. Other than that I will ask our guild manager to have some steel, iron, and other metals ingots sent here. I need some basic weapons of your choice so I can expand my armory and skills." Walker had a fairly tall order.

The amount of items the wandering blacksmith had free reign over was much more than his normal clientele would give him. This was enough work to keep him busy for weeks, he could jump in to forging with his full being and do what he did best, this was just as good as his training journeys where he would spend weeks just trying out new things.

With his ideas set he grabbed at a pile of paper on the worktable and started to draw out very detailed diagrams. There were lists of materials next to each party that he would be needing and their amounts.

This looked to be a list for Walker to use when he would make some more purchases. It was understandable that they would need more since they could not use only the materials they had gathered. The materials were just the catalysts to make the gear stronger and tougher.

"Oh and before I forget, I have a bunch of Midnight's baby scales that she shed when her adult scales started to grow in. She still has some to lose but I figure these ones might come in useful here?" Walker pulled out an armful of the baby scales.

Dropping his drawn out designs and plans the wandering blacksmith grabbed at the scales turning them over and over in his hands. What the party did not know but the wandering blacksmith did was that these were some of the best things they could have given him just now. These baby scales may not be good for the base of any gear, but they would make a great outer coating to make the durability skyrocket. Dragon scales also make their gear easier to repair in the future since the baby dragon scales lent to the ability for other metals to take on attributes of the materials that were added.

Seeing how happy the wandering blacksmith was Walker happily handed him the majority of the shed scales that the party had collected. "Alright, we will leave you to it. Just leave the list on the table and I will take it in the morning when I go to the cathedral." The wandering blacksmith didn't even hear a word of this. He just kept going on with his work completely immersed in it.

"By the way, we are all going to the cathedral to volunteer tomorrow. I think we will have time to eat breakfast and relax in the morning so don't worry." Walker dropped this on Remey and Gil who wanted to argue but were stopped by the look Su was giving them. Gil may technically have been the second in command when it came to the party but since Su had the calm and cool logic approach no one in the party could ever go against her. This was final and the other three would just need to accept it.

The four of them headed inside and found that Midnight and Onyx were occupying their usual spot in front of the fire within the dining hall. The two had been there since last night and showed no sign of moving anytime soon. Walker decided it was fine to leave them be for a while. "So who wants to come bug the old man with me? He spent the entire night bothering your mom Gil. Now he's taken up residence in the alchemist lab preparing for when he can use some of the plants."

"I will pass this time. I am not very good with potions and can't help much. I don't want to be a burden." Su knew where her strengths were.

"Same, I am better off at gathering herbs than making them in to anything. End of the day I would just be there to be there. I will practice some of my dagger skills instead. Ah! Wait a dagger, I forgot to ask

for a dagger." Gil ran off back to the forge to speak to the wandering blacksmith about making a dagger for him. He had completely been caught up in the thoughts of the arrow heads that would be made that he forgot one of his own personal goals for getting stronger.

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