

Shota 351

Chapter 351 Learning About Runes (3)

I just shook my head and said, "I was just lucky enough to chance upon these runes and the technique to engrave them. I don't have any other runes."

All of the dwarves looked at me with narrowed eyes as if they didn't believe me.

After all, I had taken out these amazing runes, so it wouldn't be strange if I could take out a few more.

But I wasn't going to just give them everything that I had.

They were my future trump cards and it wouldn't be good to take them out early.

Seeing that I didn't react at all even with all of them staring at me, the dwarves had no choice but to give up.

Since they couldn't get more out of me, they just went back to the rune.

They asked me all kinds of different questions, but there were some that I didn't answer deliberately.

Unlike before, rune smithing was something that had great potential and it wasn't something that I wanted to give them that easily.

Alloys would eventually be discovered on their own, but rune smithing was impossible to develop unless they found that thing...

In a few years, the dwarves would open up some ruins that had a book on runes. That would allow them to decode and learn the rune language, which would give them the ability to develop runes on their own.

I was even considering taking that book for my own since I knew exactly where it was and how to get to it...but until the situation had settled and I had more free time, it wouldn't be time to get it yet.

After all, even if I did get it, it would just be taken by me since I wasn't strong enough right now to defend it.

So it was better not to open that can of worms.

After answering their questions for a bit, I gave a live demonstration.

They brought over the pieces of the mithril armour that had been cut earlier and after cutting it a bit more, they put two separate pieces down on the table in front of me.

First, I just used the dagger alone to cut through the chunk of mithril armour held by a single dwarf hand.

There was no resistance at first, but then the dagger was slowly stopped by the mithril armour.

It still made a bigger gash than the gash that the Dwarven King had made with his sword which made him reveal an awkward smile.

It seemed that even without the runes, he still would have lost this forging duel.

This really put into perspective just how strong the alloys I had introduced were.

Then for the second chunk of the mithril armour, I used a bit of to activate the sharpness rune on the hilt and just that sharpness rune alone. There was only a single rune that was glowing on this dagger as I held it over that chunk of mithril armour.

Then in one swift motion, I brought the dagger down on the chunk of mithril armour.

There was no resistance at all from that mithril armour as the dagger cut right through it.

Then...it cut right through the table as well since I didn't stop it in time.

The table split in half and fell apart as the dwarves moved back to avoid it. I think you should take a look at

The dwarf that had been holding the piece of mithril armour to supply it with quickly released it out of fear that his hand would be cut as well.

There was a loud sound as everything just fell to the ground.

After that...the dwarves just looked on in shock.

They looked back and forth between the table on the ground and the dagger in my hand with the same shocked looks on their faces.

It was as if they didn't know what to make of this...until one dwarf said.

"How incredible this is..."

As soon as he said this, all of the dwarves suddenly rushed forward as if they wanted to grab the knife and examine it, but I quickly moved away from them.

After all, I still had the rune activated and if they grabbed it, they might be cut by it.

The dwarves revealed a bitter look at first, but then they realized what I was doing and stopped moving forward.

Instead they quickly brought over another table for me to put the dagger down.

When I saw this, I let out a sigh of relief and put the dagger on the table before backing away.

I knew what was about to happen, so it was better to evacuate before it did happen.

As expected, they all started fighting over the dagger.

They all wanted to pick it up and test its power with the rune activated, so this time an actual fight broke out between the dwarves.

But once again, the Dwarven King came in and took the dagger from them.

The title of Dwarven King wasn't an empty one as he easily took the dagger from them with his strength. Then with his prestige, they had no choice but to give up and let him test it for them.

The Dwarven King held the dagger in his hand and brought it up in front of his eyes to look at it carefully.

As he did, he slowly injected a bit of mana into the dagger and lit up the first rune.

He brought his other hand up to the blade of the dagger and reached a finger towards it.

Before his finger could even touch the blade of the dagger, there was a cut that appeared on his finger and a drop of his blood fell onto the dagger.

The Dwarven King didn't react at all to this and just said with a smile on his face, "Beautiful. This truly is a beautiful work of art."

He immediately turned to me and asked, "How much for this blade?"

As soon as the other dwarves heard this, they all acted like they had been woken up by something.

After a moment of being stunned, they quickly surrounded me and offering me prices for this dagger without a single trace of respect for the Dwarven King.

Chapter 352 Trading with the dwarves (1)

The Dwarven King's voice suddenly cut through the voices around me.

"I'll give you an iron mine and a copper mine."

When he said this, all of the dwarves couldn't help looking at the Dwarven King in shock.

The things that they had offered were all material things and not a single one of them offered mines like the Dwarven King did.

After all, they knew that it would be bad for their Dwarven Kingdom if they gave up resources like this.

There were many that quickly turned around and surrounded the Dwarven King to try persuading him against this.

However...just like before, after they talked for a few minutes, all of the dwarves suddenly seemed convinced.

They all just turned to look at me, as if they were waiting for my response.

I could already feel the glaring gazes coming from behind me, almost as if they were forcing me to accept this deal.

However, there were other things that were still on my mind.

After all, even if I accepted this deal, there was the matter of workers that needed to be solved. A mine that didn't have any workers didn't have any value since there was no way to get the ores out of the ground.

With a cough, I said, "I am interested in this offer, but I have to ask something first."

The Dwarven King was surprised to be asked this since he had thought that Zwein as a human would accept this deal without much fuss. But after giving a cough, he asked, "What's your question?"

I took a deep breath and asked, "Can our people come and work in the mines?"

The Dwarven King and the other dwarves were naturally surprised to be asked this.

But after knitting their brows in thought for a bit, they understood why he had asked this question.

Mines without workers had no value at all, so if he couldn't bring workers to work in this mine, there was no reason to take it.

But...workers that a human brought...would naturally also be humans.

For the Dwarven Kingdom to allow these human workers in...was naturally a very bad idea.

It would be fine if they were any other race, but humans really were bad for their Dwarven Kingdom.

There were many humans that surrounded them and many humans that wanted to take their land from them.

This had festered anti human feelings among the dwarves.

So this had created a group of dwarves that had very strong anti human sentiments and would act radically if humans were found in the Dwarven Kingdom.

But before that...it wasn't good for them to let humans in their Dwarven Kingdom in the first place since there was plenty of information that the humans could steal from them.

Even if Zwein didn't want to steal information, that didn't mean that there weren't other humans who didn't.

They would be able to use this job at the mine as a way to steal information from their Dwarven Kingdom.

So in the end, the Dwarven King shook his head and said, "Unfortunately, we can't allow this."

I had already expected this, but that just makes it more clear on what I should do. There was no reason for me to accept this since there would be nothing that I could do with these mines.

It was better to just buy the ores that we needed instead of taking the mines.

I could feel the disappointment coming from behind me, but there was nothing that I could do about this.

Or at least that was what I thought.

"But I can help you find workers among the dwarves for the mine." The Dwarven King said after a long silence.

I couldn't help looking at him with a shocked look when I heard this.

After all, I never thought that he would propose something like this.

I had thought that the last thing that dwarves would want to do is work for the humans, but now that didn't seem to be the case since even the Dwarven King was suggesting it.

I didn't keep looking at the Dwarven King and instead looked at the dwarves around him.

These were his close advisors, so if this was just a whim from him, they wouldn't let him get away with it.

But the fact that they didn't say anything to oppose this meant...that it was actually possible.

Would dwarves actually work for humans?

Seeing the shocked look that I had, the Dwarven King changed the topic again to what he cared about the most.

"I heard that you brought some alcohol to our kingdom?"

The moment that he said this, the eyes of the other dwarves also lit up.

There was only a single dwarf who revealed an ugly expression when he heard this.

Ivar revealed a very bitter look when he heard this.

After all, he had made sure not to include this matter in his report to the Dwarven King...

So how had he found out?

I couldn't help revealing a faint smile when I heard this.

I had already seen the effect that good wine would have on dwarves, so I knew that this must be what he had been after all along with this.

So I nodded to Haley who had caught my sign and she went to bring in the thing that we had brought along.

This was a royal audience, so it wasn't as if we could just bring whatever we wanted in.

But after letting the guards get a sip of it...they didn't stop us.

I said with a smile, "Indeed, I have brought some fine wine with me."

Ivar's face sank when he heard this, but all I could do was look at him with an apologetic look.

The other side was the Dwarven King, so it wasn't as if there was anything I could do here.

When Haley came back, the scent of alcohol immediately filled the air and all of the dwarves couldn't help turning in her direction.

Chapter 353 Trading with the dwarves (2)

As they watched Haley walk over, all of the dwarves couldn't help licking their lips.

But of course, it wasn't out of lust.

It was because they were looking at the bottle that was in her hand.

This was the bottle that the smell of alcohol was coming from.

Based on the smell that came out, they could tell that the alcohol that Haley was bringing in was very good alcohol.

Even for people of their position, this was alcohol that they rarely had the chance to drink.

After all, there were few humans that could even trade in the Dwarven Kingdom in the first place.

It wasn't that there weren't humans that came, it was just that few humans brought quality goods.

The humans thought that they could trick the dwarves with inferior products, but of course the dwarves had sharp eyes as craftsmen. Even when it came to wine, the dwarves had such sharp noses that they could tell the difference with a single sniff.

That was just how much dedication they had with both.

So it was rare for them to have quality products come into the Dwarven Kingdom.

Of course, the other side of the coin was...the humans didn't want to give the dwarves good products.

There was still the matter of racism between the two sides, so the humans never treated the dwarves properly...

It was different when the humans brought quality goods, but the humans didn't learn from their mistakes and kept looking down on the dwarves.

Sincerity begets sincerity, but it's hard to have sincerity when one's eyes are clouded with bigotry.

They all seemed like they wanted to rush at her to take the bottle out of her hand, but they were able to keep this bit of restraint.

But the look in their eyes...were putting pressure on her, like they were telling her to go faster.

With a secret bitter smile, Haley started moving a bit faster.

However, as she came closer, the dwarves suddenly realized a problem.

There were only so many of them, so...how would they split it?

They knew that it was impossible for them to get the entire bottle, but even a cup might be hard with how many there were.

Half a cup or a quarter of a cup was just too little for them to enjoy themselves, so they all looked at each other as if they were plotting on how to get more alcohol for themselves.

The Dwarven King was no exception, but he did have the advantage of being the Dwarven King, so he was less worried.

It was those that had lower positions that had to worry about how to claim their cup of alcohol.

After glaring at each other for a bit, one of the dwarves made their move.

"As the minister of trade affairs, how about I have a taste first? Since we will be trading for alcohol with the humans, I should make sure that it's up to standard."

This dwarf tried to come forward, but the moment that he did, he was immediately stopped by the two beside him. At the same time, there were several other dwarves that had come forward to block him.

"Minister of trade affairs? All you do is count the ores we trade each year and you're trying to make yourself sound so important. You think that we'll let you get ahead of us?"

Another dwarf then said, "Ahem, since I am the minister of foreign affairs, I think that I should be the one to test this since this will determine our future relations with the humans."

Once again, he was immediately stopped by the dwarves around him.

It seemed that none of them would yield a single inch when it came to this alcohol.

While they were still civil, it seemed like they were about to start fighting with what they said.

"What foreign affairs? All you do is sit around and check the borders once in a while. You don't even go to the human countries to talk to them."

"Agriculture? How is that even related to this?"

"Finances? You think that we don't have enough money to buy the alcohol ourselves?"

As Haley came closer to the table they were all around, she really couldn't help revealing an even more bitter smile. She didn't even bother hiding it this time since she knew that it didn't matter.

They were just too focused to even pay attention to her.

But...she also knew that she was in trouble.

Since she was the one that brought the alcohol, it would fall onto her to divide it.

It was clear that the dwarves wouldn't be able to figure this out themselves, so in the end...they would rely on her.

She of course couldn't take one side over the other since that would mean offending people and that was the last thing that she could do as a merchant.

So this really put her in a bad position.

The captain of the guards had followed her in with cups in hand.

He didn't need to come, but he had thought that he would be able to scrounge a bit of alcohol if he came with her.

But now...that seemed like a futile thought.

There was no way that he would be able to get any with so many of them competing.

The Dwarven King had been silent the entire time, as if what they were saying didn't bother him at all.

It was only when Haley reached the table that he suddenly slapped his hand down and directed their attention to him.

In a firm voice, he said, "Enough!"

All of them fell silent when he said this.

Seeing that they were all silently looking at him, the Dwarven King calmly said, "There's no reason to fight over this. We'll solve this the old way."

When the dwarves heard this, they all couldn't help revealing smiles before looking at each other with competitive looks.

It seemed that they were quite used to this already.

Chapter 354 Trading with the dwarves (3)

But after the captain of the guard put the cups on the table, the Dwarven King grabbed one of them before anyone could react.

He said with a smile on his face, "Of course, I won't participate, so one of these cups will be mine."

All of the dwarves look at the Dwarven King like they thought that he was shameless, but not a single one of them stopped him.

They gave him this respect at the very least that they didn't try to take the cup away from him.

Or it was that they didn't want to waste the energy fighting him for this.

Instead, they looked at each other with competitive looks before bringing a hand up above the table.

They all glared at each other before raising their hands.

Then they said, "Rock, paper, scissors."

They moved their hands up and down before finally releasing either rock, paper, or scissors.

Even though they acted so seriously, they were using rock, paper, scissors to decide this...

It seemed a bit too serious for just rock, paper, scissors. It was almost as if they were deciding which one of them would be dying...

But for the ones that did lose, they acted like they did die.

After all, they would be missing out on this delicious wine which was like a death sentence for them.

At the very least, they didn't complain about the results of the game.

It took a few minutes, but they were finally able to decide who would be partaking in the alcohol.

The ones that had cups in their hands revealed triumphant looks while the ones that didn't have cups in their hands looked like they had just lost everything.

Haley saw that they had all settled down, so she brought the bottle forward to pour for them.

But before she could, she was stopped by the dwarves with the cups.

They had her put the bottle on the table before they all carefully poured out the alcohol inside into their cups. With how careful they were, they were able to make sure that each cup had just the same amount of alcohol in it.

It was surprising when these cups were lined up since the fill line was perfectly the same.

This was the skill that they had as dwarven craftsmen, their fingers didn't tremble even in the slightest when pouring the alcohol, allowing for such perfect distribution.

Once the cups had been filled, the ones that had cups brought the cups up in front of them and took a deep sniff of the alcohol.

Then instead of chugging it like one might think, they took a small sip of the alcohol.

This was completely different from when we gave Ivar and his family a taste test.

But that situation was also different since there were far less of them and there had been more alcohol available then.

After taking a few sips, the dwarves that had cups lowered their heads.

The other dwarves looked concerned seeing this, but they didn't have time to overthink it.

The dwarves with cups suddenly looked up and said, "Good! Good wine!"

All of the other dwarves were surprised to hear this, but then they revealed even more regretful looks.

After all, they knew what qualified as good wine to these compatriots of theirs and since they were saying it with such force, it was clear that this was very good alcohol.

They looked like they had missed the opportunity of a lifetime.

Haley just revealed a faint smile before reaching into her bag to pull out another bottle.

There were only a few dwarves that noticed this at first, but then they immediately turned to look at her when they realized that the scent of alcohol in the air became stronger.

Their eyes immediately fell onto the bottle in her hand.

One dwarf pointed at it and slowly asked, "Is...Is that...?"

Haley gave a nod in response.

She had wanted to use this second bottle to make a bigger impression, but she had been scared to bring it out since she had thought that it would make the dwarves angry that she had hid it.

But seeing the looks on their faces, she knew that this was the right time.

As she had expected, the dwarves immediately revealed happy smiles and snatched the cups from the hands of their compatriots before taking the bottle from Haley.

The dwarves just happily enjoyed their alcohol without caring about Haley at all.

All of them had looks of enjoyment on their faces as they drank.

But those looks quickly disappeared when they realized that there was no more alcohol left.

There were only two bottles and there were a bunch of dwarves here that could drink, so naturally the two bottles didn't last long. It was just enough for each dwarf to get a single cup before running out.

Once they had finished off the two bottles, they immediately turned to Haley as if wondering if there was more.

But this time, Haley didn't take anything else out.

This was all that she had brought since there was strict security and there was the amount that she had used to bribe the guards.

After they had finished drinking, Haley said, "I'm sure that you can all tell that this is fine wine that we've brought with us."

The dwarves easily nodded in agreement to this as a trace of reminiscence appeared on their faces.

Haley was very satisfied seeing this as she knew that her plan had worked.

So she said, "Now, let's talk about the price of this alcohol. We can bring more, but I want to know what you are willing to pay for it."

The Dwarven King just calmly said, "What do you want?"

This time, Haley couldn't remain calm as she revealed a surprised look.

She looked at the Dwarven King and was surprised to find that he was being serious.

For a merchant like her who was used to dealing with people that used sly tricks, it caught her off guard when someone was being direct with her like this.

But she was a professional merchant, so she recovered quickly before saying, "Well..."

Chapter 355 Banquet

The negotiations went smoothly because of how capable Haley was.

She didn't have a problem negotiating the prices with her skills and she even got much more than she had even expected, so she was all smiles in the end.

At the same time, she also made sure to negotiate all of the terms needed to hire dwarven workers for the mine.

That was also an important matter for the future, so she needed to make sure that it was all taken care of beforehand.

Once this was all done, the Dwarven King said, "Let's go."

We were all confused when we heard this and didn't follow him as he headed out.

Seeing the confused looks on our faces, the Dwarven King explained, "A banquet has already been prepared to welcome all of you. Let's go, the dishes are getting cold."

We couldn't help being surprised hearing this, but we did follow him this time.

It seemed that from the very beginning, the Dwarven King had been planning on treating us with kindness.

Of course...I knew that there was a certain limit to that kindness before all of this happened.

If I hadn't shown him my cards...then he wouldn't have given us all of this.

There would be no mentions of mines or being able to hire dwarven workers. At most, it would have just been a permit to trade in ores with the dwarves.

So I was glad that I decided to go along with it.

After all, I had come up with a new plan during all of this.

Just in case it didn't work out in the human kingdom, it would be possible to come here.

I would have mines to rely on, the only thing that I would need is land and I'm sure that I would be able to get some if I showed a few more cards.

Always having a way out was a good idea and the Dwarven Kingdom was a very good way out.

So I was planning on making some good connections at the banquet.

When we arrived, we found that there were many dwarves that were waiting at this banquet, much more than we had met before.

All of them seemed like they were important dwarves since they were able to come to this banquet that was being hosted by the Dwarven King.

However, the banquet for the dwarves was very different compared to a banquet held by humans.

Instead of it being stuffy, it was very relaxed and open where everyone ate what they wanted and drank what they wanted. There was even an open bar that catered to anyone that came.

As long as they had a request, there would be alcohol brought out.

It seemed much different from the banquets that I had been forced to attend when I had been in the capital.

I was able to have quite a bit of fun, though I did make sure to hold myself back under the watchful eyes of Shaka and Haley.

They made sure that I didn't let myself go too much.

Halfway through the banquet, I excused myself to go to the bathroom.

When I got away from the rowdy banquet, I finally had a moment to myself to take a deep breath and calm down.

As I stood there in the hallway, I couldn't help revealing a smile.

The dwarves...really were something else.

They weren't like the humans at all with their strict rules and manners, they were free to do whatever they wanted to do.

If possible, I even wanted to become a dwarf...

But that was just wishful thinking.

As I was heading to the bathroom, I saw that there was a female dwarf that was walking through the halls with a worried look on her face.

I would have walked right past her since I knew that it was better not to get involved, as well as a small part of me not wanting to interact with female dwarves because...of their appearances.

But I couldn't help being stopped when I saw this female dwarf's appearance.

That was because...she was completely different from the other female dwarves that I had met before.

Her face was still the same, but her body...

She had a figure that didn't fit that appearance at all.

This was a figure that was full and busty, completely different from the flat figure that the rest of the female dwarves had.

Wasn't this the legendary oppai loli?

I really couldn't help stopping and taking a second look when I saw her, but that female dwarf misunderstood.

When she saw me stop, she thought that I had stopped to help her.

So she looked at me and was about to speak, but she stopped herself and revealed a surprised look as well.

It was most likely because I was a human that she was surprised like this.

However, she didn't remain surprised for long as she asked, "Do you know the way to the banquet hall? I was walking around and I got lost."

I didn't seem to hear her at first, so she said, "Are you alright? Is there something wrong?"

When she said this, I realized my mistake and gave a cough before saying, "No, there's nothing wrong at all."

I gave another cough before turning around and pointing to the left to say, "If you follow this corridor and go left, you'll go back to the banquet hall."

The female dwarf's face lit up when she heard this.

She grabbed me and I could feel softness coming from her, but that just made me turn stiff since her face...made it feel illegal.

She said in a happy voice, "Thank you!"

Then without waiting, she headed off

But at the end of the corridor...she suddenly turned right instead of left.

I was surprised by this, but I quickly chased after her and corrected her.

But it seemed that wasn't the end just yet...

Since she got lost once again even though it was a direct path.

Since I had already helped her, I had no choice but to help her to the end.

I guided her back to the banquet hall, or close enough that she would be able to see it and make her way there. However, I didn't walk her in since I didn't want to give anyone the wrong idea.

After we were in sight of the banquet hall, I asked her, "Will you be alright now?"

The female dwarf revealed a bright smile and said, "Thank you for helping me, I should be fine now."

But I couldn't help standing there watching just in case as she headed back into the banquet hall.

After all, I had seen her get lost on a straight path before.

She was able to reach the banquet hall in the end since it was in sight and it seemed that I was worried for nothing.

After this worry disappeared, I couldn't help suddenly trembling as that feeling came back.

I had been on my way to the bathroom and I had been holding it in because I had been worried about this female dwarf.

But once that worry was gone, that feeling of needing to pee came back again, so I rushed back to the bathroom.

Chapter 356 Causing trouble

After I came back from the bathroom, I found that the mood of the banquet was a bit strange.

It was no longer as lively as before.

It was almost as if something had happened while I was gone that I didn't know about.

So I went over to find Haley and the others to find out what had happened while I was gone, but before I could...there was someone else who found me first.

This was a dwarf, but this was a dwarf that I had never met before.

However, the moment that this dwarf saw me, he immediately came right at me.

With the determined look that he had as he headed towards me, it seemed like he was on some kind of mission.

I knew that this wasn't going to be good.

At the same time, I could tell by the way that the other dwarves looked at this dwarf that he was most likely the reason why the mood of the banquet had changed.

After coming over to me, that dwarf looked at me with narrowed eyes before saying, "So you're the famous human?"

I looked back at him with a calm look as I gave a shrug and said, "I wouldn't say that I'm that famous. I'm just a normal human."

The dwarf gave a snort when he heard this before turning his head away as if he was displeased with what I had just said.

I knew that he was here to cause trouble, but I didn't want trouble with him.

So I said, "I'm sorry, I have some other matters to handle. It was nice meeting you, I hope we have the chance to talk again next time."

This was all polite talk and naturally I didn't mean it at all.

As soon as I said this, I turned around to leave, but...

That dwarf suddenly reached out to grab my hand and prevented me from leaving.

I could have easily thrown his hand off, but I couldn't do it with everyone looking at us like this.

If I did, it would have surely hurt our relationship with the dwarves.

So I had no choice but to turn around and ask, "Is there something else that I can help you with?"

This dwarf just looked at me with narrowed eyes again before saying, "I've heard that you had a forging duel with his majesty and you won."

The moment that he said this, all of the dwarves looked at me with strange looks.

I could tell from the moment that these strange looks fell on me that they didn't know about this before.

It seemed like none of the dwarves other than the ones that had witnessed it had learned of this matter.

So how did this dwarf know about this?

He clearly was not a dwarf that I recognized...so he shouldn't have been at the forging duel.

Just who was this dwarf?

Still, those questions were for later.

Right now, I have to take care of this situation.

With another cough, I said, "I just compared notes with his majesty, I wouldn't say that there was a winner or a loser."

The dwarf knitted his brows the moment that he heard this. I could see that there was a trace of anger that appeared in his eyes in response to this answer.

He then gave another snort before saying, "You humans and your sly way of words. Do you really think that we can't see through them? You think you can look down on us because you know some fancy words?"

I knitted my brows when I heard this.

Judging by the way that he was reacting, it was clear that this would be leading up to a fight.

However, that was the last thing that I wanted.

So I said, "How about we calm down first. If there's any place where I've offended you, I can apologize. There's no need to let ourselves get too emotional."

The dwarf's expression turned even darker when he heard this and he raised his fist as if he was about to punch me.

I also prepared myself just in case anything happened, but nothing happened.

That was because before he could punch me, there was a female dwarf that suddenly ran over to grab this dwarf's arm.

I was also surprised since I recognized this female dwarf.

It was hard not to recognize her when she had a very distinctive feature...which was her body.

This was the curvy female dwarf that I had met before.

After grabbing this dwarf's arm, she said, "Drogath, what are you doing?"

The dwarf she called Drogath immediately knitted his brows as he turned to look at her. Then with a flick of his arm, he threw her away from him.

After pushing her away like this, he said, "Woman, who told you to interfere? Do you think that an inferior woman like you can interfere in men's matters?"

I once again knitted my brows after hearing this.

This dwarf named Drogath, it seemed that he wasn't just racist against humans, but also a misogynist.

He was the mix of the worst kinds of people, someone that everyone clearly hated.

I really couldn't understand why he was allowed in this banquet in the first place.

After all, anyone should have been able to figure out that he would have caused trouble at this banquet. So why would they allow him to attend in the first place?

The female dwarf didn't mind what Drogath said to her and said back, "This human's different, he's not like them. He was kind enough to show me the way back to the banquet hall earlier."

Drogath's face twisted when he heard this.

Then he roared out, "You sl*t, you just cling to whoever you want, don't you? Now you're even getting chummy with humans? I really need to teach you a lesson!"

As soon as his voice fell, his hand came up as if he was about to slap her.

Chapter 357 She's my woman

357 She's my woman

I narrowed my eyes seeing this and I couldn't stop myself as I moved forward.

I knew that acting here might cause some tension with the dwarves, but I couldn't call myself a man if I didn't stop the injustice happening in front of me.

So before Drogath could send out that slap, I had already grabbed that hand.

As soon as he felt someone grabbing his arm, Drogath immediately turned around.

There was a trace of surprise that appeared in his eyes when he saw that it was me, but then he narrowed his eyes to look at me again.

He looked like he was about to say something, but I knew that I couldn't let him take the flow.

So I said, "I'm sure that we've all had a few too many drinks, but there's no need to act this way."

Then my eyes turned sharp as I said in a cold voice, "Please don't do something that you'll regret."

Drogath was taken aback when he heard this and his eyes couldn't help trembling a bit when he heard this.

But then he still said with a snort, "Human, do you know what you are doing?"

This time, he didn't even bother hiding the disdain that was in his voice.

I narrowed my eyes when I heard this, but I didn't back down as I said, "It doesn't matter what I'm doing. All that matters now is whether you will stop or not."

Drogath suddenly broke out in laughter when he heard this which made me very confused.

I just looked at him with one brow raised as I waited to see what he had to say.

After laughing for a bit, he finally said, "She's my woman, my property. I can do whatever I want with her."

I knitted my brows as I had an idea of what he was implying, but I didn't want to acknowledge it since it would put me in a worse position.

So instead I said, "I didn't know that the Dwarven Kingdom had slaves. I thought that it was illegal to do such a thing here, but now you're telling me that's not the case?"

It was indeed illegal to have slaves in the Dwarven Kingdom unlike in the human kingdoms.

Anyone who was found owning slaves would be severely punished.

Drogath didn't even bat an eye when he heard this.

He just gave a chuckle before saying, "Look at how barbaric you humans are. The first thing that you think of is that she's a slave."

He turned around and grabbed her by the chin, pulling her in.

As he did, the female dwarf didn't resist at all...the look on her face almost made it seem that she was used to such a thing...

Drogath pulled her in and said, "She's my wife, my property. So whatever I want to do with her, I can do. I don't need an outsider to tell me how to treat my wife."

After saying this, he looked at me with a smug smile.

It was almost as if he was daring me to do something to him.

I couldn't help clenching my fist after hearing what he had said, but I didn't step forward in the end.

The female dwarf looked at me with an understanding look which just made it all the more worse.

For the first time in my life, I actually wanted to kill someone.

This piece of sh*t really wasn't worth keeping alive.

It was just too bad that I couldn't do a thing to him since we were in the Dwarven Kingdom.

The way that he looked at me with that smug look on his face, it was clear that he was trying to provoke me.

But it wasn't me that dealt with this racist dwarf in the end.

"Is that so? I never heard such a thing when the two of you got married." A powerful voice suddenly rang out through the hall.

When this voice rang out, everyone immediately turned in that direction.

As they had expected, it was the Dwarven King and the look on his face...wasn't good.

Seeing the Dwarven King walking over, Drogath revealed an ugly expression.

He had sent his people to hold back the Dwarven King while he antagonized this human, but he never expected the Dwarven King to come by so quickly.

Just what were they doing?

Drogath gave a cough to calm down before saying, "Your majesty, I was just having a chat with this human."

The Dwarven King narrowed his eyes to look at him before saying, "Is that so?"

Then he turned to look at the hand that was still at the female dwarf's throat and said, "Then are you planning on letting go yet?"

Drogath was caught off guard by this question, but he did let go in the end.

Though there was an unwilling look on his face since he didn't want to listen...but he had no choice since the other side was the Dwarven King.

After letting go, he said, "Your majesty, this is a matter between me and the human. I hope that you will not interfere."

The Dwarven King gave a snort before saying, "The human is my guest, so doesn't that concern me? Or do you not care enough to give me face and do whatever you want in my place?"

Drogath was once again caught off guard since he never thought that the Dwarven King would defend the human like this.

So this put him in an awkward position.

Even if he did have some influence among the dwarves, that didn't mean that he would be able to do anything to the Dwarven King.

So with a cough, he said, "Your majesty, I have some other business to attend to. I hope that I will be able to see you again soon."

The Dwarven King just gave a simple nod without saying anything.

Drogath turned to the female dwarf and said in a sharp voice, "Get moving! We're leaving!"

Though she had her head down, she still followed him out of the banquet hall.

As they walked out, she couldn't help turning back to give one last look to me before following him out.

When I saw the look of gratitude and apology in her eyes, I couldn't help feeling that I had let her down...

Eventually, someone is going to give up.

Chapter 358 Sister

Once Drogath had been sent packing, the mood of the banquet regained its momentum a bit.

However, it was impossible for it to return to the liveliness that it once had after that interruption.

It was safe to say that this banquet was over.

The Dwarven King gave a sigh before turning around. He waved his hand and said, "Come, let's go talk in a private place."

I looked at him with one brow raised for a bit before following behind the Dwarven King.

He didn't leave the banquet right away and made a lap to talk to a few people. At the same time, he also went to pick up Haley and the others from my group.

After we had picked everyone up, he finally left the banquet hall and went down one of the side halls.

As we left, I could hear the party ending behind us.

Since the Dwarven King and even us as the guest of honours had left, there was no meaning to this banquet anymore.

So they all started to disperse after we left the room.

The Dwarven King led us to a private room and we all sat down before waiting for him to say something.

We had no idea why we were here, we had been brought here by him after all.

So all we could do was wait for him to say something.

But the Dwarven King just sat there without saying a single thing.

The only thing he did was give sighs again and again.

It was as if something was bothering him, but he wasn't willing to talk about it.

Eventually, he still said something.

"I'm sorry for what happened back there. It was my mistake for not making sure that they couldn't sneak in."

As we had expected, that Drogath hadn't been invited and had snuck in.

The Dwarven King had shown that he wanted to cooperate with us, so he wouldn't have brought someone like that to the banquet.

Seeing the way that we looked at him, he said with a sigh, "I don't have a way to deal with him either. I want to, but he has a position that's considered quite volatile."

Seeing that we had confused looks, he explained, "That Drogath is the head of the anti human faction."

We were surprised, but we weren't that surprised since we had already expected this with the way that he had acted. It was clear that he didn't like humans, but we had never expected him to be the head of the anti human faction.

The Dwarven King continued by saying, "It's not that we don't want to deal with them, but if we take down Drogath...they'll just go even more overboard. He's considered mellow compared to some of the others, so it's better to leave him in his place."

"The lesser of two evils, huh?" I couldn't help saying.

The Dwarven King's eyes opened a bit wider before he gave a nod in response. I think you should take a look at

He then continued by saying, "Not only that, he's also quite the blacksmith that he has the respect of quite a few people. So unless someone crushes him with skill, it's not likely that they will be changing leaders."

I looked at him and could see that there was something off about the Dwarven King.

It was almost as if there was something that he wasn't telling us.

So I asked, "What's wrong? What are you hiding?"

The Dwarven King couldn't help jolting when he heard this before looking at me with a strange look.

It was almost as if he was trying to figure out how I had been able to see through him like this.

But in the end, he said with a sigh, "He's a childhood friend, so I don't really want to do anything to him either. He's just strayed down the wrong path..."

His voice trailed off after he said this, but it was clear by the look on his face how he was feeling.

He just wasn't saying it.

In the end, he said, "But since he's a childhood friend, that's why my little sister married him in the first place. She's the one that I'm worried about the most since I've seen the way that he treats her."

There was no response to this since we all looked at him with shocked looks.

The part that we were shocked by was...'little sister'.

We never thought that busty loli would be the Dwarven King's little sister.

It seemed that this matter was more complicated than we thought...

In the end, I said with a sigh, "This doesn't affect our relationship. They can do what they want, but it shouldn't affect our business, right?"

The Dwarven King was surprised to hear this, but he revealed a grateful look afterwards.

Then he said in a soft voice, "It would be great if I could separate my little sister from him, but I can't do anything about it because of my position. If only there was someone that could defeat him in a forging duel."

While saying this, he kept peeking at me from time to time.

But I ignored this as I didn't want to get involved in the matters of the dwarves.

This was clearly an internal issue and not something that I should get involved in...but it didn't seem like the Dwarven King would drop this issue that easily.

The look in his eyes seemed like he wanted to bring me in again...

I didn't want that, so I said, "I don't want to get involved in this. As long as he doesn't come at me, I won't do anything to him."

The Dwarven King surprisingly gave a nod of agreement when he heard this before saying, "I'll do my best to keep him away from you. I promise that I won't let anything ruin our friendship."

I was surprised by this, but I didn't feel like anything was wrong with what he said.

Though I couldn't stop the bad feeling that filled me like something was about to happen...

Chapter 359 Going Shopping

A few days passed since the banquet.

Even though we had finished negotiating everything, the process of recording everything down was much more complicated.

Everything that we had discussed up to this point was nothing more than a verbal agreement and to put it in effect, we had to put it down on paper.

So we stayed in the Dwarven Kingdom capital to take care of this matter.

I just left most of this to Haley since this was what she was skilled at.

During this time, I had been building relations with the dwarves by working in the forge with them.

I learned how to forge and I taught them about runes and alloys.

With this, I was able to forge a reputation as an expert on runes and many dwarves treated me kindly.

But out of the corner of my eyes, I could see that there were a few that still looked at me with disdain.

I didn't even need to think about it to know that these were definitely the anti human faction dwarves that were here to watch over me. I could also sense that they wanted to act, but they knew better and held themselves back in the end.

So I wasn't able to cause any trouble for them.

But just to put my own mind at ease, I had Shaka watch over them for me.

This morning, we met with the Dwarven King who wanted to meet up.

I hadn't seen the Dwarven King in a few days since he was the king of this kingdom and quite the busy person. He didn't even come to the sessions that I had held at the forge, showing just how busy he was.

But he summoned us early in the morning saying that he wanted to meet.

When we met up, the Dwarven King said, "It's been a while since you've come to our kingdom, how are you holding up? Have you already had your fill? Are you getting tired of us yet?"

I was surprised and confused when I heard this question, but I didn't show it on my face.

Instead, I just calmly said, "How could that be? We would even want to stay here forever if we could."

The Dwarven King revealed a knowing smile and he didn't say anything on this matter. Instead, he changed the topic by saying, "I'm sure that you've been busy the past few days and will probably want a day off."

I couldn't help once again being surprised by what he said.

It...wasn't a lie that it had been busy.

I could see it when I exchanged looks with everyone else.

But at the same time, we could see the looks of doubt in each other's eyes.

The Dwarven King wouldn't suddenly suggest such a thing without a reason.

So what was the reason?

Was he trying to hide us because something had happened or was it something else?

The Dwarven King could see the doubts that we had on our faces, but he didn't answer any of those doubts.

Instead, he just calmly said, "I've prepared a carriage for you all. It will take you to one of the business streets where you can shop to your heart's content." I think you should take a look at

I didn't say anything in response to this since I still felt like there was something off about this, but I just couldn't put my finger on it. I couldn't think of what was wrong with this proposal of his, so it wasn't as if I could deny it.

After thinking for a bit, I gave a slow nod and said, "Alright, let's go with your plan."

I wanted to see just what the Dwarven King was up to, so I agreed to go along with this.

The Dwarven King revealed a wide smile and summoned someone to go with us.

This was one of his trusted aides and one of the dwarves that had been there when we had our forging duel. This dwarf was named Kali Stormhammer, the master of the Stormhammer Family.

This was a family that was on par with the Silvermine Family, so Haley was very happy to talk to him while we were on our way to the business street.

By the end, she was even able to get a trade deal for iron ores out of him for some of their liquor.

It had to be said that Haley really was something else when it came to her business sense.

As long as she smelled the scent of money, she would jump onto it.

Once we arrived, I couldn't help looking around to see if there was anything out of sorts here.

However, I wasn't able to find a single thing wrong with this place.

It just seemed like a normal street lined with businesses.

It didn't seem like any kind of trap at all.

So as time passed, my guard was slowly lowered as we went through the different stores.

Kali had wanted to say that the Dwarven King would pay for what we brought, but Haley immediately rejected this.

This was the last thing that she would accept since it would mean having a disadvantage in future negotiations as the one that owed something.

So in the end, I pulled out my wallet and started spending.

The things that Haley bought were all things that she would sell when we got back, so everything that I spent was an investment.

Or at least that was what I told myself as she emptied my wallet.

After shopping for a bit, Kali suddenly said, "If I may recommend a store, it's one that I'm sure that you'll like."

He had been recommending stores along the way and so it wasn't strange hearing him say this.

But I couldn't help feeling that the way that he said this sounded a bit strange...

Almost as if he was leading us somewhere...

Still, Haley followed him, so I had no choice.

She had found quite a few good things at the spots that he recommended, so she wasn't against following his recommendation.

When we arrived at the store, we found that it was the store for a forge.

Chapter 360 'Coincidence'

This shop had all kinds of different things made of iron.

It wasn't just weapons and armour, but also many daily necessities that one would need.

Looking at these items, I could tell that they were finely made.

I had spent enough time with dwarves in the forge that I had learned quite a bit about forging.

This was without a doubt a very special store since I could tell that all the goods were very high quality.

But why would Kali bring us to a place like this?

Even if the goods were of good quality, it wasn't as if we lacked these things.

Even human blacksmiths could make these things, so there was no need for us to buy these things here.

Even if we could sell them back in human territory, it wouldn't be that profitable.

So I didn't understand why Kali would bring us here.

At the same time, I felt like there was something strange happening around us.

Though the dwarves around didn't look at us directly, I could feel that they were peeking at us out of the corner of their eyes. It was almost as if they were sizing us up while also being surprised that we were here.

Shaka leaned in and said, "It seems like there are people watching over us...Their gazes aren't hostile, it seems like it's more surprise than anything else."

I gave a nod to show I understood before falling into deep thought.

While it is surprising that humans would be in the capital of the Dwarven Kingdom, it shouldn't be at this level since we had shown ourselves quite a bit during this time. Most people should have already known that there were humans in the capital.

At most, they would be surprised before having that surprise change into curiosity over us being humans.

However, they were only surprised that we were here.

So that could only mean...there was something special about this place.

I was about to say something, but before I could, there was someone that spoke first.

"Eh? It's you?"

This was a familiar voice, a voice that I recognized right away.

It was the Dwarven King's sister, Elsa.

She came over and asked, "What are you doing here?"

Kali took a step forward and gave a slight bow to her before saying, "Mrs Elsa, I was just bringing our human friends here for a bit of shopping."

Her eyes lit up when she heard this and she came forward to pick up one of the swords. Then she came towards us with that sword in hand, but the precarious way that she was holding it really made us fearful and we couldn't help taking a step back.

During this whole time, she said with a smile on her face, "This sword is great! It cuts so well!"

A clutz, she was a real airhead.

She was someone that went at her pace and didn't care about anything else, which usually caused trouble for others around her.

I had already learned this when I had guided her back to the banquet hall, but now it had become even more dangerous since she had a sword in her hand.

However, that wasn't my biggest concern. I think you should take a look at

My biggest concern was...if she was here, that meant that it was very likely that someone else was here as well.

As if on cue, a voice filled with disdain suddenly said, "What are you doing here in my store?"

I didn't need to turn around to know who this voice came from.

It was Elsa's husband, Drogath.

The misogynistic and racist piece of sh*t.

But since he was antagonizing us, it wasn't as if I could just back down.

So I calmed my expression and turned to face him.

"We came to do a bit of shopping, but it seemed that we chose the wrong store."

"Humph, do you think that humans are welcome in my store in the first place?" Drogath said with a snort.

That was what I had thought as well, which was why the other dwarves in the store were so surprised to see us here.

But of course, I couldn't back down in front of his provocation, so I said, "Then we'll be leaving this place. It isn't as if there's anything that great here anyway."

Drogath's face turned dark when he heard this and he said, "You..."

But in the end, he held himself back when he saw that Kali was also here. It still wasn't time to tear away all face between the two sides, so he had to endure...

Instead, he turned his anger on...Elsa.

He came over and roared, "What do you think you're doing? Fraternizing with the humans like this, don't you find yourself disgraceful?"

When she heard this, she couldn't help trembling.

Her hands were trembling so much that she dropped the sword that she was holding, though it almost looked like she threw it with how much force it had when it came out.

If it wasn't for Kali's quick reactions, he might have been pierced by that sword that 'fell' out of Elsa's hands.

In the end, the sword stabbed into the ground without hurting anyone.

However, Drogath didn't let it end there.

He came forward and raised his hand as he roared, "Now you're even damaging the merchandise? You really are useless!"

Elsa once again flinched when she saw this and she brought her hands up instinctively as if she was already used to this.

Kali had knitted his brows and was about to step forward to stop this, but before he could...someone else had made a move.

When Drogath felt someone grabbing his arm, he immediately turned to look at that person.

What appeared in his vision was a young face with blonde hair and blue eyes.

What appeared in his vision was my face.

I had stepped forward to grab him before he could do anything.

Whether this was a 'coincidence' or not, I had already decided that I would need to take care of Drogath eventually for the sake of my continued deals with the Dwarven Kingdom.

So since I was given this chance, I decided to take it.