

Beast Master 1221

Chapter 1221: Immortal Guests

The presence of so many Immortals was shocking at first, but now that Karl could see that they were all Darklight Host Guild Masters, it made much more sense.

Technically, the System didn't call Matilda the Guild Master of the Darklight Host, only a branch manager. But she was a Supreme-Ranked existence, so that might just be by choice.

The first Immortal to speak gestured at the group. "These are Dave, Gregor and Nox. I am Axiom. It's a pleasure to meet you all, especially the fellow Darklight Host members.

I do have to ask, though. How did you get a Blue Dragon? Trying to pry them out of the Library long enough to do anything is troublesome. Trying to get them to commit to anything that is not learning or teaching is near impossible."

Karl chuckled and waved at Sapphire, who had just walked past, headed for his suite.

"My home world has an abundance of base class Warriors at the moment. I developed a skill that helps them advance to new and improved Warrior type classes. I believe that she hopes giving them new skills and advancing their class will make them less 'warrior', and more suitable to intellectual endeavours." Karl joked.

Axiom laughed. "It doesn't work. They are still warriors, just with more skills.

We tried.

Well, they tried. My world uses a slightly different system known as the Wandering Cultivator System, and it doesn't have classes.

Every world that the World Dragon influenced with his magic is different, but some are completely unrecognizable in their magic. They still smell like the World Dragon's Magic, but he simply didn't imbue it with any sort of System that we can identify."

Annabelle frowned. "How do you know the World Dragon is a 'he'? It's been a running debate between me and Hugo for years."

Axiom laughed. "I met him and his wife. It's one of the advantages of being old. Sometimes you get to meet the Gods in person if you are powerful enough. The World Dragon is definitely male."

Hugo just shrugged. It was hard to argue with that. No deep and philosophical text, no ancient records. Just 'I met him one time'.

Nox, the Immortal Guild Leader with long black hair and a narrow face, chuckled. "My mother is a Demigod Ranked Priestess following the Goddess of Life and Fertility. The Bunny God. She often has visions of the Gods, and I agree with his assessment. The World Dragon is not just a masculine influence, that one was definitely a man before he was a Divinity."

Annabelle made a note and then nodded. "Is your father a cleric as well?"

Nox shook his head. "My father failed his tribulation and never made it to Immortality. He passed on to his next lives a little over a million years ago, by Fae Realm reckoning."

The Mythic Ranked mage looked shocked. "So, there IS someone older than the Supreme Lady? And in the same Guild, no less."

Nox frowned. "I'm not that old. Or perhaps she counts her years differently? By the Fae Realm's timeline, she is definitely older than I am. She was a Guild Master when I joined, and I was mortal then."

Then he turned to look to the side.

"She's upset that I called her old. I am going to have to make her an apology gift later." He sighed.

“Distract her with the Chaos Badger, she won’t stay upset for long.” Karl whispered.

The guests laughed quietly at the suggestion. Putting Matilda and Cara together was bound to be entertaining, even when they thought that they were behaving.

“I don’t suppose that you can spare a few minutes for practical questions before the wedding, can you? My world is rather short on Immortals to ask questions.” Karl asked.

“Of course. We have all the time in the world.

You only have about two hours, but we have got plenty of time.” Axiom joked.

“This will naturally be about gaining Immortality, it always is.” Dave agreed.

Karl nodded. “Really, it’s mostly about the Power Matrix. I get the concept of needing to master a Fundamental Rule to advance. And that I need to improve the Matrix to channel the energy needed. But do I have to alter it in more than just the quantity of points and design when I get to Mythic Rank?”

The Mythic Ranked guests waited intently for some sort of answer as the Immortals inspected Karl’s aura and probed his soul for the current state of his progress.

“Your Soul Strength and Mental Forging are both progressing well. I see a seventy-two point Chaos Element focus, but you appear to be mastering the Mana Manipulation Fundamental Rule.

If you don’t improve your Chaos Rule Affinity as well, you’re going to run into problems when you get close to Tribulation.

Probably.

Or maybe not.

Chaos is fickle like that.

Sometimes it causes things to go smoothly for no apparent reason at all. Like when the Supreme Lady Reached the Supreme Rank. She announced that she needed to understand something, then went to an Incubus brothel for the night and came back at the Supreme Rank.” Guild Master Dave noted.

The other Immortals simply stared at him. That couldn’t be true. But ... it wasn’t impossible.

Nox nodded as he finished his inspection. “I think that the major limiting factor will be your understanding. If you can master a Fundamental Rule, you shouldn’t have any real issues with the Tribulation. Your Mental Strength and Power Matrix are both up to the bare minimum standard to survive.”

Axiom nodded. “My world is different. But I would say that you should be able to reach the tribulation with appropriate resources using your current cultivation method. Or in your current Class, as it were.

If you don’t advance your Class far enough to be compatible with an Immortal Rank skill, you will get stuck along the way.

I don’t know if you have one that will advance that far, but if you’re bonded to that Divine Fluff Ball, you should be fine. His healing and Earth Manipulation skills can both reach the Immortal Rank.”

That was excellent news, Tian decided. Someone had confirmed that he really could be an Immortal. He just needed some time and the right opportunities.

And one of those Pixies to come back and scratch that itch on his left ear.

Chapter 1222: Cultural Differences

Almost as if they could actually hear him, one of the Pixies did come back to stroke his head and smooth the fur on Tian’s ear while the Immortals watched with bemused smiles.

This Stonefur Divine Fox was clearly an orphan, they decided. The species was a proud one, and the mere notion of allowing the Fae to braid their fur, much less to pet their head, would have sent most Divine Foxes into a rage.

But Tian? He liked his new row of braids, and he was thoroughly enjoying the scalp massage.

"Getting nervous yet?" Lord Drodh asked Karl, who was sipping coffee and watching the chaos around the room.

"Nope. Excited, but not nervous yet. I've been looking forward to this for some time now, and it's going to be quite a relief to have the bond solidified and confirmed by all these guests." Karl replied.

Behind him, Thor chuckled. "Exactly, you can't be letting the Dana Mage escape now."

"That shouldn't be a concern for much longer. With all of us here today, who would dare to say that they didn't know that was Karl's wife? Anyone who tried to steal your Dana Mage away probably wouldn't live to regret it.

Unless the first one to catch them was the Badger." Lord Drodh agreed.

The Immortals and Demons laughed, but a few of the others, including Karl's father, looked confused.

"Is the Badger actually the merciful one?" He asked.

"Oh, not at all. But while Rae or most of the men here would simply kill them and put them out of their misery, Cara would make sure that they lived in the most horrific way possible.

Though, letting Remi catch them might have the same effect. She's constantly looking for test subjects for experimental alchemy concoctions, and some of those are bound to have less than desirable outcomes." Karl explained.

Jake frowned for a second, trying to remember which one was Remi.

"Oh, the Naga. She seems to be popular, but I don't speak Naga." He realized.

"Well, you might be able to understand her now that you've awakened a Class. The System usually translates for us." Karl explained.

Lord Drodh nodded. {If you can understand me, then you can probably understand her as well. It's the same System Function.}

Jake nodded. "I can. It's a strange thing, knowing that your words are being translated, but I certainly understand that language."

"That will be very helpful to you in the future, as there are a number of monster species that have spoken languages, and if you're defending your hometown after you gain some power, you will be able to hear them strategizing." One of the Immortals agreed.

Karl chuckled. "And most of them are too stupid to realize that you can hear them, so they go ahead with the plan as soon as they're finished making it."

"Does your world have an antagonistic relationship with the Titan Clans as well?" Axiom asked.

Karl nodded. "With all species of Giants, really. They're just not easy to get along with. My home nation, where my father still lives, just finished a war against the Giant Clans, and the Titan Clan is causing trouble on another continent, trying to suppress the System.

They're just generally a nuisance to every other species."

Axiom sighed. "All these years, and they're still holding a grudge. I suspect that it is personal between their gods and ours, and that is why they simply can't let it go and get along with any other species.

I can see that your world gets along better with the Demons than most other worlds, but that could be the human influence. Humans love to pick sides in the Demons versus Seraphim wars. They're almost like the Orcs that way, itching for a good fight."

Everyone in the room nodded in agreement. The humans did love a good fight. Not as much as the Orcs, but they were getting there. And they did get along surprisingly well with the Demons.

"We also have a lot of beastkin among our population, and they form a sort of buffer between the Dragons, the humans and the Demons. On my home world, it's not uncommon for species to mix.

Take Deve for example. He's got a bit of Owl beastkin in his lineage, and his wife is a Badger type beastkin. Lyric, the little one chasing the Green Dragon Priestess and the Forest Dragon around, is half Elven." Karl explained with a smile.

Axiom winked at Gregor, the quietest of the Darklight Host Guild Leaders, and then began to laugh.

"That's a human trait everywhere. Gregor has a theory that half the species only exist because humanity can't keep it in their pants. Take Lamia for example. What sort of genetic evolution would have naturally led to that form? A fully human upper body with a snake lower body?

That's unlikely to be natural.

More likely, one parent was either a Serpentine Demon or a Magical Beast, who got involved with humans. It would also explain why all Lamia are female. The genetics only matched up on the X Chromosome, so males were impossible. Or, some human magic user with a fetish ensured that all offspring of his pairing would be female."

Lord Drodh snorted in amusement. "I wouldn't put either one past them. My thoughts were always that the Lamia and some others might have been a result of the Chaos Dragons getting bored.

But them being created by horny humans left unattended makes sense."

Lyric stepped into the room and giggled. "So, this is what men talk about when they're alone with each other. Were there any more of the raspberry pancakes left? We've only got blueberry left in the kitchen."

Karl nodded and pointed to the side of the room, where the buffet was still fully stocked.

"Breakfast is still being served out here. But if she's driving everyone insane, bring Button out here, and we will keep her entertained." Karl suggested.

"It won't interrupt men's time?" Lyric asked.

"Not at all. Besides, there are plenty of women here as well. Not everyone is part of the bridal party, and they wouldn't all fit in the suite anyhow."

Chapter 1223: Bridal Walk

And that was how lunch arrived and Button had to be removed from Lord Drodh, who had been letting the Forest Dragon ride on his shoulders so that she could see more of what was going on around the room.

Button needed to be cleaned and dressed before the wedding, as she had been nominated by Matilda to help scatter flower petals down the aisle before the bride entered.

That was the perfect job for a bored Forest Dragon, who could create even more flowers on her own if she happened to run out.

She had to be physically restrained from going in to practice, just so that the floor didn't have half a metre of flower petals on the floor when Dana had to walk down the aisle. It took a bit of explanation from the staff, but eventually Button understood that only the bride was supposed to step on the petals, so she had to wait until everyone else was seated.

Karl retreated to a dressing room to change and get ready for the ceremony, and found that there was an entire group of professionals waiting there for him.

Well, professionals and one Spectral Knight, who was holding up the white tuxedo with a black shirt that Rae had chosen for Karl to wear to his wedding.

Once the suit was handed over, the Spectral Knight vanished, and the others got to work.

Karl was lotioned, trimmed, brushed, and oiled to perfection over the next hour, and then he got dressed in the fancy suit and the staff nodded in satisfaction.

"Sir, you are ready. There are fifteen minutes left before you are needed on the stage. Supreme Lady Matilda will guide you through the process, but you only actually need to say two words, and then she will perform the binding ceremony." The Dryad man in charge of Karl's preparation explained.

"Perfect timing then. Let's go."

Now, he was beginning to feel the nerves, and to wonder why Matilda hadn't seen fit to tell him anything at all about the details of his own wedding. It was exquisite, and she hadn't missed any detail that he might have thought of, but it was a bit odd to have someone just look at the future to see your reactions instead of asking you.

Karl followed the staff through the resort to the chosen location for the ceremony, and then realized that the whole wall of the room actually folded down to form an extended platform out over the cliffs, giving them a waterfall background, with massive Fae trees and hot springs.

Karl realized that everyone in the room was primarily in black, but with differing accent colours that were actually colour coded to how they were related to Karl and Dana.

Guild Mates and Alliance Members were in black and white, Family were in black and green, matching Dana's eyes. Friends and other guests were in black and red, matching the flowers that had been placed all over the room.

Karl greeted everyone again as they entered the room and found their seats, then went to the stage to wait with Thor and his father, who would be serving as his Groomsmen for the ceremony.

Tian was sitting on Thor's shoulder, and Hawk was perched in the trees outside. Even Opal had come out, and the butterfly was sitting in the rafters of the room, committing everything to memory using a dozen illusionary clones of herself.

The Fae thought that it was hilarious, as they were already recording the event. But when Opal showed them her version, which used solid illusions and not just a projected image of the scene, they were deeply impressed with her sense of showmanship.

Matilda and Rae were the last to enter, with Matilda taking a spot behind the Master of Ceremonies, along with the other Immortals, while Rae joined Remi and Cara, who was in humanoid form for a change, in the Bridesmaid's positions.

A gentle tune, reminiscent of birdsong and chirping foxes in a windy forest, began to play. That was the signal for Button to enter, happily scattering flowers by the handful from a basket that never seemed to get empty.

When she reached the front, she hopped in the lap of Dana's mother, ignoring the empty seat that was reserved for her.

Karl smiled at the interaction, and wondered if they were going to end up adopting a Forest Dragon to live in the Guild House, or if they were going to send Dana's mother to live with the Druids in the Tiny World.

It wouldn't be a bad option for her.

But then the music changed, and everyone turned expectantly to see the bride's grand entrance.

Elven Trumpets sounded, and curtains parted, revealing Dana in all her bridal glory.

Her flowing red gown was covered in golden embroidery, and her hair was covered in delicate ornaments, with a translucent red veil over her face as she carefully paced down the aisle.

Each step was deliberate and measured, but with the long gown, and her movement skills, it looked more like she was floating down the aisle over a lake of flower petals.

Once she reached the end of the aisle, Dana circled the front of the stage to take her spot facing Karl, and the room broke into raucous cheering.

After a moment, it quieted, and the Master of Ceremonies began to speak.

"Welcome Guests of the myriad Mortal Worlds. We have gathered here today to join this couple in most holy Matrimony, under the sight of the combined pantheons.

With their blessing, we shall proceed." He began.

Then the sky shone bright with golden holy light, and Karl realized why they had held the ceremony with the sky visible.

Which God or Goddess had decided to shine their light on the wedding, Karl couldn't tell. He simply lacked the ability to discern the personal differences in holy power. But he could feel it deep in his bones.

Dana sighed as the holy energy soaked into her body, and the Master of Ceremonies smiled in satisfaction.

"The Gods have confirmed the integrity of this bond. Now, we shall begin." He announced.

Chapter 1224: Wedding Ceremony

The Master of Ceremonies cleared his throat and a polished wooden staff appeared in his hand, made of some sort of silver wood, and carved to resemble a lounging dragon who held a large blue orb in its jaws.

Karl could see that the orb was actually a globe, though not of their world, and when he inspected it more closely, he realized that there was an actual planet sized [Tiny World] inside the orb, and set to be visible from the outside.

The ancient Elf released the staff, and it remained upright on its own, glowing with power.

"The Gods honour the petition of this man Karl, and this woman Dana, to be joined for eternity.

Do you, Karl, offer yourself to this union freely and wholeheartedly, with true love and devotion?"

"I do."

"Do you, Dana, offer yourself to this union freely and wholeheartedly, with true love and devotion?"

"I do."

Then the Master of Ceremonies began to chant in a language that Karl didn't recognize. It had a haunting familiarity, like he should know it. But the words were pure power as the old Elf wove a spell.

Then the magic of his words merged with the magic of the staff, covering the bride and groom in a gentle halo of golden light.

[What is this? I don't recall this in the briefing Matilda gave me.] Dana's thoughts entered Karl's mind.

[SCORE!! We have a Dana Mage!] Cara mentally cheered, which made Dana turn to look at her.

She was beginning to panic, but Karl took her hands to focus her attention.

[It's a mental link. Relax, this is normal.] He gently explained.

[Normal for you. I can hear everything.] She replied as the power of the magic surged.

Power began to flow between the two of them, sending a pleasant tingle through Karl's muscles. But to Dana, it was like her whole world was being forcefully realigned, and her soul was tossed through a sea of holy magic and chaos with only Karl's touch as an anchor.

Then, as suddenly as it had begun, the process was over, and Dana felt her mana begin to change. It took on a bit of the chaotic essence of Karl's power, and the power level began to grow rapidly until it hit a bottleneck and pressure built for a few seconds.

Then, the pressure popped, and Dana felt herself pulled into the Totem Rank, and forcefully propelled toward the peak, getting closer to Karl's power level by the second.

"The Soul Bonding is complete. This man Karl and this woman Dana have been forever merged by the will of the Gods. From this day forward, their souls will be bound as one, together for eternity." The Master of Ceremonies announced.

"You may now kiss the bride."

The feel of Karl's lips sent desire surging through Dana's body. But it was not all her own. She could feel his thoughts and emotions, including his amusement at her panic, like he wasn't also experiencing this ceremony for the first and only time.

For a moment, her mind went blank, devoid of anything but Karl and the feel of his body against hers. Then she was abruptly pulled back to reality by the realization that they were practically making out in public, while the crowd cheered.

A gentle thump at Karl's chest made him break the kiss, and he turned to the crowd, raising their joined hands in victory.

Button began throwing flower petals in the air in celebration, and the Immortals moved to stand behind them.

Matilda motioned to the crowd for silence, and after a moment, it was quiet enough that she could speak.

"The ceremonies of the Old Gods are simple, but powerful. We thank the representative of the Ancients for agreeing to host the bonding ceremony today. But the Darklight Host has one more tradition.

As a group blessing, we ask that everyone in the resort focus a stream of mana on the Master of Ceremonies' staff." Matilda explained.

Then she stepped, back, and led by example, putting a massive amount of mana into the artifact.

Then the other Immortals joined in, as did the guests.

The amount of flowing power was even more incredible than what had happened during the bonding ceremony, so when Axiom stepped forward to shape the effect, Karl did wonder if he would actually be capable.

His world didn't have the same sort of System that the others did, with a class that smoothly progressed, or levels that could be easily measured. Instead, it had a form of cultivation with milestones and tribulations that you had to surpass.

In a way, that was similar to how the mages of Karl's world organized themselves before the system resurgence, but all thought of power Rankings vanished the moment that Axiom actually began to shape the effect.

Two glowing golden images appeared, identical to Karl and Dana, right down to their current pose. Then, when they were so clearly defined that they looked like solid gold and not pure energy, they floated forward and merged with the bride and groom.

Axiom hummed happily as searing pain shot through Karl's body, and all his beasts froze in shock.

That spell was changing the Karl on the most fundamental of levels. Remaking his body in preparation for... something.

Dana's thoughts said that she was confused by Karl's response, but Axiom's smirk told her what she needed to know. The effect was on both of them, but the pain of the transformation had been completely channelled to Karl so that she didn't have to undergo it.

"Place your hands on the staff and complete the circuit. Let the power flow through you, and you will complete the Golden Core Divine Refinement." Axiom declared.

A grand name, to be sure. But a fundamental stage of the path to Immortality under his world's System, and one that made it immeasurably easier to survive the Divine Tribulation.

Karl and Dana placed their free hands on the staff, letting the power flow through them, and the excess cycle back to the orb.

That eased the pain of the overflow, and Karl smiled as he began to feel bonds breaking on his power. He was very, very close to the Mythic bottleneck, and now that he was bonded with Dana, so was she.

Chapter 1225: Refinement

The Golden Core Divine Refinement was not a fast process, it continued for nearly five minutes as the guests and Fae staff of the Resort continued to add mana to the staff.

Then, the Mythic Bottleneck completely vanished, and Karl felt himself advancing as if it had never existed.

The quality of his physique had been refined to such a degree that even advancing to the Mythic Rank no longer held any restrictions for him, the change was as easy as breathing.

It felt like the world had suddenly become lighter, or his strength had increased to an incredible degree, so that all considerations of physical limits no longer mattered.

It was a heady feeling, and Karl saw the smile on Dana's fingers as she advanced, and the effect of the refinement faded.

"Congratulations, Karl and Dana. You have completed the Golden Core Divine Refinement, a secret technique of the Darklight Host Guild. Now, eternity really is within your reach." Axiom announced.

The crowd was in awe.

What sort of insane Guild wedding gift was that? A gift of smooth progression to Immortality? The wedding had brought Dana from the Overlord to the Mythic Rank in a matter of minutes, which was insane enough on its own.

But the foreign Guild Master had suggested that was not the extent of their gift and blessing.

It had sounded more like a side effect of the gift.

Dana's makeup was smudged by tears of joy, and Cara mentally sighed.

[See, this is why I wanted to do it in Fox form. The happy tears just ruin makeup.] She complained.

That made Dana smile and pat the transformed badger on the head.

"It is going to take some time to get used to having all these extra thoughts in my head." She whispered.

"I will teach you how to ignore them if you want. But it's more fun to listen in on their squabbles and daily life." Karl agreed.

Matilda pulled them both into a hug, and then whispered in Karl's ear.

"What do you think of my present? It wouldn't have worked right if we weren't in the Fae realm, where it's possible to achieve Divinity directly from mortality. Now, you're bound to your bride just as surely as your beasts."

Karl smiled at the Chaos Dragon. "But we still don't have a Dana Space."

That made both Dana and Matilda chuckle. "Just give it time. One more separate space spell, and you can make one dedicated just to your Dana."

Karl shook his head. "Instead, I will help her gain Immortality and teach her [Tiny World], so that not only can I give her forever, I can give her the world as well."

Cara giggled and mentally congratulated him. [Ten out of ten, best sappy line so far.]

Dana didn't have time to reprimand the errant badger, as there were guests coming up to give their congratulations and hand over gifts. That gave Cara time to escape, but Karl knew that she would be back, as she had her own present ready to give to Dana.

All of the beasts had prepared something. Rae made the wedding dress, which was impressive on its own, and that had started a competition among the beasts.

Opal was preparing a replay montage of all the touching moments of their relationship, but Tessa had stopped her when the butterfly wanted to give a demonstration this morning.

The parts that Opal found most interesting were not suitable to be displayed to the public.

So, she was making a recording of everything instead. One that Dana could replay at will, and watch from any angle, including from her own point of view.

That should be a good present, Opal decided.

Thor had consulted with Tessa, and they had decided to go for a much more practical route. They had chosen to go out and get the couple a rare tome on Cultivating Mental Power, which was rumoured to have come from a different world.

Both the bride and the groom could use it if it were real. So, by Tessa's determination, it was a solid wedding gift.

This wedding in particular was a tricky one, as the usual gifts of jewellery for the bride would never do. Karl could make better than what they could offer, and it was simply tactless to gift a craftsman the things that he made for himself.

So, instead the gifts were mostly in the form of rare items. Rare materials and rare books especially.

Karl wasn't sure who was going to be more pleased with this wedding. Dana or Sapphire.

They certainly had a lot of magical tomes.

As the gift giving wound down, Hawk returned to perch on the edge of the platform with a smug sense of superiority in his mind. He had found the perfect gift.

While they were in Zilaz, he had flown out over the lake and found the most wonderful Mythic Ranked fish. It had taken some work to defeat the accursed thing, but he had, and now it was a special dinner for the Dana Mage's induction ceremony.

Hawk wasn't exactly clear on what the purpose of a wedding was, but as far as he could discern, it was like the party that they threw for a new member of the beasts, except that she didn't get a dedicated Dana Space.

That was a shame. He really liked his space.

The food was brought out, while the band started to set up for the party afterward.

They were going to need as much energy as they could get for the festivities, as everyone intended to make the very most of their vacation and dance until the sun came up, then return to the spa for a rest day.

Not all of them could stay for an extended vacation, so many of them were headed home after only a single day of fun.

That was somewhat expected, but now that they were at the resort, it seemed like a real shame.

Chapter 1226: Reception

Karl enjoyed the soft sound of Fae harps as they finished their dinner, sitting at a table with Dana and the Immortals.

Or you could look at it as the leaders of the Darklight Host. Which brought up a good question.

"Matilda, why don't you have the Guild Master title? You're listed as the Cyhosasa Branch Leader, but you're clearly the most powerful member of the Darklight Host on the planet." Karl asked.

The Chaos dragon smirked. "When there is a proper Guild Master, the Darklight Host gains a Guild Skill based on the leader's abilities. Every member of the Guild gains that one skill at their own Rank as a benefit of being in a Divine Guild.

Can you imagine what would happen if I was actually named as the Guild Master?

If anything, we should probably name Orthos as the Guild Master, just so that we get something resembling a normal Guild Skill. Even if we made you Guild Master, we would probably get something weird."

[Make her do it. I need to know the answer.] Cara mentally demanded.

Matilda smirked in her direction, and Karl knew that the dragon had heard the Chaos Badger's thoughts.

Dana chuckled. "I think that it could be funny to name Karl. Is it automatic, or does he get to pick one of his skills? Because with his abilities, he could likely create a good one for the Guild."

The Immortals smirked. "It's automatic, chosen by the World Dragon. But it's always one of your more uncommon skills. If anything, it might be one of his defensive abilities, and that would be quite the Guild buff. But if it was something like his ability to advance skills? Or to allow Divine Beasts to pick a bonded partner?

Can you imagine the reaction of the public if all of our Guild Members could do that?"

Nox stroked his beard and nodded sagely. "You would have to pry the Green Dragon Clerics off with a troll."

That was an odd phrasing, and the Immortal noticed Karl's confused look.

"Kilo for kilo, trolls are one of the strongest monsters in the world. So, many in my world use them as a standard. If you're stronger than a Troll at your own Rank, you're gifted. But we only have Mountain Trolls on my world. There aren't any of the other ones, like the cute forest Trolls or the bridge trolls." He explained.

Gregor nodded. "Trolls are helpful. I hire a bunch of them to guard doors and bridges. They're excellent at it."

The Fae hosts chuckled. Trolls loved to guard things, to the point that one of the species had been named "Bridge Trolls" because of their intensely protective instincts.

They didn't just live under the bridge, they collected tolls, did maintenance, and prevented anyone from damaging the structure.

Whether they actually turned the tolls over to anyone was questionable at best. But nobody would ever accuse a bridge troll's bridge of being unsafe to cross.

If you ignored the danger from the troll.

The music of the harps changed, and a staff member stepped to the microphone.

"Would the bride and groom please come to the dance floor for the first dance?"

This should be interesting, Karl thought. Neither of them was a skilled dancer, though they were both agile.

But when they stepped on the floor, the Fae cast a spell on them, and a set of dance moves smoothly entered their memory. A very provocative dance.

The music changed to an upbeat rhythm, and Karl swung Dana into the dance as she giggled and kept pace as he spun, twirled and rubbed against her.

The Tango was the traditional Fae mating ball dance, so that was the one that they assumed would be right for the first dance of the married couple, and Karl couldn't say that they were wrong.

Unlike the slow and formal sort of dancing, this was actually a fun one, and no less intimate, though in a different way than staring soulfully into your partner's eyes as you slowly danced.

The first dance ended, and the dance floor filled with guests, while Karl's father came to take Dana's hand and Dana's mother joined Karl for a dance.

Wendy was a surprisingly good dancer, Karl realized.

There was no worry of stepping on toes, though the dance was much more subdued than the last one.

Partially because if he twirled her around like he did Dana, he was likely to dislocate her shoulder or twist her ankle. Some moves were simply not intended for the average human to perform without training.

The next dance went to Rae, who managed to sneak ahead of everyone else who was waiting for the song to end.

"I want the fun dance." She demanded.

"Got it." Karl nodded to the band members, who smirked and then picked up the tempo of the music so that Karl could spin and twirl with Rae through the song.

Or, most of the song because Lotus couldn't wait until it ended before she wanted someone to spin her.

So, Karl traded partners, and Rae claimed Button, to spin the little dragon, who didn't actually have any idea how to dance with a partner.

Karl took a quick break for drinks in between dances, and watched the chaos as the guests mingled.

Being from not just different regions and continents, but also from different planets, all of their wedding customs were different, so everyone just went with whatever the idea was, and Cara was busy making up new wedding traditions on the fly, just to get people to do fun stuff.

There was a conga line attempting to Salsa dance on one side of the room, while someone had started a drinking competition between Demons and Dwarves on the other.

But there was no fighting, which was a good start.

Slowly, everyone was beginning to get tired, and Karl noticed that a few of the guests had vanished with the Fae staff members. Though, he suspected that Lotus did not have lewd intentions.

She was probably in the kitchen.

Chapter 1227: Sleeping In

Dana rubbed her temples as she walked out of the shower late that night, wearing nothing but a towel and dripping water on the floor.

"Toss me a healing spell, would you? I drank way too much." She complained.

"Twelve straight hours of shots after a double advancement wasn't a good idea?" Karl joked as he watched Tian's healing magic flow over her.

"Ah, thank you. We should have given up hours ago." Dana sighed.

Karl nodded. "That is true. It's after midnight already, and one of us should probably be up to say goodbye to the guests who are leaving after lunch tomorrow."

Karl picked Dana up in one arm and peeled the towel off her with a smirk.

"I think we can spare at least a few more minutes, though."

Karl woke up the next morning to fox ears flicking at his face as Dana dreamed about something entertaining.

He didn't bother to move, though he could see that it was late in the morning, by the sun through the curtains. They weren't actually in any sort of rush, at least not until it was time that guests were getting ready to head home.

That was a moment that came far too soon, and Dana had to hurry to shower so that they could get dressed and say farewell to the guests.

Karl was not being helpful.

While he was supposedly in the shower to help get them both clean faster, that was not at all what his actions suggested, and by the time that they finally made it to the lobby, Matilda was almost ready to open the portals and start letting everyone head home.

"Sorry for the delay, we were a bit slow getting going this morning. Is everyone headed out early?" Karl asked.

Matilda nodded. "Other than the ones who are going to the Tiny World, who are already there."

Karl quickly checked the separate space and found that the rest of his Guild members, plus Dana's mother, were all in the Tiny World. He had been so busy lately that he had hardly had time to even speak to them at his own wedding.

But, they didn't seem like they had a bad time.

Everyone was excitedly discussing the amenities of the Fae resort, and making plans to find a way to come back here again in the future. It would be an expensive vacation, but they all got paid well.

Karl hugged his mother as Matilda opened the portal back to the Golden Dragon Nation.

He could see the Academy through the portal, and from there, it would be easy enough to get his parents back to their house. The Academy had plenty of mages, but Karl suspected that there would be government leaders who wanted to ask questions before his parents went home.

After all, a destination wedding that took them out of the world entirely was certainly something that the Government would want some answers about.

"I don't know how long it will be before I see you again, but I will try to make it some time soon." Karl whispered, then activated [Follow Me, Little One]

{Champion Karl Offers Knowledge} Skill [Mystic Cooking] will be transferred to the Wallflower Mary Elanor.

Her eyes went wide, and Karl winked at her, then let his father usher her through the portal. He would find out in about five seconds that she had just activated the System Interface, but he was going to be immediately questioned about the same thing, so there was no harm in keeping them together for this part of their return trip.

"You let Cara influence you too much." Dana whispered.

"I think it's funny, too." Rae whispered in Dana's ear.

"Dammit, you always manage to sneak up on me. Even now that I've actually got the advantage in power level, you still do it." Dana grumbled.

Rae smiled back at her. "Thank you. I appreciate the compliment."

Dana rolled her eyes. Of course, Rae would take that as a compliment. She had no awareness that people might not want to be startled, and she had very little sense of personal space.

"Shall we all prepare to head back to the Guild House? With this advancement, I'm sure that the Guild Alliance will be eager to find out how our skills stack up at Mythic Rank." Karl asked.

Dana smiled. "That's a good point. But with none of the beasts at Mythic Rank, you'll be at a disadvantage for some time."

Karl chuckled, and Dana shrugged.

"Well, a disadvantage compared to your usual combat strength, anyhow. With your abilities, I suppose that it wouldn't really be a disadvantage versus the average Raiding Team member.

Do you think that Remi will be able to do what she did for Totem Rank and find a potion to help everyone break through?" She amended.

Karl shook his head. "I think that we simply don't have the proper materials for it. She's been trying because it would not only make her super famous, but it would also make a large portion of the world want her potions.

I don't think that it will take them long to reach Mythic Rank, though.

Now that my energy is at Mythic Rank, and the improved Power Matrix has improved the refinement speed of my energy, they'll be bathing in much higher energy density spaces before long, and that is bound to force at least one or two advancements.

Rae already has what she needs for her advancement bath as well. Not perfect, as ideally, she would want a bit of Immortal Essence to reach the Mythic Rank, but it's fully possible with just Mythic Ranked ingredients."

Dana smiled at the thought of Rae getting upset that her bath wasn't up to her standards, when it was full of Mythic Ranked blood.

Of all the things that someone could be accused of, Rae would never be accused of not being discerning enough about her skincare routine.

Or about her fashion sense. Ironic, really. The Bloodbath Spider becoming a haute couture fashionista was not on anyone's checklist when she first arrived at the Academy as a dinner plate sized baby spider.

Chapter 1228: Sort The Portals

Their first stop was the Alliance House in Zilaz so that they didn't have to immediately deal with the panic it would cause the people of Drodh when they reappeared at Mythic Rank.

Here, the Rank was incredibly common. But there, it was just the Lord who held the Rank.

They were not going to escape the celebrations, though. Common enough that most Guilds had a few didn't mean that it wasn't a huge accomplishment, or an elite powerhouse.

The house had already been decorated, and all of the Mythic members of the Alliance had gathered to congratulate them, along with some of the Totems who knew Karl or his team.

"So, how long until we can expect a Mythic Ranked beast Raiding Team?" Nilla asked as he raised a glass of blood wine in greeting.

"Not long now. I know that some of the team members are going to struggle to make the advancement, but we will find a way to work with that.

Worst-case scenario, I might have to find a new friend for the team so that our Totem Rank capped members can retire from the Raiding Team." Karl replied.

"Is that even an option? I know that they can stay outside when you are away. But can they actually retire?" Nilla asked, confused.

Karl shrugged. "There aren't any restrictions on what they do on their own time. They'll still be linked to their space, so they will be getting stronger when they're near me. But there is no need for them to be on every trip to the Dungeon.

In fact, they can actually go along with different teams.

Often in the past, Thor would go along with Tessa and the others so that he could work as their Tank."

The Vampire smiled. "Well, that's certainly an option. If any of them have Golem Summoning abilities, other than Lady Rae, they would almost be a Raiding Team on their own."

Karl shrugged. "Well, Remi has her bodyguards, but other than that, none of them have been compatible with the skill. We were hoping that Cara might be, but no such luck. The Chaos Badger did learn to make illusionary copies of herself, though."

The vampire stared at him in horror. More of them? One Chaos Badger was already more than one city needed.

Hawk was staring suspiciously at Cara as she napped in her space. He remembered this setup, and the absolutely unfair level of fuckery that was her advancement to Totem Rank. He wouldn't put it past her to do it again, just because Karl was going on an adventure without her.

Not that she actually needed the advancement. She didn't care about the damage she did most of the time, only that it was entertaining.

The staff brought out drinks, and Karl let everyone out of the Tiny World to come and relax in the house.

The druids had been working hard to maintain the ecosystem, and they deserved to be part of the party.

As the ladies filtered out of the portal to join the celebration, Karl noticed one out-of-place soul within his Tiny World.

"Nacht? What are you doing here?"

The black dragon grumbled as he stepped out of the portal. "Did we not specifically ask you to leave the baby dragons alone?"

Karl patted Button's head. "But baby dragons like me."

The black dragon pinched the bridge of his nose and closed his eyes to focus his thoughts.

"I will help you find someone to look after the eggs." He relented.

"Already on it. I asked Tessa to send a message to the Red Dragon Clerics, so we can get some caretakers in the Tiny World. The ladies are doing a wonderful job incubating them, but they're not trained to raise baby dragons." Karl explained.

"And where will you even put them?"

"Right where they are? It's a perfect living condition for them, so there's really no need to move them until they're grown up enough to start going out on their own." Karl offered.

"I thought that you might say that." Nacht complained.

Raj laughed at the interaction. "I don't think that I've ever actually seen a black dragon frustrated before. I wonder what the Karl is going to do with a baby dragon that is giving even him headaches."

Nachtia giggled and leaned over to whisper the answer.

{He found a hundred and some dragon eggs when he was out on a mission, and plans to have his friends raise them.}

The Warrior looked bemused. "Baby dragons raised by Lotus and a Chaos Badger? Oh, I'm in for this."

Nacht glared at him. "Don't give them ideas. I will ensure that there is a responsible and trained caretaker sent to look after the hatchlings."

Button ran over to give the black dragon a hug. "You're going to bring us more friends? I knew that you were secretly not so scary."

Lyric bopped the dragon on her head. "He means he wants to send over a teacher who will keep you from playing all day and make you actually do your school lessons."

Button gave Nacht a suspicious look.

"He wouldn't dare."

Nacht gave her an unimpressed look, and the Forest Dragon frowned.

"He's looking at me like he would. But surely dragons aren't that evil. I collect the chicken eggs on time every day, what more do they want of me?" Button whined.

"Can you read?" Nacht asked.

"A little bit. But I have a plan for that. The Karl can teach skills, so he can teach me to read with a head pat, and then I don't need school." Button replied proudly.

The room burst into laughter at the little dragon's logic.

Baby Dragons were Baby Dragons, even when they were Forest Dragons, it seemed.

Then Button turned to Lotus for reinforcements, and everyone knew that she was fighting for a lost cause. If her best hope for escaping responsibility was the Green Dragon Cleric, then Nacht would already have someone available who knew how to keep her in line.

The Church had centuries of practice with Lotus and her kin, after all.

Lotus offered Button a sippy cup of juice and a cupcake, and the little dragon vanished into the kitchen to eat, leaving the Mythic Rank visitors chuckling.

Maybe they didn't need a new person at all. Lotus had Button figured out.

Chapter 1229: Everyone's Invited

"The mana here is nice. Did you cast some sort of protective spell on the house?" Lyric asked as she watched Lotus and Button vanish into the kitchen.

"More than one. But part of the mana here is that it's next to the lake, which puts off a huge amount of elemental mana that mingles with the leaking mana from the dungeons." Karl explained.

Lyric nodded. "I have no idea what that means, but I like it."

Explaining to the Elf that the area around a Dungeon always had higher concentrations of mana, and that with so many Mythic Ranked Dungeons in the area, Zilaz was a virtual heaven for mana users, could be done later.

"For now, don't worry about it. Let's party and celebrate a pair of Mythic advancements. I'm sure that the rest of the Alliance will be glad to hear it, even if just because Dana has three different types of Golems." Karl joked.

Raj snapped his fingers. "That's right! I heard that you knew a new Golem spell. Do the blue dragons know yet?"

Dana laughed and pointed at Sapphire, who was smirking at them.

The Librarian had already pleaded for Dana to make skill books for all the special skills and class skills that she knew so that they could advance more mages into battle mage related tracks.

Dana might focus more on her Golems and ranged combat, but her class was actually exceptionally melee capable.

You could call it a side effect of being surrounded by good friends that she never needed to go forward to hold the line, and that nothing ever got through to attack the healers in the back with her.

But the end result was the same. The golems used her blade skills more than she did.

"You have a point. Not only did they make Mythic, but they're newlyweds. Did you have plans for a honeymoon vacation?" Hugo asked.

Karl shrugged at the big mage. "Well, we tried a vacation while we were on a mission for Matilda, but that turned out to be more work than vacation. So, perhaps we will lounge around the house for a bit. Perhaps spend time in the Tiny World, so there are fewer distractions.

Now that I'm at the Mythic Rank, I can likely expand that Tiny World even more again, giving us more room to roam. But I'm not in a hurry to do that yet.

A whole week without getting out of bed except to eat sounds good to me."

Hugo nodded. "And then when you get out, you'll have a whole load of equipment requests to catch up on, and demands that you make another trial tower.

Word of the one that you made for the Golden Dragon Nation is spreading fast, and everyone wants one."

Karl frowned. "How would they even learn about it here?"

None of the people from the Dragon Isles had been present when he made the tower.

"Did you think that the Church was isolated? Dragons love nothing more than gossip. Every cleric from the Dragon Church knew that you were getting married, they all know that you're Mythic now, and that you made a sort of repeatable trial tower for the Golden Dragon Nation with golems and illusions to fight." Hugo explained, and all the clerics put on their best innocent faces.

Even Sapphire shrugged, as if to say that it wasn't her fault, just something inevitable.

Karl sighed. "Then I suppose I should think of a place to put a new one."

Sapphire waved her hand dismissively. "No need for that. Let them argue, and someone will come tell you the decision eventually. The Dragon Gods and Beast Gods adherents are having a discussion about it now.

The Dragons already have one, but it's at Totem Rank. So, the Beast Gods want one as well. The answer will most likely be that they want it in Gathuzan or Nerud.

Gathuzan is Divine Beast territory, and Nerud is mostly under the Spider Goddess, but the other Beast Gods are also worshipped there."

Karl nodded. "Well, I don't really see an issue with it. I'm sure that they can find some appropriate method of payment."

Nacht snorted as he stifled laughter, and Karl shared a smile with him.

It wasn't hard to guess what the old dragon was thinking. Now that Karl had a whole space full of baby dragons, he didn't need to go looking for them anymore. But the most likely price for a priceless treasure was to offer him a cub from one of the Divine Beast Royal Lineages.

Unlike the dragons, who were guided by their patron, and would eventually grow up well on their own, the Divine Beasts usually needed guidance to stay on track and reach their potential.

Karl was an excellent choice for that mission, as he already had so many other wildly successful beasts in his care.

Just based on his track record, they would treat him well.

Drinks were brought out by the house staff, and someone called in the bards to play for the evening. A regular band was an option, but the actual bards could use their magic to refresh and revitalize the party goers, keeping the event going longer, and keeping anyone from getting excessively drunk and causing a scene.

Well, too big of a scene because there was bound to be one with so many big egos in one room, even when they were all friends.

The drunker they got, the more that they needed a reason to compete over something, and more than one challenge had to be moved to the roof of the compound, which had been reinforced with protective barriers for just this sort of thing.

But that gave Karl a great idea to meditate on when he took Dana to bed.

Instead of a full-fledged trial tower, Zilaz would likely do better with an arena, where you could enter to fight a challenge against either a real person or an artificial challenger.

With spectators and betting.

Because Zilaz.

Chapter 1230: Crowded Beds

Karl woke up the next morning and gave Dana a hug, then realized that while she was fluffy, she was oddly lumpy.

[Is it morning?] A groggy Tian asked.

[Why are you sleeping on Dana's chest?]

[It's soft and warm. Like being back in the burrow with mother. I'm going back to sleep.]

Karl chuckled and left the little fox to his nap.

Dana was worn out this morning, but he didn't need to actually get out of bed, he was just mentally formulating the method to make a training arena without physically building the arena.

He had discovered last night that portability would be the key.

Not all duels wanted to go to a formal training area, and there were already buildings for that.

But if he could make a form of illusionary Domain, with solid obstacles inside that could be hit by the contestants, it would be perfect. Just activate it, let the contestants step inside, and fight it out wherever they happened to be.

Karl was fairly sure that he knew how to coat the inside of the [Illusionary Domain] with solid surfaces, if he activated it with an object created through Runecrafting. But it would not be a small object, no matter how tiny his writing was.

The idea of the mountain, with its layered slices, was actually a practical one, but Karl was thinking of an obelisk, made with layers of stones, each enchanted, then attached by a base.

If he did it that way, he could make the object under two metres tall, and still have the needed spells. The domain, the solid interior from Earth Manipulation, the protective spells for the spectators and the arena itself, the opponents, and a referee. Having an illusion with some basic sentience would let the artifact adjust its own barrier levels and create requested opponents from the available golems.

He didn't have an unlimited variety, but his Golem spell created beasts of most sorts, and he could create Dungeon Bosses that he knew.

That should be a popular feature for the raiding teams

Being able to bring a team in to practice, or try out new strategies in a setting where the monster would stop before actually killing you, was a huge thing.

But that also meant he needed to build a healing spell and recovery area.

If only there was a template for this.

He should have asked the other Darklight Host Guild Masters. One of them was almost guaranteed to know a suitable sort of skill.

Unfortunately, the idea had occurred to him too late, and now that they were on different planets again, he was unable to directly message them, though the additional branches still showed as active, but out of range in his System interface.

With them so far away, he had no way to contact them, and he didn't have the skills to open an interplanetary portal between Guild Houses, even though the System would let him target the ones that were within range from Zilaz.

He had never been to the Cyhosasa Guild House, but in theory, he could open a portal to the location that Matilda had designated within the property.

After much consideration, the plinth model really did seem like the best option to create the arena. It was easy to layer, could be placed anywhere, and he could make it to be distinctively representative of the Darklight Host.

Half black and half white wouldn't hurt anything when he enchanted it, and it wasn't supposed to be a decorative piece, as most of the runes were hidden any way that you arranged it.

Karl mentally designed the entire plinth, all fifty layers of it, and then began to work on altering it so that it would be more practical, and easier to keep charged when the combatants damaged the protective spells on the arena.

The last thing that anyone needed was for the whole spell to collapse in the middle of a battle and dump the spectators on the ground.

Being an illusionary domain, it was larger inside than outside, so depending where the arena was set up, some of the guests might not land anywhere safe.

Cara saw many fun ways that could be abused, but Karl wasn't going to let her deliberately use the collapse of the arena to dump guests into secure areas that might get them arrested.

It could be funny, but more than a little troublesome.

Bored, Cara came out to join them all in bed, snuggling up to the other side of Dana, then carefully sniffing her to see if she smelled pregnant.

There were wagers on when they would get baby Dana Mages, and she intended to win.

There was a chance that Thor might have this one, he had pretty good instincts, but with a bit of advance knowledge, Cara was sure that she could influence the odds in her favour.

[You know that I can hear your thoughts, right? And Remi, no making potions to induce labour just so that you can get the exact time and date that you have bet on.] Karl warned.

[He's getting too good at this. I didn't even let myself think of it while he was awake, and he still guessed.] Remi commended Karl's ingenuity.

Dana opened one eye. "Is it normal for them to be plotting against us like that? Completely shameless."

Karl laughed. "They forgot that you can hear them now, so they thought that you would be caught unawares when they started making plans to get you to have baby Dana Mages on their selected dates.

If I'm not wrong, they've already started to arrange date nights for us so that they can maximize the odds that conception occurs within the correct window for their wagers."

Dana sighed. "At least one of them isn't completely shameless."

Rae snorted in amusement. [Opal isn't innocent, she just wants to make a film about it. It doesn't matter to her what dates the filming runs.]

The spider had a point. That was not an improvement.