



異世界迷宮で

アイテム

を

4

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Isekai meikyuu de dorei harem wo

(異世界迷宮で奴隷ハーレムを)

Slave harem in the labyrinth of the other world

Shachi Sogano

(蘇我捨恥)

Story Description:

A man was about to commit suicide and decides to search for a way to die in the internet, but then he found an odd site that asked a lot of questions and had a point based system that allows you to create skills and abilities for a character. He took interest in it and when he finished setting his character he was asked "You will now be transported to a world with the settings you choose, coming back is not possible, do you still accept", Then without thinking much of it he pressed YES and he find himself in another world with the skills and abilities he choose to have.

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Chapter 85 : Field trip

*

I awoke hugging Roxanne, like usual.
Sherry is behind me, and Miria is the other side of Roxanne.
Sherry is against my back, and Miria is close enough to reach as well.

I can touch three people when I move.
The population density in the bed went up because there are more people.
It's a nice fit.

Roxanne kisses me.
How does she know I woke up? It's a mystery.

Quietly, without any sound.
I stuck to her, twining with her smooth tongue, wet with saliva.
Roxanne's tongue wriggles with passion.
After thoroughly twirling our tongues with each other, I released her mouth.

Next is Sherry.
Or so I thought, but she seems reluctant.
Things have changed, so she's thinking about something.

“Are you sure?”
“...”
“The order doesn't change?”

Sherry whispered as I held her, and drew her close.
I see.
Does the order change?
It's clear that Roxanne's position is solid.

Now that Miria is here, there is a chance to change order.
That Miria might get a more favored position.
Are you afraid of it?

“It's fine, there won't be any changes soon.”

I answered quietly, and searched for Sherry's lips.

I won't deny that things will never change, because things might get too relaxed.

The kiss order last night was Miria, then Sherry, then Roxanne. This morning we will maintain it with Roxanne, then Sherry, then Miria. I didn't use Sex Maniac last night. I shouldn't go all out on the first day.

“XXXXXXXXXX”

“Good morning-desu, Master.”

When I release Sherry's mouth, something is said by Roxanne and Miria greets me.

Did you teach her to finish things like that, Roxanne?

There's no helping it.

Finally, I exchange a kiss with Miria. Just lightly.

There will be plentiful use of the tongue in the future.

After poking her lips with my tongue, she pulled back a bit with anxiety, so I separated from her lips.

“Good morning Miria. Everyone get changed and we'll go to the labyrinth.”

“Certainly.”

“Yes.”

“Yes-desu.”

I get up and change my clothes.

“We only fought once yesterday. We will try the 12th floor. Miria, be on your guard.”

“XXXXXXXXXX”

“Yes-desu.”

Miria answered when Roxanne translated. Were the desu's taught by Roxanne?

Entering the pitch black wall of [Warp] takes us to Haruba's 12th floor.

“Good. Miria come as well.”

She was told it was safe even though it's unknown, so there's no problem?

"Yes-desu."

"The labyrinth is dangerous. Every second counts. You don't have to speak in a polite way in the labyrinth."

"XXXXXXXXXX"

"Yes."

Roxanne guides our search through the Labyrinth. Grass Bee, and Mino were defeated easily with four wind spells.

"I'll use the sword in the next fight. If a Grass Bee appears, since it has a ranged attack we will charge it without waiting. Roxanne take us to the next one."

"Yes."

I pull Durandal out, and continue with Roxanne's guidance. Grass Bee has a ranged attack, so it would be a disadvantage to wait for it before fighting.

There isn't a problem using magic. However, magic takes time to cast enough spells to defeat the enemy. There will be chances for enemies to attack if they rush in quick.

When I use Durandal, the strategy reverses. I need to approach a demon to use my sword. While I am approaching, I am completely exposed to the enemies ranged attacks. Don't wait. You need to run at the enemy as quickly as possible.

We encountered demons. It's a group of three Grass Bee's. Roxanne begins to run.

"Me, then Miria, then Sherry. Sherry you're the rear guard."

I followed Roxanne without waiting for an answer from Sherry.

"It's coming."

Roxanne stops along the way.
It's the ranged attack from the Grass Bee.
I hear a small sound, and Roxanne begins running again.

I was worried about if it was avoided, but it seems to have been blocked with the shield.

It's reassuring.
I am safe if I am behind Roxanne.
I'm running in the safety zone.

After making it to the Grass Bee, I circle sideways and use [Rush].
I attack again straight away.
The bee attacks my head as it hovers.
I barely avoided it.

I make a severe attack on the Grass Bee's body.
The bee falls.

Three [Rush]'s?
It's the same as Tare's 13th floor.
I could probably defeat it with two [Rush]'s and a normal swing.

The second one was defeated with 2 [Rush]'s, a regular attack, and a pierce from Sherry's spear.
It's just like I thought.
Miria looked to be observing carefully.

The third one had Roxanne as it's opponent.
I knocked it down with five swings from the side.
All the bees disappeared and left behind beeswax.

“Roxanne blocked the ranged attack, and was a great help.”

I thanked Roxanne as I received the beeswax.
Miria had been picking them up.

“Because we had Miria today.”

There was also Sherry and I.
Roxanne, I'd like you to understand that not everyone can dodge like you do.

“I’d appreciate you to keep blocking them in the future.”

“I understand, though it takes more time than dodging them.”

“I don’t mind.”

I gave Roxanne an order.

“Ok.”

“Next, can you find some Mino or NT Ants.”

I check the toughness of a Mino Lv12.

One [Rush] and a regular swing.

Grass Bee on the 12th floor is twice as strong.

I understand that we can fight on Haruba’s 12th floor without problem.

The next challenge is how to get Miria accustomed to it.

Should I let her keep watching until divers level increases?

The ranged attack from the Grass Bee could be a problem.

There is always the chance of receiving an attack.

Should we start fighting on a lower floor in Vale or Quratar’s labyrinth?

How is Quratar’s 12th floor?

I don’t plan to make it a regular hunting ground for now, but we should pass Quratar’s 11th floor and go to the 12th.

There isn’t any downside to it.

“I want to go to Quratar’s 12th floor, do you think it will be safe for Miria?”

“I think it will be safe.”

“The cane has been strengthened, so there shouldn’t be a problem.”

Roxanne and Sherry give their agreement.

Roxanne’s opinion might be an overestimation, but if Sherry says it’s safe is it safe?

“The map is in the house, so we’ll get it, and make it to Quratar’s 12th floor, then leave it til tomorrow morning. For today, how about we go to Vale’s 8th floor?”

When Sherry was a master smith Lv1, we fought on the 8th floor.

The demon of Vale’s 8th floor is the Collagen Coral.

Fighting it should be good.

I don't know if the Collagen Coral demon is considered aquatic.
It feels like it might be aquatic.

Coral is.

“XXXXXXXXXX”

“XXXXXXXXXX”

“Um. Miria would like to be taken along instead of being left in the house.”

Roxanne reports after speaking with Miria.

I see.

Will Miria be alright even if it's unfamiliar?

“Shall we go?”

“Yes.”

I [Warp] to the storeroom in the house where the map is kept.
It's before sunrise, and the room is pitch-black.

“There is a booklet on the shelf. We need the 11th sheet of papyrus.
There is a spear leaning against the shelf, take it.”

“They have been taken.”

“That's fast.”

Miria has grabbed the map straight away.

I can't even see Miria.

The ability to see in the dark seems to be extremely good.

I call out, and we go to Quratar's 11th floor with [Warp].

“Is here alright?”

Roxanne receives the map from Miria and checks it.

“It's the room near the entrance.”

“I understand. This way.”

“Miria, use the spear. Attack if you get a chance. Think about safety first,
and don't step out front.”

Miria starts to pass the spear, but I leave her with it.

It's the copper spear Sherry used previously.
Since it has an empty skill slot, I didn't sell it.

It's possible to attack demons with the spear, while keeping some distance.

It's a good weapon for Miria to use at the moment.

I receive the wooden shield from her.

She wears the dagger like a sword.

We move along the path indicated by the map, while beating several demons.

If the Green Caterpillar is defeated with 4 spells, then it isn't much of a threat.

Miria succeeded attacking several times without taking a hit before we arrived at the boss room.

The boss on the 11th floor is the White Caterpillar. Roxanne makes all its attacks useless at the front, while I cancel all its skills.

Miria also pierced it with the spear from the side.

It is such a majestic battle.

It would probably calm me down if this was my first time in the labyrinth.

Do you feel that you're fitting in as a party member?

"The demon on the 12th floor is the Sarracenia. It has a special attack that shoots digestive fluids. You might get poisoned if you are hit with it. It doesn't have a tolerance to any kind of magic, and fire is its weakness."

TN: It's a real plant if you want to google it.

We entered the 12th floor, and Sherry gave a briefing.

It shoots digestive fluids. It seems to be a scary demon.

"We'll fight once."

It's the demon on the 12th floor, and I just have to use fire magic.

If I use fire magic on it, since that's its weakness I'll just have to use four. It's not a major threat if it's just four.

"The 12th and 13th floors will be good money for our party. It would be

good for hunting, unless you want to go to the labyrinths in the Harz territory.”

“Why is that?”

“The Sarracenia drops aconite root, which is a raw material for the nourishment pill to be made.”

Sherry explained it, since I was puzzled.

I can make nourishment pill?

I should be able to make it from the herbalists skill [Herbal medicine generation].

Selling antidotes made from leaves makes more profit than just selling leaves.

So it's the same for aconite root, it makes a higher profit as nourishment pills?

It's natural.

If the aconite root was more valuable, people making nourishment pills would disappear.

The payment a herbalist gets from making nourishment pills must be high.

“I see. Roxanne, can you guide us to a Sarracenia?”

Roxanne leads us forward.

A demon with a grassy appearance appears.

It has two green leaves, and a green head.

The leaves stick out to the right and left. They appear to be it's arms.

It's almost the same height as Sherry.

You could say that it's big, but it's not especially big if you think of Japanese pampas grass, and goldenrods.

A brown root wriggles eerily towards us.

I used a [Fire ball].

The flames lick it's grassy surface for an instant.

I use a second shot.

An orange magic formation appears at the base of the Sarracenia.

“It's coming.”

Since I went to the side, even if Roxanne hadn't mentioned it I had already seen it.

I hid behind Roxanne immediately.

I am pathetic.

The Sarracenia lowered its head.

I say head, but it's more like a tulip's flower.

The inside is hollow.

The Sarracenia's head is like a bag.

It has a feeling like a pitcher plant.

An insectivorous plant.

Is that why it shoots digestive juices?

The digestive juice is launched from the head of the Sarracenia.

I give it a [Fire ball] in return.

Roxanne blocks the demons attack with the Iron Shield.

Sherry & Miria pierce it with their spears.

The Sarracenia swings a leaf.

Roxanne avoids it.

I use a fourth [Fire ball].

The Sarracenia is covered in fire, and it collapses.

"Is the digestive juices alright?"

"Yes. It should dry soon."

"Oh?"

I check with Roxanne, but there doesn't seem to be a problem of it melting the shield.

Saracenia Lv12 is defeated with four fire spells, which is its weakness.

It's the same as Grass Bee Lv12.

"The attacks are usually more dangerous than the digestive juices. It has a wide swing range which is hard to discern, and difficult to block with a sword or shield."

Finally, an enemy has appeared that annoys Roxanne?

The swing is hard to see because it's a leaf.

It's possible that it bends as it moves.

Sherry brings the dropped aconite root.

I remove monk, and add herbalist.

I put the aconite root in my palm, and use [Herbal medicine generation].

Three pills are made from the aconite root.

Nourishment pills.

Unlike antidote pills, there seem to be three.

This is how nourishment pills are made?

“Okay, I can make the nourishment pills.”

“XXXXXXXXXX”

Miria is saying something to Roxanne. She has an amazed expression.

Getting her used to things seems to be progressing well.

Chapter 86 : Mayonnaise

*

We kept hunting Sarracenias on 12th floor of Quratar's labyrinth until one slot of my Item Box was completely filled up with nourishment pills. I pass ten pills to Sherry for contingencies.

Miria has acquired Herbalist Lvl.
Because she picked up dried aconite roots, most likely.
Dried aconite root is considered a medicinal herb like leaf, it seems.

Surprisingly, fighting against Sarracenia wasn't that difficult.
Because it's plant, its offensive ability is not that great.
Even when I engaged it in close quarters with Durandal, it was an easy victory.

"Uh-oh"

When I was lost in thought, I get attacked with digestive fluid.
While I was focused on my sides, it drops on me from above.
I tried to jump out of the way but couldn't dodge it in time.

"So it has such an attack pattern."

Roxanne says casually. I was about to die here!
I swing Durandal and manage to take it out.

"Sherry, do you think Collagen Coral is an aquatic monster?"
"I think it is."

Because Sarracenia seems dangerous, we move to 8th floor of Vale's labyrinth.
Sherry agrees with my notion of Collagen Coral being an aquatic monster.

"Have you heard about a skill called Anti-Aquatic Enhancement?"
"I'm afraid I haven't."
"Miria doesn't know about it either?"

Because it's a passive skill?

“Miria, which is the highest floor you have visited?”

“Only first floor, she says.”

“Well, 8th floor may be difficult for you but the monsters there are aquatic, so you shouldn’t face any trouble due to your Diver job.”

We start hunting on 8th floor.

It took three spells to take out a Collagen Coral Lv8.

I adjust bonus points and increase Intelligence so much so that I can almost take monsters out in two spells.

I leave a Collagen Coral, that had already received two of my spells, for Miria.

Steel spear, scimitar or bare hands?

Miria neither has Swordsman job nor Monk.

Miria attacks using spear and easily takes the monster out.

When she attacks it with sword, however, it counterattacks.

As expected, her movement is not on Roxanne’s level.

That’s a relief.

I would cry if it were standard for beastkin.

When Miria tries to attack it with bare hands, she receives an attack.

“Are you alright?”

“xxxxxxxxxx”

“Yes.”

I apply Plating and cast two Treats.

Miria receives one more attack before taking out the Collagen Coral.

When I open Party Job Settings interface, Miria had Monk Lvl and Swordsman Lvl jobs.

“How were the attacks of the monsters?”

“She says that it was alright.”

“Can you fight against monsters other than aquatic?”

“Yes.”

Miria replies energetically.

She seems sufficiently motivated.

I’m glad.

We move to 8th floor of Quratar's labyrinth and fight against a Needle Wood Lv8.

I ask her to use sword again. While attacking, she receives an attack again.

I cast Treat and apply Plating again.

“How was it?”

“Although it's more difficult than Collagen Coral, she says that she can fight.”

“Okay. So, do we advance through 9th, 10th and 11th floors? The number of attacks required to take monsters out increases by one with every floor. Or do we jump to 12th floor and have Miria stay in the rear?”

I was not sure myself, so I ask the three for their opinion.

It will be safer if monsters can be taken out in one hit.

Receiving attacks from monsters is desired the least.

I don't want Miria to suffer pain.

However, even if we enter lower floors, it won't be 100% safe.

It won't be funny if she receives attacks during this experiment of mine and dies.

I take the gamble and move to 12th floor.

Even if you're in the rear, it's not entirely safe for you are in labyrinth.

There's a possibility of stray magic coming your way.

On the contrary, if I have her observe 12th floor, she may grow more quickly.

“In my opinion, we should have advanced through the floors in order. Receiving attacks is not a big deal. In labyrinth, there's always risk of receiving attacks.”

Roxanne opines.

To someone like Roxanne, it may really not be a big deal.

“Advancing through the floors in order is indeed better from safety viewpoint. It's not like we are going to receive attacks intentionally.”

Sherry is rational as ever.

It will be nice if Miria is rational too.

“XXXXXXXXXXXX”

“XXXXXXXXXXXX”

“Miria says that she agrees with what sister said.”

Are you sure Roxanne didn't force you to say that?

Oh well, if she says that she's fine with it, so be it.

Due to popular opinion, we decide to advance through the floors in order.

We move to 9th floor of Quratar's labyrinth and then proceed to 10th.

I take out all monsters but one and leave that one for Miria to take out.

Whenever Miria receives an attack, I finish it off myself.

Because she has already acquired Swordsman and Monk jobs, there's no need to overdo it.

“Are you okay?”

“Okay.”

She answers when I ask her while casting Treat.

She seems to have learned the word 'okay.'

Miria has been able to endure attacks of monsters up to Green Caterpillar Lv11.

“12th floor will be difficult. Should we proceed?”

“XXXXXXXXXXXX”

“Okay.”

When Roxanne translates, Miria replies determinedly.

Miria seems to be brave by nature.

It's a necessary trait to be able to fight in labyrinth.

I wonder if it's natural for people to be so in a world filled with labyrinths such as this.

No, it's people such as these who choose to fight in labyrinth.

Had I chosen a beautiful woman instead, I don't think it would have been the same.

There's a possibility that Miria is saying so superficially because she's our party member.

“Well then, we'll now move on to 12th floor of Haruba's labyrinth. You will not actively take part in fighting. For now, just try to get a hang of it.

Poke your spear from the distance if you find an opportunity. You will be in the rear while Sherry will take your place in the front for the time being.”

Having advanced through prior floors, she has now leveled up to Diver Lv3.

12th floor won't be a problem as long as she doesn't get killed in one hit.

We move to 12th floor of Haruba's labyrinth.

We start hunting in usual manner.

Miria is observing from the rear.

Like I thought, there's no problem in having her observe from the back.

Because I can take monsters out in four wind type spells, battles don't take long to end.

Ranged attacks appear sporadically but Roxanne takes care of those.

Over the course of morning, Miria's Diver job has leveled up to Lv5.

Because she's low level, the pace of her leveling up is quick.

If this keeps up, she'll soon be able to hold her own.

We finish hunting and head to Quratar's adventurers guild.

To buy ingredients for breakfast.

I was afraid as to what would happen at the fishmonger but Miria passes it by normally.

She's no longer insisting on eating fish.

Because she said earlier that she wants fish every ten days, is that why?

“The fish doesn't seem to be fresh.”

While I was pondering over it, Roxanne whispers in my ear.

I see.

It's probably leftover stock.

Did they really put unsold fish from yesterday on stall?

That's bad for business.

“Does Miria want to make something?”

“XXXXXXXXXX”

“XXXXXXXXXX”

“Roasted meat. I’ll help her out, so it’ll be alright.”

There really won’t be any fish today.
If Roxanne will be cooking with her, it’ll be fine.

“Then I’ll make soup.”
“Would you like to add egg to the soup?”
“Egg? Okay.”

It seems to be Sherry’s turn to make soup today.
After buying egg, bread and other food ingredients, we return home.
I’ll make something else then.

I first take egg yolk and add some vinegar into it.
I bend a wire to blend it.
After that, I add some olive oil to the mixture.
Because I don’t know the exact quantity of the oil to be added, I add it
little by little.

I keep whipping it until it thickens.
I whip it.
And whip it.
Until it’s ready. Mayonnaise, that is.

“Here.”
I pass egg white to Sherry.

“I understand that this is egg white but what is that thing?”
“It’s seasoning. We will make fish for Miria in the evening after
tomorrow. It makes fish delicious.”

“Ooooh”

Miria looks at me with shocked eyes.
She seems to have understood that we are talking about fish even without
Roxanne translating it.

“You seem to be doing well in labyrinth, so this is your reward.”
“XXXXXXXXXX”
“Tasty, desu.”

She hasn't eaten it yet but she's already calling it 'tasty.'

"It's reward. Reward."

"Reward, desu."

Miria repeats it after me.

As for the meaning of the word 'reward,' I'll teach that to her later tonight.

I'll teach her the essence of the word.

I put the lid on mayonnaise.

"Don't eat it just yet or it'll upset your stomach. Also, don't take it out with bare hands."

I leave with that note.

There's a chance for raw egg to contain salmonella.

It is, therefore, suggested not to eat raw eggs.

Because there's vinegar and olive oil in mayonnaise, however, it'll die out in about a day.

Apparently, Miria can make dishes other than fish.

It's delicious.

I continue hunting after breakfast and then head to the Imperial capital in the evening.

To buy negligee for Miria.

Negligee here is made of thin, translucent fabric.

I wasn't able to buy one yesterday.

We have already spent a night together, so she won't be shy about it.

Miria is choosing her negligee with Roxanne and Sherry.

The three of them are making too much noise.

It will obviously take time.

I have made a mistake.

I should have done it before buying fish.

She would have immediately finished shopping had that been the case.

"Do you sell palace maid outfits?"

Because there was no end to waiting in sight, I start conversation with

an attendant.

It's better to ask that from a male than a female.

Miria doesn't have any maid outfit.

“You can have it tailored. You just have to choose fabric and we will get it ready in ten days.”

“Really?”

That's great.

It seems to be in demand.

“Ordinary fabric will cost you 3,000 Nar. Silk-blend fabric will cost you 6,000 Nar. If you opt for pure-silk fabric, it'll cost you 10,000 Nar. It's incredibly soft and has the best texture.”

He leads me to the fabric section.

I touch the pure-silk fabric which he shows to me.

So smooth. So soft.

I imagine embracing Roxanne, Sherry and Miria wrapped in this fabric.

Damn!

This man knows exactly why I want maid outfit.

It was a mistake to have asked this from a male.

“This time, I intend to have only one outfit tailored, so I would like to go with ordinary fabric.”

I can't have only Miria wearing outfit made of pure silk.

I ask him for ordinary fabric which costs 3,000 Nar.

The maid outfit which I bought from the slave merchant costed me 4,000 Nar.

If I eliminate his profit margin, it'll be same as this ordinary one.

In other words, he charged a profit of 1,000 Nar!

That's too much!

But it's too late now.

Miria finishes choosing her negligee.

It's blue. Same color as her hair.

“Well, I'll take measurements then.”

“It’s for her.”

“Very well.”

I send Miria to a female attendant.

“You both received your outfits from the slave merchant in Vale but there’s no outfit for Miria, so I’m having one tailored for her.”

I explain to Roxanne while enjoying the spectacle of Miria giving her measurements.

They may think that Miria is receiving special treatment, so I explain it to them.

“Indeed. Miria is the only one who doesn’t have any.”

Replies Roxanne.

Are you okay with it?

I let out a sigh of relief.

If you have a harem, you need to take care of everyone.

“Thank you very much.”

Miria comes back after giving her measurements and expresses her gratitude after hearing from Roxanne as to what was it about.

She’s not as happy about clothes as she tends to be about fish.

Or perhaps she’s not happy about maid outfit?

“How would you like to pay? You can make advance payment either in full or half.”

“I’ll pay in full together with this.”

So there’s an option to pay latter half when the outfit is ready?

If I pay later, I’m not sure if 30% discount will work at that time.

At this time, however, 30% discount is effective for I have bought a negligee as well.

I pay for the maid outfit fully in advance.

“I heard from grandfather that you can pay in advance if you are going to have your clothes tailored.”

Sherry remarks at dinner.

“You heard from your grandfather?”

“To pay fully in advance is a token of trust.”

“Ah, I see.”

There’s a risk of merchant running away with your money if you pay in advance.

But there’s no such risk here for the store is in prime location of the Imperial capital.

On the contrary, it is I who may die in labyrinth.

So my paying fully in advance can be taken as an expression of trust.

“As expected of master. xxxxxxxxxxxx”

“M-Miria, do you like any dish other than fish?”

When Roxanne translates it, Miria’s expression turns respectful, so I try to change the topic.

What did she translate it to?

For some reason, I feel it’s not right to leave the matter of her education to Roxanne.

By the way, Miria properly made stir-fried food for dinner.

“She seems to like only fish.”

“I guess.”

“She also ate crabs and shrimps when she used to fish.”

There are crabs and shrimps in this world?

I have yet to see one.

They’re probably sold in areas near the sea.

“What about shellfish?”

“I don’t think there exists a person who doesn’t like shellfish.”

“Really?”

While Roxanne was translating it, I ask Sherry.

“Umm... normal shellfish can’t be eaten. Only shellfish that are dropped by monsters can be eaten.”

“I-I see.”

Really?

It's my first time hearing this.

I haven't seen shellfish anywhere.

"Shellfish is truly delicious. However, it's in short supply, so it's quite expensive. For this reason, common people eat it only on holidays or special occasions."

In this world, holiday is the first day of a 90-days-long season. So they eat special food on special days?

"Miria has yet to eat one. I ate clam once. It was delicious."

What Roxanne ate was clam.

I wonder if it really is delicious.

"Clam huh? Is it sold at the fishmonger?"

"Umm... sorry. It wasn't my intention when I said that."

"Yes, I know."

"Also, Miria says that she has eaten enough fish for now."

Miria might have said that.

But I'm sure that it didn't come from her heart.

mranon: I still have no idea what this countdown is for. [Insert evil laugh]

Chapter 87 : Clam Chowder

*

When I wake up in the morning, Miria greets me. I somehow feel unusually refreshed upon waking up. It's best to go to sleep after getting pleurably tired. Once you've got a good night's sleep, you would feel pleasantly refreshed.

I never felt tired with Roxanne and Sherry. Now that they have increased to three, with the addition of Miria, I feel slightly fatigued. However, this doesn't mean in any way that I have expended my all. If push comes to shove, I have Sex Maniac. I'm quite surprised at my own vigor, actually.

After kissing Miria in the last, I get up from bed. She's still clumsy at kissing but it feels good in its own way. The way Roxanne aggressively squirms her tongue in my mouth feels better, so does the way Sherry gently entwines her tongue with mine. I'm lucky to be able to enjoy three varieties.

After changing into our equipment, we move to 12th floor of Haruba's labyrinth.

"Because we have already advanced through the floors in order, Miria should be familiar now. Try to fight in the frontline. Don't overdo it however."

I pull a copper spear out and hand it to Miria. She's Diver Lv10 now. Because her level has hit two digits, I can afford to have her up front.

Three of them line up in the front. Roxanne positions herself in the centre with Sherry and Miria on her left and right respectively. With this formation, we start hunting.

I can take monsters out on 12th floor of Haruba's labyrinth in four

spells.

Battles on this floor are not lengthy.

I can take the monster out before it's able to attack Miria successively.

I continue to hunt and observe her state.

She seems to be doing fine.

Miria has yet to receive an attack.

Ironically, It was I who receives first attack of the day.

When I swing Durandal, I receive body slam from a Grass Bee.

When I use Durandal, it becomes dogfight. Consequently, the battle lengthens, so I can't help but receive attacks.

This is the excuse I have come up with.

Plating is indispensable for Miria.

Therefore, I can't remove Alchemist.

Because I have other skills at my disposal, I decide to remove Warrior.

Without Rush, it takes four normal strikes which requires time.

Before long, it becomes easy to take a Grass Bee out in four strikes of Durandal.

Miria leveling up being the reason.

In the beginning, it used to take about five strikes due to missed hits.

However, I can consistently take them out in four strikes now.

I can't become strong overnight.

It takes time. One step at a time.

Coincidentally, the more Miria is leveling up, the more I'm becoming strong.

Miria's Diver job has an effect 'Small Increase in Strength.'

Job effects seem to be shared by all party members after all.

'Small Increase in Strength' effect of Diver job is definitely being shared by the party. The extent of increase depends on Miria's level.

Apparently, if all party members are high level and one low level member joins the party, they can fight without any trouble.

First experiment is over. Time for second.

Although I'm a little apprehensive, I change Miria's job to Villager Lv5.

I send Miria to the rear. It now takes five strikes of Durandal to take a Grass Bee out.

So it was thanks to Miria's Diver job that I was able to take monsters out in four strikes.

By the way, when I fight using Durandal, I join Roxanne in the front. Miria connects with her spear from the back.

Depending on the number of monsters, Sherry switches between the frontline and the backline.

When I'm in the front, fights take longer to end compared to when Miria is in the front.

It can't be helped, however, for I receive attacks from monsters.

Never before had I thought as to why people in the front take longer.

Today, Roxanne receives an attack as well.

When you're in the centre of the frontline, you're exposed to most of the attacks.

In other words, I shouldn't even think about taking central position in the front.

There's no other option.

Nothing can be done about it.

She has to bear with the attacks.

I receive another attack. This time, from an NT Ant.

I return the favor with Durandal and take it out.

When Grass Bee, Mino and NT Ant appear together, we take out the NT Ant first.

Reason being, it can use poison attacks. Also, I can take it out in two strikes.

NT Ants appear together with other monsters.

So I can't help but receive attacks.

I don't receive attacks, however, when I fight one-on-one.

I believe so, at least.

After taking out NT Ant, I rush toward Grass Bee.

The ant turns into smoke and dissipates.

Oh

What remained in its place was not poison sting but a white card.
A monster card.

Monster Card | Ant

Ant Monster Card?

While glancing at it, I take two Grass Bees out.
I didn't receive any attack from the Grass Bees.
I could afford to take my eyes off them because Roxanne was there to hold them off.

I receive the monster card from Sherry.

“What skill does Ant Monster Card give?”

“If fused with an armor, it gives Poison Resistance skill. If fused with a weapon, it gives Poison Fang skill.”

“Poison skills huh? Well, I intend to use Kobold Monster Card with Rabbit Monster Card. Should I use Ant Monster Card as is?”

“You can have it fused with your armor. It'll give you protection against poison attacks. When you upgrade your armor, you can just resell it for good price.”

Should I attach the skill to my armor then?

It's understandable because I'm the one who receives attacks from monsters the most.

Thus far, I'm the only one who has been inflicted with poison.

“Should I fuse it with my leather cap? Or should I buy new hard leather gloves?”

“The better the equipment, the higher the profit margin upon reselling it.”

I see.

You should have told me so before attaching Water Resistance skill to leather mittens.

I would have bought better equipment at that time.

Perhaps Sherry was not confident that she would be successful?

If you use expensive equipment, you have to succeed.

If you don't think you can succeed, you should better use either that equipment which you can remake or cheap equipment.

Because she is confident now, is that why she's recommending me to fuse it with better equipment?

It's natural to be confident if you succeed consecutively without failing even once.

I must do my part, so that she doesn't lose this confidence of hers.

We finish hunting and move to Quratar's adventurers guild.

It's still too early for the armor shop to open.

I head to the fishmonger.

Miria comes right by my side.

There was a fish which she was staring at intently.

I wonder if it's a quality fish.

She doesn't say anything however.

I have already announced that there will be fish for tomorrow's dinner. So it's probably enough for her.

It's serving as her restraint.

"Do you sell clams?"

"Of course."

"I would like to buy two."

I speak with the old man explorer and receive two clams.

It doesn't have shell.

It looks like a shellfish without shell.

When I use Appraisal, it says clam.

I try to put it in my Item Box.

As expected, it's a dropped item.

It goes into the Item Box without any problem.

It's small however.

It really is 'small,' not 'not big.'

"Thank you very much."

"Can I have two more?"

“Certainly.”

Freshwater clams are not this small.
It might be oriental clam.
Whatever, it's clam nonetheless.
If larger ones are not available, I'll just get more.

“Thank you very much. Four clams will be 896 Nar.”

I pay the amount to the merchant.
It's pretty expensive.
If you compare it with the prices of eggs and vegetables, it's quite high.

Because it's a dropped item, most likely.
If it were cheap as kobold salt, no one would bother selling it.

In respect of serving per person, prices of meat and fish are about same.
Clam, however, seems expensive.
No wonder it's eaten only on special occasions.

“Are you sure about this?”

When we leave the fishmonger, Roxanne asks.

“I'll make soup this morning, so I bought extra.”

“Okay, I understand.”

When Roxanne translates it to Miria, she looks at me wide-eyed.
I'm still not sure if Roxanne translates my words accurately.
After buying bread and vegetables, we return home.

First, I add a little wine to water and simmer the clams.
In case of shellfish, you keep the pot open. Because it's clams, however, I don't know the time it'll take to boil.
If I leave it for long, it may get overcooked.

After that, I dice vegetables and ham, and stir-fry it. Next, I make white roux.

I take the clams out from the pot and add it, along with stir-fried vegetables and ham, to white roux.

I then heat it up to slightly below the boiling point. It's ready. Clam

chowder, that is.

I take the pot off fire and put it on dining table.

“XXXXXXXXXXXX”

“Miria says that it’s her first time eating clams.”

Oh, so she was watching me when I was cooking?
The surprise has been spoiled.

“Although there are clams, it’s basically soup.”

One clam with some soup for each of us.
I wonder if the soup is failure.
It can’t be. No ingredient is missing if I remember correctly.
Smell wafting from the soup is great, at least.

I taste it to confirm.
Oh
Delicious!
It’s a success.

I pick the dark clam up from the thick soup.
The clam is chewy and rich in flavor.

So delicious!
It was worth every Nar.
How can it be so delicious?

And whats with this amazing smell?
I know it’s awkward saying that about something I made myself.

“Master, it’s really delicious.”
“It’s by far the best clam I have eaten.”
“Tasty, desu.”

I receive positive feedback from the three.
I wonder if I’m master or mistress.

I should make it again sometime but not so often or they’ll get used to this luxury.
It’ll be troublesome.

After breakfast, I visit the armor shop by myself.
I buy a hard leather cap and hard leather gloves.
There's hard leather headband too but it seems to be an accessory for females.
Because Roxanne isn't here, I get done with it in no time.

After returning home, I pass hard leather cap and Ant Monster Card to Sherry.

Sherry takes a deep breath and fuses the monster card successfully.

Poison Resistant Hard Leather Cap | Head Equipment
Skills: Poison Resistance | Empty

“Oh, I did it.”

“Well done, Sherry.”

“Amazing, desu.”

Miria leans forward.

Now that I think about it, Miria must have seen Sherry doing this for the first time.

“As expected of Sherry.”

“xxxxxxxxxxx”

“Miria says that everyone in this party is so amazing.”

She looks at Sherry with eyes full of respect.

If you work hard, you deserve appreciation.

Roxanne isn't the only amazing one in this party.

Kaga Michio | Male | 17 years old

Explorer Lv37 | Hero Lv34 | Wizard Lv36 | Alchemist Lv31 | Monk Lv35

Equipment: Rod of Offerings | Poison Resistant Hard Leather Cap |
Leather Armor | Hard Leather Gloves | Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Roxanne | Female | 16 years old

Beast Warrior Lv26

Equipment: Scimitar | Iron Shield | Leather Cap | Hard Leather Jacket |
Leather Gloves | Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Sherry | Female | 16 years old

Master Smith Lv24

Equipment: Steel Spear | Leather Cap | Chainmail | Waterproof Leather Mittens | Leather Shoes

Miria | Female | 15 years old

Diver Lv12

Equipment: Copper Spear | Leather Cap | Chainmail | Leather Gloves | Leather Shoes

We put our equipment on and move to 12th floor of Haruba's labyrinth. Because I can't afford to test Poison Resistance skill, I fight in usual manner.

Should I try to deliberately receive a poison attack?

Nope.

I don't mind receiving antidote mouth-to-mouth from a party member however.

Okay, I'm ready.

When I want to receive attack, no one is attacking me.

This time, it's Miria who receives the attack.

It's a group of four Grass Bees.

I take all four of them out in four Breeze Storms.

I apply plating and cast four Heals.

"Are you okay?"

"Yes."

It looked like there was quite an impact but her face doesn't suggest so. So, is she really okay?

Her Diver job has leveled up to Lv15.

"I'll give her wooden shield now. She'll be in the frontline with you, Roxanne. Tell her not to overexert herself however."

"Understood."

Roxanne translates it.

I take copper spear back and pass wooden shield to her.

Miria pulls out the dagger on her waist.

Under Roxanne's guidance, we encounter a group of three Grass Bees and a Mino.

"Miria, stay back until the monster approaches."

When I shot first Breeze Storm, Miria lost her footing.

"Here it comes."

Right after Roxanne says this, one of the Grass Bees shoots a needle. It's better to have Roxanne take on this ranged attack. After Roxanne deflects the needle with her shield, I launch second wind spell.

After I shoot third Breeze Storm, Sherry and Miria step forward.

One of the Grass Bees tries to shoot another ranged attack but it was too late.

Sherry and Roxanne take on a Grass Bee each. Miria takes on the Mino. It's one-on-one now.

Sherry thrusts her spear into the Grass Bee.

Roxanne slashes with her scimitar while Miria waves her dagger.

Miria parries the Mino's ram with her wooden shield.

I launch fourth Breeze Storm.

Bees collapse one after the other.

Miria seems to be able to fight in the front just fine. Once she gets accustomed to this role, it'll be great.

Chapter 88 : Fish Fry

*

“Do you need olive oil?”

Asks Roxanne.

Before we were done with hunting for the day, we move to 6th floor of Vale’s labyrinth. Reason being, there are Naive Olives on this floor.

“Just a little.”

We hunt Naive Olives until one slot of my Item Box was completely filled with olive oil.

We finish hunting and move to Quratar’s adventurers guild.

Miria is excited and walks ahead of us.

Today is the day for the promised fish.

“Fish~ fish~ fish~ desu.”

It’s obvious that she hasn’t forgotten.

We make a beeline for the fishmonger.

There are other things I want to buy but it’s not possible to buy anything before buying fish.

“Is there any good fish?”

“xxxxxxxxxx”

“Rock sole, she says.”

The moment Roxanne translates my question, Miria immediately points her finger at one.

“You have a keen eye for fish. This pseudo-trout was caught just now. It’s fresh and its meat is excellent. It tastes best when roasted or stewed.”

Rock sole is called pseudo-trout?

Well, it does resemble trout.

Its size is about 20 centimeters.

Just the right size.

“Four pseudo-trouts then.”

“Thank you for your patronage.”

“Here are four pseudo-trouts for a special price of 28 Nar.”

So one fish is priced at 10 Nar?

It's not that expensive.

Compared to clams, especially.

I pay the amount to the merchant while Miria receives the fish.

The old man explorer wraps the fish in papyrus and hands it to Miria.

Carrying four fish is supposed to be difficult, it seems.

Well, if she wants to do it, there's no reason to refuse.

“I'll be making fish for Miria. Is there something you want to make, Roxanne, Sherry?”

“Very well. Sherry, would you like to make soup?”

“Alright, I'll make soup then.”

I buy other ingredients like bread, eggs and vegetables.

We visit the hardware seller, who had been looking after our house before we rented it, and buy a pot.

“Miria, is there any utensil that you want for cooking?”

“This pan is good.”

Roxanne translates.

Miria points to a pan with shallow base. It looks just like paella pan.

Handles are attached to both sides.

We indeed don't have such a pan in our house.

“This?”

“With this pan, she says that she can make delicious fish cuisine.”

Fish again huh?

I had to go for 30% discount anyway.

This pan would do the job.

After buying the pot with lid, which I chose, and the pan with shallow base, which Miria chose, we return home.

“Miria, can you fillet the fish?”

I ask her in the kitchen.

Miria gets down to it without needing Roxanne to translate what I said. I knew it. She understands all those Brahim words which have even slightest relation with fish.

I leave an egg to boil.

Fish has been filleted already.

Miria brings filleted fish on chopping board.

“Yes, desu.”

“It’s done already?”

“Done, desu.”

I receive fillets from Miria.

There are eight slices.

They have been carefully skinned.

It looks tasty already.

“Can you please squeeze these lemons?”

“Yes, desu.”

Once again, she gets down to it without needing Roxanne to translate. I add chopped vegetables, mayonnaise and lemon juice to the pot, and crush the boiled egg.

It’s ready. Tartar sauce, that is.

“Now finely crush this bread. Like this.”

I pick the bread up in front of Miria and Roxanne who’s translating.

“It’s called bread crumbs.”

“Bread crumbs?”

“Because I don’t have cheese, I’ll use this as substitute.”

“I-I’ll translate it to Miria.”

Why is she making such a sad face?

She translates it to Miria and runs away.

I add some olive oil to the new pan and heat it.

I dredge the slices – which I had already seasoned with salt and pepper – in flour, beaten eggs and bread crumbs, and fry it in the pan.

After pouring some tartar sauce over it, fish fry is ready to be served.

Now that it's ready, I'll have the girls know that it wasn't a substitute for cheese.

This recipe involves very few steps, so the chance of failure is low. Judging from the look, too, there doesn't seem to be any problem. Miria is staring at it with watered mouth. I hope it's a success.

The moment the dinner starts, Miria digs into the fish fry. When she stuffs her mouth with the fish, her eyes open wide.

"T-T-T-Tasty, desu!"

She seems to like it.

I try to eat mine.

It's indeed delicious.

The sour taste of tartar sauce is mingling quite well with the taste of the fish.

"It's delicious. I have never eaten such a dish."

"Neither have I."

"It's one of the fish recipes I know."

"As expected of Master."

Roxanne and Sherry seem to like it just as well.

Miria looks depressed after having downed two slices.

Each slice was enough in its own right.

"Here, have mine."

"Thank you very much, desu."

The moment I divide my slice, Miria snatches it.

Miria snatches half of Sherry's and Roxanne's as well.

Sharing food helps in developing better relationship.

Fish fry doesn't seem to exist in this world. I can make it however.

Caught up in the moment, I make tonkatsu next morning.

Although eating meat for breakfast is not a good habit, I get to eat only two meals a day in this world, so it's not an issue.

It has been quite long since I last ate tonkatsu. (TN: Tonkatsu

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tonkatsu>)

Although pork meat can easily be acquired on 13th floor of Tare's labyrinth, it's delicious.

Although there's no sauce here, it's delicious.

It kind of reminds me of Japan.

“Isn't it strange?”

Roxanne says when we resume our morning hunt.

“What is?”

“There's a person ahead. At such a time as this no less. This person was there yesterday at the same location and the day before yesterday as well.”

It's indeed strange for someone to be at the same location in the labyrinth everyday.

Well, I too hunt at the same location for quite an extended period of time.

“Is it perhaps a monster that smells like human?”

“I haven't heard of such a monster. So far, I have been avoiding that location because I was supposed to stay clear of places with people.”

Because I use magic spells, I instruct Roxanne to avoid crowded places. When there are people waiting next to boss rooms, we avoid boss battles as well.

Because it's a bad idea.

Few days have passed since we advanced to 12th floor.

Since I can take out the monsters here in four spells, hunting has been smooth thus far.

Because we can't see anyone around, that person must be on the far end.

“Now that I think about it, I have heard such a thing.”

“Do you know something, Sherry?”

“Thieves set up ambush in those labyrinths where not many people are found, like this one. I'm sorry that I forgot about it because I heard it way back when I was a kid.”

Thieves?

Is that really so?

“Not many people?”

“Many people enter Quratar’s labyrinth, so it’s not best to set up ambush there. An ambush will be effective in labyrinths, such as this one, where not many people are found.”

There are three labyrinths in the Harz duchy.

I was asked of by the Duke because they were short of capable people. Knights and explorers in the territory must have been divided in three groups.

So the people per labyrinth are naturally less.

“But why here, on 12th floor?”

“Monsters on 12th floor are a lot stronger than monsters on first eleven floors, so people upgrade their equipment.”

“To rob equipment?”

“Indeed. Those who advance to 12th floor, albeit barely, can be classified as intermediate. Thieves can overpower them with enough numbers. Even if they possess better equipment themselves, intermediate equipment can be sold for good sum.”

So, is this why they set up ambush on 12th floor?

Sherry’s explanation sounds rational.

So there’s a possibility of getting ambushed by thieves on 12th floor?

“Should we wait until he’s gone?”

“If he’s here at this time, you can safely assume that he’ll be here all day. And there are less people at this time because it’s quite early in the morning. It’s a good opportunity to break through.”

Roxanne is brave as ever.

Haruba’s labyrinth is in the north of Quratar’s labyrinth.

It must already be day here but I opt to remain silent

Because if I say that, I’ll have to explain that the world is spherical.

“We should ask the order of knights for help.”

We have another option. Reporting it to Gozer, that is.

But we don’t have any evidence. I can’t say that there is someone who

seems to be thief.

That thief must have entered through the entrance but he was not caught there.

Even if I use Appraisal, I can't present that fact as evidence.

If I kill this thief and collect the bounty, his companions might come looking for me.

That'll be bad.

Killing him is no good.

Also, if I try to claim bounty, I'll need to have my Intelligence Card verified.

Gozer and the order of knights believe that I'm an adventurer.

I can't have them see my Intelligence Card because I'm an explorer.

So approaching Gozer is no good either?

"I don't think the order of knights will help anyone other than the Duke and his family."

Sherry advises against asking the order of knights for help.

"They won't?"

"Protecting us is not their duty."

"Because Master is a free person."

Roxanne supports Sherry.

"I see."

"It does seem difficult."

"Free people are supposed to protect themselves. That way, they can preserve their privileges as a free person. If a free person requests protection, they lose their rights as a free person. Asking for protection is not the best idea."

Sherry explains further.

I don't quite understand this but it seems to be a bad idea.

What I do understand is, there's no such thing as police in this world.

Protect myself?

I have to protect myself?

Isn't that my right? Isn't that their duty?

It's not like I can't ask for protection.

However, it's not free.

I'll have to pay the price.

Instead of asking for protection, can't I just have them listen to me?

Because I'm a free person, I'm supposed to protect myself.

Therefore, even if I say something in this regard, will they listen to me?

After all, I'm supposed to protect myself.

"Is that so?"

"Therefore, we should break through on our own."

So Sherry is brave as well?

Is this attitude rational in this world?

"XXXXXXXXXX"

"Okay."

When Roxanne translates our discussion to Miria, she nods as well.

I'm not sure anymore what's right and what's not.

"It'll be alright. There's only one thief. And we are not that weak either."

"I think so too. Thieves set up ambush with the strength of normal parties in mind. On 12th floor, parties normally take considerable time to take even one monster out. We, on the other hand, take monsters out a lot quicker. Miria and I may be weak links of the party but against a thief, we'll do just fine."

When Sherry says the same thing as Roxanne, it begins to sound rational.

Should we break through on our own then?

It seems normal course of action in this world, at least.

I killed thieves in the very first village I appeared in. I also killed thieves to fund Roxanne's purchase.

But this doesn't mean that I want to make it my profession.

Besides, I don't want to put Roxanne, Sherry and Miria in danger.

If it's one-on-one, however, I can't imagine Roxanne finding herself in trouble.

Sherry has leveled up quite a bit, so she can hold her own against low level thieves.

My concern is Miria who has only recently joined our party.

Well, we don't even know yet if he's actually a thief.

He may be someone who happened to be at the same location for three days straight.

We have to confirm first.

I can use Appraisal.

I can identify immediately if he's thief or not.

With Roxanne's nose, Miria's eyes and my Appraisal, we don't have to be worried about surprise element.

If his level is too high for us, we'll just run away.

"Miria, are you fine with it?"

"XXXXXXXXXX"

"Yes."

When Roxanne translates, Miria nods.

Is it really alright to confront this thief?

These three seem to be brave enough to do it, at least.

"Okay then, I'll go ahead. If I raise my right hand with sword, it's the signal to attack. If I raise my left hand, it's the signal to retreat."

I decide on the signal to retreat if something goes wrong.

I pull Durandal out and head to the location.

It would have been easy if I could use Meteor Crash.

For better or worse, however, area of effect attacks seem to inflict damage only upon monsters.

I prowl through the cave cautiously.

So as not to alert him.

"I'm sorry. There seems to be a hidden room. Earlier, I thought that there was just one. However, if the smell is from the other side of the door, there may be more than one."

Roxanne apologizes.

There's no one visible to the end of the cave.

The thief seems to be on the other side. Furthermore, not just one.

I can't use Appraisal from here.

I can't even go to Gozer like this.

I must confirm that they're thieves.

It'll be better if they're some distance away from the door.

"Everyone, behind me. Roxanne, you take the rearmost position."

With Durandal in my hands, I lead from the front.

In labyrinth, it's not unusual to hold weapon.

I walk to the end of the cave.

The door slides with rumbling sound.

The door sets down, making way to a small room.

There were six thieves inside.

Chapter 89 : Subjugation

*

In the small room in the labyrinth, there are six thieves.
Their levels aren't too high.

Four of them in their 10's, and two in their 20's.

Can a party like this make it to the 12th floor without being attacked?
I don't think so at all.

The maximum party size is six, so it would be six vs six if there were six
opponents.

It would work out to one vs one fights.

Even if they catch me by surprise, I should be able to slaughter them
all.

If I counter-attacked desperately, the difference of two people shouldn't
be bad.

Then I can take my time looting.

If I'm cornered, I could probably get out of it with reckless violence.
The thieves are a cool headed bunch, that lay in wait to attack someone
in the labyrinth.

I don't think these six could rob people on their own.

Is their attack power divided? Do they have more members somewhere
else?

They probably aren't ready since it's early morning.

They've already lost the chance to make a surprise attack.

“XXXXXXXXXX”

“?”

A thief says something, but I don't understand since it isn't in the
brahim language.

When I look confused, a Lv28 thief approaches me.

“Good morning. The boss room is through there. We are going in after
we take a little rest.”

He gestures for us to pass on his left.
He is the one with the highest level among the six thieves.
He seems to be able to speak Brahim.

I watch, and enter the room.
The thieves split up.

Oh crap.
It looks like a move they've trained at beforehand.
The thieves move quickly, and spread through the room.

We weren't really surrounded.
It was more of a cautious distant circle.
They can't tell me not to be cautious, because they are doing the same.

It's difficult to quickly kill the thieves.
It would be a fight with unnatural movements.

What will happen if a fight starts?
Their level is low, and I can probably kill two of them straight away.
I'm not sure about a third person.
By the fourth person, it would be impossible to catch them off guard.

If I fight in this room, Sherry and Miria might also be drawn into a one vs one, as well as Roxanne.
I don't think that I'll lose, but I can't say for certain that I'll win without losses.
I should avoid danger as much as possible.
Can you hear what the thieves are saying quietly.

"Thank you."

We moved left where the thief gestured.
Thieves were standing in positions to block the other passageways.
They don't show an appearance like they are about to attack.

I see.

I understand the thieves strategy.
Of the three directions, aside from the way we entered, one must lead to the boss room like the thief said.

Otherwise there would be no point in putting a trap here.
There are probably more thieves waiting in one of the directions.

It's a good strategy.
Even if there are six thieves waiting in this room, without [Analyze] you would just think it was a regular party taking a rest.
If strong people come, and they don't think they can win, they just have to let them past to the boss room.
If someone who seems weak comes, they guide them into the trap.

Did they decide that I was strong? Or easy prey?
Should I have let Sherry & Miria wear misanga's in a flashy way?

When I pass by the thieves at a distance, they look behind me.
They are smiling in a vulgar way.
Are they aiming for the women?

I want to punish them, but I shouldn't make my move here.
Maybe I don't seem like an easy mark.

The door opened, and we went into the cave to the left.
There's nobody.
The cave just continues forwards.

"...they should die."

Were the thieves only looking at Roxanne and Miria's chests?
I agree with Sherry.

"There are three or four people around the bend."

Roxanne at the back, catches up to me with quick steps and reports in a whisper.
Sherry, be pleased.
I will destroy them.

Is it a pincer attack from the back and the front?
It's a good strategy for a thief.

They seem to have decided that we are an easy mark.
Maybe they were just blinded with greed looking at Roxanne's chest.

It's like scattering bait.

“They are thieves. Fighting them is inevitable. Roxanne, the front. Sherry, the back. Cover Miria, keep her behind Roxanne. I will fight the thieves, you give priority to defense. I'll move around freely, don't try and keep up with me.”

I take the copper spear from the item box, and exchange it with Miria's wooden shield.

The spear should be good against thieves.

I'm glad I kept it in case it was useful.

We moved on to the bend.

Roxanne shakes her head a little.

The thieves seem to be a little further on.

I went around the bend.

There are four people at the edge of the cave.

Bandit Lv24 | Pirate Lv67 | Thief Lv48 | Explorer Lv42

All of them are very high level.

Especially the pirate, he's amazing.

Bandit, it's the first time I've seen one.

Is he their main fighting force?

It would be annoying if we are caught up to from behind, so we advance at a jog.

Four people spread to block the cave.

Three in the front, and the bandit Lv24 behind them.

Is the bandit their leader?

“Did you think there was a boss?”

“Sorry, but it's us thieves.”

“xxxxxxxxxx”

The men ahead make jokes.

One person doesn't speak brahim, so I'm not sure what he said.

Because Roxanne doesn't react, it probably doesn't matter anyway.

As for the explorer, was he threatened or join them unwillingly?

He might just be corrupt as well.

Thieves behavior is pretty bad.

Even without [Analyze] you could probably tell they are thieves.

If I try and time a surprise attack, it would probably be advantageous.

From the back, the six people from just before have caught up.

The thieves surround our back and front with ten people.

“If you leave the women, we will spare your life.”

I see.

It's not a surprise attack, so they think there is room for negotiation.

They'll take less damage if they don't have to fight.

If you are sandwiched from the back and front, some parties will give up.

But the possibility of thieves letting someone live, and leave, is zero.

I understand that.

It must have been difficult to find this place, and it would be impossible to use again if they let someone go.

But a decision like that is hard to make when you're surrounded by thieves.

“All of you, drop your weapons.”

“...you can at least go with your life.”

There are ten enemies.

Four of them have a considerably high level.

One party might be an easy victory for them.

Normally.

“One brave man in the complicated puzzling labyrinth.”

I ignore the thieves, and utter an incantation.

“It's impossible to escape, this cave is coated in cover cement.”

The explorer thinks I'm a fool.

Of course they'd think about that.

When they finally got someone in their pincer, if there was an explorer the party could just escape.

If they use cover cement, [Field walk] can't be used.
Cover cement must have the same effect against [Dungeon walk].
If so, it would be impossible for a party to escape.

"Dungeon walk."

I ignore their advice, and say the skill name.
I say [Dungeon walk], but use [Warp] in my head.
A black wall appears.

It is possible to use [Warp], even if there is cover cement.
I rushed into the wall.

"Shit, dungeon walk was supposed to be unusable."
"xxxxxxxxx"
"It's just one person that ran away, the women are still here, what a stupid bastard."
"Who's a stupid bastard?"

"While hearing Roxanne's voice, I thrust in with Durandal."
I was at the back, and stabbed into the bandit Lv24's neck.
I moved right behind him with [Warp].

From the place I appeared, I had a perfect shot.
Durandal struck right where I wanted it.
In a single blow, the bandit Lv24 falls.
Because of the falling sound, the other thieves notice the situation.

"Shit, what happened?"
"Kill them all!"

It will be hard to fight against everyone at once.
Between Sherry and the six thieves at the back, I made a [Fire wall].

"There's another one. A wizard is hiding himself somewhere."
"xxxxxxxxx"

The thieves panicked.
I can't block the whole cave with the fire wall, but it helps.
Sherry's spear is waiting to thrust into them.

The main force of three people with high levels head to me.
It's a good decision.
Because I moved, these three are in a position sandwiched between us now.
This brings the advantage to us.

It's also convenient.
If they come to me, Miria's danger decreases.
How should I defeat these three now?

Large scale attack magic isn't usable on people.
I can use single target magic on them.
I can't use other magic until the [Fire wall] burns out.
Still, it seems I can use bonus incantations.

The wizard job is out, but the bonus incantation is a different matter.
If I make some distance, I can use the bonus incantation.
If possible, I don't want to use it, but I don't have that luxury.

When the thieves approached, I use [MP full release] towards the man in the center.

The single purpose attack magic from the bonus incantations.

The pirate Lv67 explodes.
The man in the center of the three thieves blew up suddenly.
His equipment is left behind, but he literally exploded.

"Wha...?"

The movement of the men to either side stopped for a second.
The pirate next to them had exploded.
They can't help but stop.

I hold back the feelings that are welling up, and desperately continue.
I can't miss this chance.
I don't want to do anything, my mind is a mess, but I still wield Durandal.
The neck of the thief Lv48 who had stopped for a moment was cut without difficulty.

I can feel my MP getting recovered.

It seems I can absorb MP from people.

I hold back the feelings of wanting to run away, and continue on.

The explorer who was next to the pirate had also stopped moving. There's spray from the pirates body sticking to the explorer. He needs a little time to recover his thoughts.

The recovered MP is suppressing the hopeless emotions, and I continue moving my arm.

My sword flies towards the explorers neck.

More MP is recovered.

It's enough for another luxury.

I used [Warp] again.

I came out behind the six thieves.

“You can't escape.”

I called out to the thieves from the back.

I open my item box, and take out a strength pill and a restore pill.

I tossed them into my mouth as I took off.

You can't go through a long war without recovery.

“XXXXXXXXXX”

“XXXXXXXXXX”

The six people try to argue, and charge towards me at once.

Though the [Fire wall] just disappeared, there are three people over there including Roxanne.

Over here there is just one.

Naturally they will try for the exit on this side.

But, it's not a good idea.

They probably haven't thought of it.

There was a [Fire wall] between the six thieves and Sherry until just now.

I use the [Fire wall] again without incantation as the six people come.

The first thief took some awesome damage, and was beheaded by me as he was startled by the fire that appeared behind him.

The second and third thieves ran directly into the [Fire wall].

I've recovered some again, but the MP used might have nearly instantly killed me.

The fourth thief half enters the fire, and then jumps sideways panicking, and is cut down by me.

The fifth thief only touches it a little, and then jumps backwards. He falls on his backside.

Is there only one person that got off safely?

"I'll take you down a bit."

Roxanne and the others are there.

The safe person turns, and tries to make distance.

I advance forward.

Towards the thief who fell on his backside..

I'm nearly in range, I take a great step forward and aim for the neck of the thief who fell on his backside.

The standing thief stabs at me.

It's a good idea for the thief.

If my sword wasn't Durandal.

A normal sword can't cut off someones head so easily.

When I try to cut the head off, I might get stabbed to death.

But, the sword I am using is Durandal.

I easily cut off the head of the man who fell on his backside, and continue the swing into the side of the man coming to attack me.

He loses his momentum, and I avoid the attack.

I draw the sword back, and then push it into his stomach at full force. Then I slowly pull it out.

The thief collapses.

"Master!"

Roxanne rushes up.

"Is everyone alright?"

"Yes."

"Roxanne and Miria, please confirm that there are no thieves who ran

away. Sherry, please help collect the intelligence cards, I'll need something to wrap the hands up so you can cut some clothes off the thieves..”

It might not be over yet.

I gave instructions to the three people immediately.

All the thieves we were able to confirm should have already been defeated.

In addition I used magic with no incantation, I also use [Warp] and [MP full release].

If someone saw it, I would have to dispose of them.

Roxanne and Miria head towards the small room that had the six thieves.

“It was a wonderful fight.”

“Thank you.”

“You should collect the hands quickly.”

Sherry started working with indifference.

I cut off the thieves hands.

I piled them up on the clothes Sherry had cut off.

It seems I did it just in time.

When I cut off the hand of the bandit, he disappeared as he was absorbed.

The equipment is left, and the body is absorbed by the labyrinth.

The body of the bandit sank into the floor in an instant.

The other thieves bodies disappear as well, one after the other.

This is how the labyrinth digests a person?

“I don't think there is anyone who escaped.”

Roxanne and Miria came back.

“I see.”

“It was an amazing fight. As expected of Master.”

“Thank you. I'm glad that Roxanne and the others are safe and uninjured.”

“Yes.”

None of the three seem to have been injured.

I was most worried about them being hurt.

This is the best result.

“The thieves weren’t able to do much because of the [Fire wall] you made. Thank you.”

“XXXXXXXXXX”

“Miria also says that it was amazing.”

Even though I’ve just hacked up the thieves, these three don’t seem to be avoiding me.

Originally, these three were the ones who instigated this.

When I count the hands, there are eight.

The explorers hand will not have a reward, so I do not take it.

The hand of the pirate who exploded because of [MP full release] was not able to be collected.

It seems to have dispersed with no remaining pieces of the hand.

Chapter 90 : Collection

*

I breath a sigh of relief, and collect the treasures the thieves left.
All the items are taken.

I'm reasonably sure I don't need to strip search them.

"I've let you experience something serious."

"Not really, Master defeated everyone."

While picking up the equipment, I looked at Roxanne's expression.
Is it alright that I killed thieves?

"This can happen at any time, and we survived."

Sherry has something reasonable to say.
These three have grown up in this world where thieves attack people.
Killing a thief is something they expect.

"XXXXXXXXXX"

"XXXXXXXXXX"

"XXXXXXXXXX"

"It seems that Miria was quite surprised, and thinks it seemed easy for Master despite it being a place like this, and she will keep it a secret."

There seems to be a person with different assumptions.
Something bad happened, but intervening was difficult.
The wrong person is in charge of education.
I don't comment, and devote myself to collecting equipment.

The thieves leather equipment has hard leather equipment mixed in.
A hard leather hat, hard leather gloves, and hard leather shoes.
It would be an upgrade for everyone.
There is only one item with an empty skill slot.

After I've checked them, I put them in the item box.
Hard leather armor... Ah, am I the only one who can use it?
Sherry glares at me as I look around.
Women have a certain chest shape, so none wear this.

There isn't enough room in my item box, so I give it to Sherry.
Should I remove alchemist, and use cook?
Miria has leveled up a bit, and should be fine without [Plating].

"There is a Ring of Determination."

There was a Ring of Determination in the thieves equipment.

Accessory: Ring of Determination: [Attack power increase], [Personal strengthening].

The accessory has skills.

One of the bandits had it equipped.

"I think it's a high grade item."

Sherry informs me.

A high grade item?

It's definitely a good accessory.

As for weapons, there are two steel swords, and an iron sword.
There isn't any skill slots in any, so nothing awesome.
I might keep one steel sword for now.

Next is one rapier, and one steel shield.

The pirate had the one handed sword.

"A rapier?"

"Yes, it's a thrusting sword. It's a higher level sword for stabbing instead of slashing. It uses a different combat style too."

"Is it good for Roxanne?"

"It's good. The rapier also has a blade, so it can be used for slashing as well."

Is the attack style for a rapier like fencing?

It should be alright to use.

"Then, the rapier goes to Roxanne, and the scimitar with iron shield go to Miria."

I pass the steel shield and rapier to Roxanne.

Roxanne tells Miria something, and passes her the iron shield and

scimitar.

Sherry receives the dagger and wooden shield from Miria, and puts it in her item box.

There were ten magic crystals.

The thieves seem to have had one each.

When you sell magic crystals in the guild, they don't check your intelligence card.

The thieves must know that.

There was one yellow magic crystal.

A yellow magic crystal is quite precious.

More than 100,000 demons have been defeated.

It might be more valuable than the reward money.

“Umm. Even though it's still early we should return to the house. You should wipe your body, and your clothes should be washed. The equipment needs to be given maintenance as well.”

After we've picked up everything, Roxanne makes a suggestion.

There is blood on my clothes.

There might also be blood on my face.

Should I return straight away?

I can't fight with this bundle of hands.

I don't need to take a stamina pill since I absorbed MP from the thieves, so I have enough MP.

I returned to the house.

The eastern sky is getting brighter, the sun will rise soon.

I take my clothes off at once, and wipe my body in the bathroom

Roxanne washed my clothes for me.

“Roxanne, today was bad.”

I was able to defeat them, but it was careless to have fought with them.

It was planned well, I was invited into a trap set by the thieves.

I don't know how things would have gone if there was a strong thief as an opponent.

I'll have to be more careful.

It would have been traumatic if I had just come to this world.

I would have withdrawn from everything, and spent all my time in the labyrinth.

Why aren't I doing that now?

It's because of my experiences.

I have been used to fighting for a while now.

I'm willing to fight, and can handle that much.

I was able to win, so I'm not wrong.

I live in this world now, and it's not bad to be accustomed to combat.

But, it's still a frightening experience.

About fighting, everyone has a different potential, and you have to judge it carefully.

If you don't, at some stage you'll be caught off guard.

I win, and I tighten the cord on my helmet.

Today might be a good lesson.

“What do you mean? It was a splendid fight. It's natural to defeat a thief.”

Even fighting is common sense in this world.

I leave the bathroom, and change my clothes.

I reorganise my item box.

Three people are bringing their equipment together and performing maintenance on it, and I'm freeing up space in my item box.

I can go for a bit longer without needing to use cook.

I will merge the magic crystals the thieves had into one.

A white magic crystal has the magic power of 1 million demons, and is apparently the highest.

I already have a green crystal that has the magic power of 10,000 or more demons.

If the thieves yellow crystal has 900,000 or more magic power, and my green crystal has nearly 100,000 magic power, then there would be some waste if I merged them.

I keep my green magic crystal, and only merge the thieves crystals together.

The yellow crystal did not become white.

I'll keep the green magic crystal, but I'll fight with the yellow one from now on.

I keep the one I'm using in my item box, and any ready to sell are kept in Sherry's item box. Now the spare one will be kept in the store room. The copper spear is put against the wall in the storeroom.

I used [Character reset] while alone in the store room.

I added points to [Bonus equipment], and [Second accessory].

It's the first accessory I saw when I came to this world.

When I ended the [Character reset], a ring appeared on the forefinger of my left hand.

Accessory: Ring of Determination: [Attack power increase], [Personal strengthening].

There it is.

The Ring of Determination.

I had been curious since I used [Analyze] on the accessory from the bandit.

Apparently the accessory from my [Bonus equipment] skill, and the accessory from the bandit are the same thing.

The same name, the same ring, and the same two skills.

Are there people other than me that can use [Character reset]?

The Ring of Determination I made is brand new.

The other ring is dull and has scratches.

I can tell they are different from a glance.

I used [Character reset] again, and cancelled the Ring of Determination. Then I put on the ring from the bandit.

Sadly, the skill for [2nd accessory] didn't light up.

If it had, I could have gotten 3 bonus points.

Naturally, it's impossible.

Now for a different experiment.

I used [Character reset] to activate [Second accessory] and then swap the ring with the ring left behind by the bandit.

It seems I can disable it.

I boldly do it.

The Ring of Determination disappears.

There's no abnormality showing in my bonus points.

When I activate [Second accessory] again, the ring re-appears.

But, it's a new item.

The ring doesn't have the worn look and fine scratches on it.

The item seems to be a new item when created with [Character reset].

The Ring of Determination with the worn look and fine scratches is gone.

I cancel [Second accessory] and return to the main room with the new ring.

“Do you know what kind of person can make something like this?”

I asked Sherry.

“It's the Ring of Determination from earlier?”

“Yes.”

“A Fixation.”

“A Fixation?”

There seems to be something.

“That's right, you aren't part of a guild.”

“Oh?”

“The blessing of fixation can be received at the guild temple. If you receive the blessing you can't change your job anymore. It is believed that you become stronger and it's a blessing from the guardian deity of that guild.”

So that's fixation.

There are guardian deities, and shrines in guilds?

“Are the guardian deities in the guilds?”

“Nobody has actually met one, so I don't know if they are real or not...”

Sherry is always rational.

“So, fixation is locking in a job?”

“Yes. When fixing, an accessory might appear on the person, and it’s assumed to be a gift from the guilds guardian deity.”

“Like this ring?”

“I’m not certain, but I assume that ring came from a fixation.”

I don’t know what Sherry thinks when I take out Durandal. Maybe she thinks that I put it away in my item box. It’s not really different from using the item box, since I can use the item box without the incantation.

Is there someone that can take out the ring like I do? Fixation might be related to [Character reset] and bonus points.

There is a connection. When you take out an accessory. It becomes impossible to change your job. Since you get bonus points from each level up, it becomes impossible to switch to a lower level job while you’re using them.

There’s something else. You become stronger with fixation. Bonus points can also be added to your status.

“Do you know what kind of equipment appears?”
“It seems to vary according to the person. There are wizards who get swords, and fencers who get canes. Fixtures always create equipment with a skill, and very rarely something amazing appears.”

It’s a little different. I only use my sword as a bonus weapon. Does it vary from person to person?

“What kind of people get what kind equipment?”
“It’s quite easy to get the blessing if you’ve been doing the job for a number of years, and the increased strength and equipment is good. But since you can’t change your job after fixation it’s normally done by people who are thinking about retirement. If a good piece of equipment comes

out it can be passed down to your descendants as a family heirloom.”

It's not quite what I was asking, but it doesn't matter.

Is it random? Is there a rule to it?

The armor that I get from bonus points is equipment for men.

If a woman gets bonus equipment, it would not be strange if something different appeared.

If the Ring of Determination came from fixation, you could think it relates to bonus equipment.

Since bonus points are based on level, if you raise your level more it might be more profitable.

A person who was active in their job for many years will get the blessing easily, that seems like evidence that fixation requires bonus points.

Are fixation and bonus points related?

After hearing the story from Sherry, I checked the intelligence cards.

There were eight of them.

I know what to do with the intelligence cards.

I can take them to the Order of Knights in Quratar, or I can take them to the Order of Knights in Vale.

I can get a reward straight away.

The less people that know I've defeated thieves is probably better, so should I take them to Vale's Knights?

Maybe it's dangerous there and people are watching for me to take them in?

Should I take them to Quratar's Knights?

The first option is to take them to the Order of Knights in the Harz Duchy.

If I pass them to Gozer, it shows I was in a labyrinth in their territory like I promised.

I'll be in their favor for exterminating thieves hanging out in a labyrinth in their territory.

Special connections I've gained in this world.

I need to value them.

It would be troublesome if I'm seen as being too useful.
There's always another side to things.
Is there a problem in how I found the thieves?

The problem is checking my intelligence card.
If they check my intelligence card to give me the reward, they'll know that I'm not an adventurer.
I shouldn't expect them to skip the check since they know me.

Should I bring the card to the Order of Knights in the Harz Duchy after I become an adventurer?
Then I can't get the reward until after I've become an adventurer.
Explorer Lv50 is the lowest condition, so it will still take some time.

"Sherry, can you tell when someone died from their intelligence card?
Do you know?"

"I haven't heard anything like that. The age someone died can be checked though, so you can narrow it down to some degree."

You can guess by the age when they died?
Unfortunately, if the thieves birthday is tomorrow, you can understand they died by today.
Will they know when thieves birthday's are in this world?

"Do they know when thieves birthday's are?"
"Um, only by every season when the age on the intelligence card increases."

It's like that?
It's the first I've heard of it.
They base years on seasons?
It's fine if I start the count from each spring.

If it takes too much time to become an adventurer, I can just take it somewhere else.
For now, I'll keep the thieves intelligence cards for a while.

Chapter 91 : Replenishing Recovery Medicine

*

I put the matter of Intelligence Cards on hold for the time being and decide to dispose off equipment left by the thieves.

What do I do with their hands?

“How do I dispose off these hands?”

“Dump them in a labyrinth. They’ll be digested right away.”

Suggests Sherry.

Labyrinth huh?

Because labyrinth can digest dead bodies, it’s a perfect dumpster.

I wonder if it’s alright to feed it.

Actually, it’ll send monsters outside if it’s not fed.

If it’s fed in moderation, it’ll not turn ferocious.

“Okay then, let’s go and buy ingredients for breakfast after discarding these hands. Because strengthening pills have been used up, we need to stock up on those as well.”

“Raw material used in strengthening pill is dropped by Fly Trap, the monster native to 13th floor of Quratar’s labyrinth. I would rather recommend hunting in Quratar than buying it.”

Sherry informs me about the raw material used in strengthening pill. Now I get why the prices strengthening pill and nourishment pill are identical. Nourishment pill’s raw material can be acquired from 12th floor while strengthening pill’s from 13th.

“And raw material used in strengthening medicine?”

“It’s dropped by Animal Trap, the boss of 13th floor.”

Oh, so it’s like that.

If I can get it myself, why should I buy it?

The small room, where we found the thieves, was next to the boss room.

That was the reason why they had set up ambush there.
We have almost cleared 12th floor of Haruba's labyrinth.
Therefore, an excursion to 13th floor of Quratar's labyrinth shouldn't be a big deal.

We will have to fare without strengthening pills and strengthening medicine for the time being.
Recovery medicine is our only back up.
Because we have map of Quratar's labyrinth, we can clear the floor in no time.
If it's for a short while, we can take the risk of going on without MP recovery medicine.

MP recovery medicine is not required for boss battles.
Because I use Durandal against boss monsters.
Although we don't have strengthening pills, we won't face much trouble.
We can't obtain strengthening medicine until we defeat the boss of 13th floor. The quicker we clear rest of the floor, the quicker we can take the boss out.

After dumping the hands on 12th floor of Haruba's labyrinth, I buy the ingredients and then have breakfast.
Haruba's labyrinth was quiet. There were no more thieves in ambush.
If you look carefully, however, you can find a minute blood stain.
But it's dark here, so it won't be noticed.

After breakfast, I sell the equipment, pick up the map and enter 12th floor of Quratar's labyrinth.

"Sherry, put this Ring of Determination on."
"Are you sure?"
"It would be a waste if I were to use it."

Sherry equips the Ring of Determination.
Roxanne and I have Sacrificial Misanga.

Sacrificial Misanga is really a useful equipment.
Even though I have received countless attacks from monsters, it has yet to activate.

The attacks I received didn't inflict critical damage, it seems. On the contrary, if I receive critical damage and it fails to activate on the off chance, I don't even want to imagine the consequences.

"Thank you very much. I thought that it would be worn out but it's almost new."

...I will pretend that I didn't hear it.

"Roxanne, what's the situation?"

"As you would expect from 12th floor. Even though it's broad day, there are very few people."

It doesn't seem to be crowded like first three floors.

The higher the floor, the less the people.

If it's 12th floor, we can afford to hunt in Quratar's labyrinth even in the day.

"Then I'll have to trouble you."

After having confirmed that there are not many people around, I ask of Roxanne to search for monsters.

Except for labyrinths in the Harz duchy, people take special notice of magic.

Therefore, I avoid people as much as possible.

"Ahead is the boss room. I'm not sure if there are people inside or not. I caught smell but it has vanished. They have probably moved on."

"Thank you. As expected of Roxanne. We were able to reach the boss room without encountering anyone."

"Not at all. I must be the one thanking you."

So even Roxanne can't tell if there are people inside the waiting room? There is another door separating the boss room from the waiting room. When the party inside the boss room is done, the party inside the waiting room proceeds to the boss room.

It is difficult to tell from outside whether the party is in the waiting room or the boss room.

There's always some risk. You can't completely avoid it.

I earnestly visit labyrinths of the Harz duchy.
Even if I didn't, it's not like the Duke and Gozer would blame me excessively.

Still, I can't tell them that I visited Quratar's labyrinth to collect raw materials. It's not a valid excuse.

"Miria, can you go and see if there are people inside? If there aren't, give us a signal. If there are, come back."

To mitigate the risk, I ask Miria to go.
Gozer has yet to meet Miria.

"Yes."

When Roxanne translates it, Miria nods quickly and proceeds.
The door to the waiting room slides open. Miria peeks inside.
Miria turns around and signals.
No one seems to be inside.

Three of us rush inside.
Miria sticks her chest out proudly as if she has accomplished a mission.

"Thank you. Well done, Miria."

"xxxxxxxxxx"

"As you would expect."

That said, I don't think it can really be considered a mission.

"Yes, desu."

Is Miria happy because she was of use?

We enter the room.

There was no one in the waiting room.

"Sarracenia boss is called Nepenthes. It's basically strengthened Sarracenia. There is a point to note however. On 12th floor, other monsters appear alongside the boss, so we have to be careful."

Sherry shares the information on the boss of 12th floor.
Thus far, our boss battle strategy has been to leave the frontline to Roxanne and attack from the back. However, we can't use that strategy

this time around.

It is impossible for things to always remain the same.

When we enter the waiting room, the door to the boss room immediately slides open.

Four of us enter the room.

Smoke gathers. Monsters appear.

One Nepenthes and one Sarracenia.

“Roxanne, hold the Nepenthes from the front. Sherry, Miria, keep the boss occupied. I’ll wipe out the small fry first.”

I give instructions to the three and charge toward the Sarracenia.

I hit the Sarracenia with successive Rush attacks and silence it.

I join the boss battle immediately after.

Nepenthes is a pitcher plant but its pitcher is larger than Sarracenia.

Its overall size is bigger as well.

Unlike Sarracenia, the brown pitcher of Nepenthes looks creepy. You can tell that it gets its food not from photosynthesis but from eating other creatures.

Actually, even Sarracenia doesn’t get its food from photosynthesis. Both are carnivorous plants and, on top of that, monsters in labyrinth.

(Insectivorous plants need nitrogenous compounds, which they obtain from insects, for amino acid. They produce starch normally through photosynthesis.)

We need to be attentive for it may swing its leaf and attack from behind us.

This is troublesome.

I should have asked Miria to use spear instead.

Her level is adequate now, so it would have been fine.

In the end, it turns out easy for we were four against lone Nepenthes.

We maintain our winning streak.

The Nepenthes collapses.

It turns into smoke and dissipates.

“XXXXXXXXXX”

Before I could see the item it dropped, Miria shouts excitedly.

“Fish savings, she says. There seems to be a magic crystal.”

“Magic crystal?”

“She says that there wasn’t any before the battle. It appeared just now.”

While Roxanne translates it, Miria picks the magic crystal up.

Great!

So she can identify it the moment it appears?

“As expected of Miria.”

“She says that It started glowing, so she immediately noticed it.”

Nope. Because it’s black, it doesn’t glow.

“It’s magic crystal. Repeat, magic crystal.”

“Magic crystal.”

I should have taught her the right word back then.

After teaching Miria one more Brahim word, I receive the magic crystal from her.

I receive the dropped item from Sherry.

It’s called summer solstice.

I remove Warrior and select Herbalist, and try to make medicine.

In my palms, summer solstice turns into three nourishment medicines.

Summer solstice is a medicinal herb after all.

“You really did it.”

Sherry is surprised for some reason.

“Isn’t that a given?”

“No. I have heard that summer solstice can’t be processed on the first attempt.”

Eh?

Wasn’t Sherry the one who told me that I can make strengthening medicine from the item dropped by the boss of 13th floor?

If strengthening medicine can be made from the item dropped by the boss of 13th floor, can’t nourishment medicine be made from the item dropped

by the boss of 12th floor?

“C-Can’t be processed?”

“Yes, but I knew you could do it.”

“As expected of Master.”

“As expected, desu.”

I don’t feel like I did something worthy of praise.

My Herbalist job is Lv4 now.

It kept leveling up when I was making nourishment pills the other day.

A Herbalist Lv4 is not supposed to be able to defeat Nepenthes, it seems.

Even if a Herbalist Lv4 can make nourishment medicine, no herbalist was probably able to ascertain that.

There’s another possibility that it’s dependent on MP.

Because I have Wizard Lv37 supported by Hero and Monk, I have enough MP at my disposal.

“It’s no big deal.”

I stuff the nourishment medicines and the magic crystal in my Item Box and leave the boss room.

“The monster native to 13th floor of Quratar’s labyrinth is Fly Trap. It’s similar to Sarracenia. It uses water magic attacks. Its normal attack has chance to inflict poison. It’s resistant to water magic. Its weakness is fire magic.”

Sherry shares the information. We encounter a Fly Trap. Like Sherry said, it looks like Sarracenia. Even its size and shape is same.

But there’s one difference.
Its head is not pitcher.
It’s sliced open into two in order to trap an object inside.
Is it carnivorous like Sarracenia?

I fight while keeping an eye on its head.
I take it out in five spells.

“It didn’t attack with its head.”

“But we shouldn’t be careless for carelessness is lethal.”

“Higher level ones may attack with their head.”

According to Sherry, high level Fly Traps may attack using their head. Like Roxanne said, however, carelessness is taboo.

I have already received digestive fluid of Sarracenia on top of my head.

I receive polygala root from Miria.

Because Herbalist job was still active, I immediately try to make medicine.

Three strengthening pills.

Same as nourishment pills.

“Since I can fight against Fly Traps without much trouble, search for group of monsters.”

I ask of Roxanne to search for multiple monsters.

Sarracenia and Fly Trap both are weak against fire magic.

Five spells don’t pose much of a challenge.

It would have been difficult, however, had I not upgraded my cane.

“Here it comes.”

Amidst fighting, Roxanne warns.

It’s ranged attack of Fly Trap.

Roxanne takes it on.

It needs not be mentioned that she dodged it.

A bullet of water fades in from where Roxanne was supposed to be standing.

“Ah, that was close.”

I somehow manage to evade.

I knew it. I’m not safe behind Roxanne.

“I’m sorry. I should have deflected it off my shield.”

“Deflect?”

“Yes. You can deflect most of the force behind the attack but you receive some damage.”

You should have taught me how to do it.

I position myself slightly in diagonal with Roxanne.

Roxanne, who's in the center of the frontline, will receive most of the attacks.

Therefore, I should not stand in line with Roxanne and the monster.

Water magic is troublesome but we carry on hunting on 13th floor of Quratar's labyrinth.

It takes about five strikes of Durandal to take out a Fly Trap Lv13.

It was four on 12th floor.

Oh well, it can't be helped.

When I was fighting using Durandal, I borrowed the Ring of Determination from Sherry.

But there was no apparent effect.

"5x Increase in Attack Power" skill of Durandal doesn't seem to stack with

"Increase in Attack Power" skill of Ring of Determination.

I make a bulk of strengthening pills.

I pass a dozen of pills to Sherry.

"We have already acquired strengthening pills, should we go for strengthening medicine or not?"

"We should, I think."

"It's rational to keep it in reserve for contingencies."

I obtain Roxanne's and Sherry's support to challenge the boss of 13th floor.

Because I have been exploring for quite some time, I have got a hang of it.

From 12th floor to 22nd, same monsters appear in every labyrinth, albeit in different order.

The monster that appears on 12th floor of Quratar's labyrinth may appear on 22nd floor of some other labyrinth.

By the same token, the boss of 12th floor of Quratar's labyrinth may be the boss of 22nd floor of that other labyrinth.

If I defeat the boss of 12th floor of Quratar's labyrinth, I will have one less thing to worry about when I challenge the boss of 22nd floor of that other

labyrinth.

I won't say that it'll be easy because strength increases with level. Green Caterpillar Lv11, for instance.

That said, it's still the same monster. It can't become unexpectedly strong. You won't have to be worried about surprise element. It's 23rd floor and onwards where difficulty level jumps up again.

As far as Quratar's labyrinth is concerned, we have its map, so exploration itself is quick and smooth. Unlike Vale's and Haruba's labyrinths, where we have to explore each and every corner of the floors. However, regardless of which labyrinth it is, advancing to next floor is not smooth.

"Okay then, would you please take us there?"
"Certainly."

Roxanne guides us to the boss room of 13th floor. Miria takes a peek inside but finds no one, so we enter the room. We take out both the boss of 13th floor, Animal Trap, and accompanying Sarracenia.

"Why was Sarracenia accompanying the boss?"
"Any monster that appears on a floor may appear with the boss of that floor."

As per Sherry, Animal Trap is Fly Trap boss. Sarracenia is troublesome to deal with but I took it out swiftly. Once the boss was surrounded, Durandal did the rest.

Sherry brings dried orange peel over to me. Is this the item dropped by Animal Trap? I use my Herbalist skill and make three strengthening medicines.

Chapter 92 : Emphasis on Experience

*

After making strengthening pills on 13th floor of Quratar's labyrinth, my Herbalist job has leveled up to Lv6.

I haven't removed the job just yet.

Miria's Diver job is now Lv20.

The speed of leveling up is quite fast.

It may be due to higher value of gained experience on higher floors.

Or perhaps the value of gained experience increased only after 12th floor?

Whichever the case is, we are gaining experience quickly.

I have to level my Explorer job up to Lv50 as soon as possible to acquire Adventurer job.

I can't move freely until then.

12th floor was the reason why those thieves had set up ambush there.

I, however, killed those thieves on that very 12th floor.

If I turn in their Intelligence Cards to the order of Harz duchy knights, I'll surely be asked as to how I was able to kill those thieves on 12th floor.

Rather than moving to Haruba's labyrinth, it's better to explore 13th and 14th floors here.

If someone finds me there, it may get complicated.

What was a person, who's exploring 14th floor, doing on 12th floor?

I'm being unnecessarily worried.

I should carry on hunting in Quratar's labyrinth.

However, Quratar is not completely safe either for there are a lot of people here.

I may encounter someone who's connected to the Duke of Harz.

But the chance is remote that I'll encounter such a person in Quratar's labyrinth.

I open Character Reset interface.

I set Required Experience to 1/20th and Gained Experience to 20x.

My emphasis is on experience now.

I have a total of 135 bonus points because my Explorer job is Lv37. Required Experience 1/20th requires 63 points, so does Gained Experience 20x.

I can't deselect Character Reset option. After allocating 7 points toward fourth job, I'm left with 1 point.

Should I make do with three jobs?

Hero, Wizard and Explorer?

But Monk is needed for emergency situations.

In the end, I leave it at four jobs and allocate 1 point toward Short Incantation.

"Sherry, which monster appears on 14th floor?"

"The monster native to 14th floor of Quratar is Hat Bat. It's quite small in size, therefore, hitting it is not that easy. It can bypass the frontline, so those in the backline have to be cautious. It's generally weak against magic attacks, especially water, wind and earth magic."

It's troublesome for someone like me who stands in the back.

Under Roxanne's guidance, we come across a Hat Bat.

Hat Bat is a black bat.

It's difficult to see it clearly in the dark.

When it stops flapping its wings, it looks like a black bowler hat.

"Water Ball."

Ugh!

Although I had closed some distance before attacking, it still managed to dodge it.

The Hat Bat suddenly changes its altitude.

For second attack, I use wind spell but it dodges again.

Its movement is quick.

Third attack, Earth Ball, hits successfully.

Roxanne is standing in the front.

Sherry and Miria are surrounding the bat from the sides.

I position myself diagonal with Roxanne.

So that I can keep my allies out of the line of my magic attacks.

Fourth attack hits as well.
The Hat Bat cuts in and approaches quickly.
Roxanne parries it with her shield.
The moment the bat comes to a halt, I cast fifth spell.

The Hat Bat collapses.
Five spells huh?
Even Durandal might have taken five to six strikes.

“Umm... why did you call out the spell names?”

Why, you ask? Because I don't have enough points to select Skip Incantation.
But I can't say that to Roxanne, so I'll have to come up with an acceptable excuse.
I can't say that I have chuunibyou.

“Because it's difficult to hit Hat Bat, I thought it's a good opportunity for us to practice coordinated attacks.”

“Indeed. I understand.”

“Th-Then I'll have to ask of you to search for groups.”

I'm not completely at ease but...
But against a group of monsters, I can use area of effect attacks.
I won't have to worry about missed hits if I use area of effect attacks.

Three Hat Bats and a Fly Trap appear. I take out Hat Bats in five Breeze Storms.
After three more Fireballs, the Fly Trap drops down as well.
What annoys me is that Hat Bat is weak against magic of three attributes, yet fire isn't one of those three.
Hat Bat is a nuisance.

“Try to look for groups of either carnivorous plants or bats.”

“It'll be difficult but I'll try.”

“If you're unable to find such groups, find those wherein not more than one monster differs from the rest.”

If it's just one monster that remains, it'll be Roxanne to take it on from the front.

She's reliable.

Under Roxanne's guidance, we carry on hunting. As I asked of her, she finds groups of either four same monsters, or three-one and two-one composition.

Because Hat Bat is small in size, its movement is quick, and its attack is difficult to dodge.

Sherry and Miria are struggling.

Because I have used too much of my MP, I pull Durandal out. I remove Gained Experience 20x and select 6th-tier weapon. Because I still don't fully understand as to how decreasing Required Experience really works, I opt to keep it.

I decrease jobs to three and select Skip Incantation. Whenever I use Durandal, I move to the frontline. Because only Roxanne and I will be receiving attacks from monsters, Monk isn't required. Even if I receive damage, I have HP Absorption Skill of Durandal.

Holding Durandal, I approach a Hat Bat. I keep an eye on the bat's movement. I can't possibly think of landing an attack just like that when even Sherry and Miria are having hard time. While I was thinking so, the bat hurls itself on me.

I invoke Overwhelming. I connect one strike straight away and slash once more after maneuvering my body. That second strike was cool, wasn't it? Under the effect of Overwhelming, I feel I can dodge just like Roxanne. When the bat approaches me again, I invoke Overwhelming again. I move Durandal only slightly and try to connect third strike after having hit twice. That's great. I can land three consecutive strikes.

The Hat Bat collapses. I charge toward next one.

With Overwhelming, Hat Bat looks just like a punching bag. Since I'm recovering more MP than I'm expending, there's no problem in that regard as well.

"Wow, desu!"

Miria praises me.

Praise be upon Overwhelming.

I recover my MP through Durandal.

It's not efficient to use Overwhelming so sparingly but it can't be helped. After recovering fully, I ask of Roxanne to search for groups of Hat Bats and carnivorous plants again.

I had 4 points to spend after decreasing jobs from four to three. Of 4 points, I used 2 to upgrade Short Incantation to Skip Incantation, 1 to increase Gained Experience and 1 to select Meteor Crash. I use Meteor Crash on a group of monsters.

Hat Bats are weak against earth magic while carnivorous plants are weak against fire magic.

I'll confirm then if Meteor Crash is a fire spell or not.

Both Fly traps and Hat Bats drop down in just one Meteor Crash.

Does it even have any attribute?

Because I have upgraded my cane to rod, that's probably why I was able to one-shot both Hat Bats and Fly Traps.

I can't go back and equip weaker weapon just to confirm this notion.

It's actually better if I can take monsters out like this.

It's not a problem in any way.

It was worth the effort because Miria is amazed after seeing this spell for the first time.

We carry on hunting.

We are doing just fine.

We can fight on 14th floor without much trouble.

"Sherry, do you know about the boss of Quratar's 14th floor."

When we take a break from the labyrinth in the afternoon, I ask Sherry.

“Hat Bat boss is called Pat Bat. Pat Bat is basically strengthened Hat Bat. It’s not strong in offense. However, its attack inflicts paralysis. You can’t heal yourself or take pills until it wears off. That’s the only noteworthy feature of Pat Bat.”

“I have anti-paralysis pills but only two.”

“Unlike poison, you do not lose HP over time, so there’s no risk of death. Also, it’s not impossible to break free of it.”

So it’ll be alright?

We have to advance to the next floor as quickly as possible in order to increase our leveling up speed.

Still, is it a good idea to clear 14th floor and move on to 15th so quickly?

“Should we proceed to 15th floor?”

“I don’t see any issue.”

“We will do fine, I think.”

Roxanne and Sherry accede.

But I have never seen them rejecting any of my proposal.

Roxanne, of course, won’t find it difficult. But what about Sherry? Will she be fine?

Was it rational of her to consent to it?

“Okay, desu.”

When Roxanne translates it to Miria, she nods as well.

Is it really gonna be alright?

This attitude seems to be natural for the people of this world. On the contrary, I may seem excessively cautious to them.

Still, I’m afraid of advancing to higher floors so quickly.

I’m afraid but I can’t help it.

In the afternoon, we enter Quratar’s labyrinth again and move to 14th floor.

I decide to keep one anti-paralysis pill and pass the second one to Sherry.

We proceed per map.

After having Miria confirm that there are no people inside, we enter the boss room.

“I’ll take the small fry out, you three engage the boss in the meantime.”

One Pat Bat and one Hat Bat appear.

Both are bats huh?

No Sarracenia or Fly Trap? Great!

I’m not saying that it’s luxury.

Still, I couldn’t help but think so when I saw them.

I invoke Overwhelming and take a hack at the Hat Bat.

“Here it comes.”

Before I could finish the Hat Bat off, Roxanne’s voice reaches my ears.
It’s activating skill.

I must not let it activate the skill.

I invoke Overwhelming again and slash at the boss.

I made it somehow.

I was able to connect Durandal with the boss before it could finish incantation.

I’m back against the Hat Bat.

I invoke Overwhelming again and take it out.

I close in on the boss.

I can see our winning streak extending.

It’s difficult to connect strikes because it’s flying up high but I use Overwhelming whenever it approaches me to attack and shave its HP.
I use Overwhelming again and take a hack at it. The boss finally collapses.

“Sherry, which monster appears on 15th floor?”

“The monster native to 15th floor of Quratar’s labyrinth is Grass Bee.”

“Grass Bee? Then we don’t have to waste time on trying to fight against one. Roxanne, find groups.”

“Understood.”

We proceed to 15th floor and encounter a group of monsters.

Two Grass Bees and two Hat Bats.

“Breeze Storm.”

I take them out in six wind spells.

Six spells huh?

They'll obviously grow stronger with every level.

Although higher floors are more difficult, I can't stay on lower floors. I have to level up quickly.

I have no support from party jobs either.

Roxanne is beast warrior, Sherry is master smith, Miria is diver. None of their jobs has 'Increase in Intelligence' effect.

If there was an 'Increase in Intelligence' effect in party jobs, wouldn't it become easier?

Should I change Sherry's job to Monk or Shrine Maiden?

If I do that, however, it'll become difficult when I use Durandal.

Isn't there a two-in-one job?

Because I have to be in close quarters to use Durandal, I can't afford to prolong battles.

I carry on as is.

In the next battle, both Sherry and Miria receive attacks.

They received hits because battles have now become protracted.

"Since battles are now taking longer to end, you may receive attacks. Will you be fine? Heal."

I ask while casting Heal.

"I'll be fine."

"Are you sure? Heal."

"Yes, I'll be fine."

"Okay."

"Alright. Heal."

Both Sherry and Miria assert that they'll be fine.

"I'm fine now."

"Alright. Miria, it's your turn now. Because I'm in the back anyway, you take my Poison Resistant Hard Leather Cap, Sherry. Heal."

"Are you sure about this?"

"You'll be taking on Grass Bees from the front, so it'll be of more use to

you. Heal.”

Sherry and Miria both have recovered fully.
Without Skip Incantation, I feel like I’m a different person.

At the moment, we have only one equipment that has Poison Resistance skill.

Roxanne has tremendous ability to dodge. Although Miria fights energetically, I’m still concerned about her.

But there’s only one, so it can’t be helped.

I exchange caps with Sherry.

We have yet to encounter a group with three or more Grass Bees.
Miria receives an attack.

“Aaaagh!”

Miria groans.
It’s poison.
Because I have been through this, I know.
I bring out antidote pill.

“Roxanne, I’ll entrust her to you.”

“Yes.”

I cast fifth Breeze Storm and put the antidote pill in my mouth.
I pull Miria into my embrace.
And put my lips on hers.
I shove my tongue in to open her mouth.

I push the antidote pill into her mouth
Miria’s tongue is trembling.
I gently entwine my tongue with hers.

I keep my tongue entwined with Miria’s.
It moves.
For the first time, Miria moves her tongue passionately.

I want her to do that from now on but I’m afraid to say that out loud.
While Miria was in my embrace, a Grass Bee hurls itself on me.
If I get hit with its needle, I may receive poison as well.

“Breeze Storm.”

I separate my mouth from Miria’s and cast sixth spell.

Chapter 93 : Wanted man

*

Author note: The thieves defeated on Haruba's 12th floor included a bandit that I changed to a pirate.

I asked Roxanne to find a place with a group that includes carnivorous plants.

After shooting down a Grass Bee with six wind spells, I finished the Fly Trap off with three [Fire ball]'s.

I hadn't experienced a long battle like that before.

"One Saracenia or Fly Trap would be good, can you find somewhere like that?"

"Just one might be difficult."

"Probably."

"Going up to the 16th floor might be better."

Sherry makes a suggestion, and Roxanne seems to agree. They seem to be in high spirits.

"What is on the 16th floor?"

"The 16th floor of Quratar's labyrinth has the Bitch Butterfly. Wind magic is its weakness. The Hat Bat can be defeated with wind magic as well, so the 16th floor might be easier than the 15th."

I see.

It's a decent idea.

As expected of Sherry.

The Bitch Butterfly is the demon that appears on the 16th floor of Quratar's labyrinth.

The Grass Bee is the demon from the 15th floor.

The Hat Bat is the demon from the 14th floor.

So wind magic is the weakness of the main three monsters that appear on the 16th floor?

The chances of Saracenia and Fly Trap appearing decrease a lot after

the 15th floor.

Will it be easy if I just have to use wind magic?

“That’s fine. We’ll see how well we can handle the 15th floor for a while, and then move onto the 16th floor.”

“I think that’s good.”

It’s dangerous to go suddenly, so we’ll take our time.

The number of attacks received increases on the 15th floor.

The Hat Bat avoids the vanguard, and hits me.

It shakes our stability.

I take out Durandal, and exchange hats with Sherry.

I used [Heal], so my MP has decreased quicker than expected.

My experience gain decreases because I’ve taken out Durandal.

When we go up a floor, we get more experience, but I take out Durandal more often as well, so the experience falls.

I’m not sure if there is any profit going up in floors.

“Roxanne, can you find somewhere with a variety of demons?”

When my MP completely recovered, I asked Roxanne.

“Well, I can smell a place with four kinds of demons.”

The 15th floor can have four or less demons, so four is the maximum possible.

I had forgotten it.

Up to five demons can appear on the 16th floor.

Is the 16th floor difficult?

No. If I use area effect magic, the numbers won’t be a problem.

Roxanne is up front, so it should be alright.

Because I can defeat more in one go, will the 16th floor be more profitable for experience?

Grass Bee, Hat Bat, Fly Trap, and Sarracenia. To this group, I give them a [Meteor Crash].

A scorching rock flies through the cave.

All the demons except Grass Bee are defeated.

Only the Grass Bee isn't defeated?

Wind magic is the weakness of Grass Bee, and it was not defeated.

Fire magic is the weakness of Fly Trap and Sarracenia, and they were defeated.

But the Hat Bat was defeated, I don't know why.

We finished hunting without going to the 16th floor that day.

It is dangerous to advance too fast.

Going to the 16th floor tomorrow morning is fine.

Explorer has risen to Lv38.

I can use [Incantation omission] if I go up another one.

When I return to the house, a message from the broker Luke is there.

"It's written that he has made a successful bid of 5,400 nars for the kobold monster card, and he'd like you to come at once."

Roxanne reads the memo.

It's the kobold monster card.

Why does he need me to come immediately?

"Ok, I'll be gone for a bit. Can you three prepare dinner?"

"Certainly. Have a safe trip."

"Please be careful with the broker."

I went to the merchants guild.

When I asked for Luke at the reception, they took me through right away.

I met him in the small room for business discussions.

"Sorry for calling you out. First of all, the kobold monster card."

"Sure."

Luke takes out the monster card.

After I confirmed it with [Analyze], I pay the 59 silver coins which includes the commission.

Luke only delivers genuine articles.

It seems I can trust him as a broker.

"The previous successful bid on the kobold monster card was 5,400 nars as well. It was previously taken by people who had been watching me bid.

If I keep making successful bids at the same price it becomes troublesome.”

“There’s a problem like that too?”

Being a broker seems to be quite troublesome.

If you know another group will put up a fight til 5,400, then you know you won’t make a successful bid at 5,300.

There seems to be some difficult bargaining.

“Therefore, I had to bid the maximum price this time.”

I don’t know if I should be pleased about it.

The other party now knows our best planned price is 5,400.

“Well, that might do for kobold monster cards for now.”

“Ok. I’ve also received a message from the Order of Knights in the Harz Duchy. They would like you to come immediately.”

The Order of Knights in the Harz Duchy wants me to come there immediately?

Did they sell the mirrors?

“The Order of Knights in the Harz Duchy, I understand.”

“I’ve finished passing the message on.”

I’ve received the kobold monster card, and I leave the merchants guild.

I was thinking about ordering the ant monster card, but I didn’t.

It’s definitely not enough to just have it on one hat.

I want to arrange for some more poison resistant equipment.

But it will take time between ordering it, and obtaining it.

When we get the ant monster card, I don’t know which floor we’ll be fighting on.

There might not be any demons that use poison there.

I might regret not preparing any, so I could save some for later.

When I get home, I prepare the bath.

Today was strenuous, so I want to relax.

I finished up early, and also visited Luke.

After dinner, Sherry does her smithing.

I got the kobold monster card, so we merged it with the rabbit monster card.

The skill of [Incantation interruption] is put on Sherry's spear.

This will be useful.

All of today's work is now finished, and I climbed into the bath.

Miria floats in the hot water.

I peek at her from the surface of the water.

It is quite pleasant.

Roxanne and Sherry are to either side of me.

Comfortable.

I am.

"It feels good in the bath after today's events."

"Yes. It's the best."

The best part is Roxanne's tail.

In the hot water, I put my arm under Roxanne's body.

I like the feeling of her tail.

When I lightly hold her body and pull it close, a rich swelling presses against my chest.

"Is Miria comfortable as well?"

"Yes-desu."

Miria gives a reply.

It's a happy thing.

She floats around the bath tub.

She floats without being tied down by anything.

The bathtub isn't especially wide.

Miria's tail touches my foot.

Two mountains are floating.

"Miria, can you make the fish dish with the pan we bought the other day soon?"

When Roxanne translates it, a great force flies at me.

It's right on top of me.

A face is near.

“I could do it-desu.”

“In this case it’s ‘I can do it’.”

“I can do it-desu.”

My important thing struck Miria’s smooth stomach.

Miria doesn’t seem to be bothered by it at all.

She is looking into my face hard.

“How about dinner, the day after tomorrow.”

“I can do it-desu.”

She left again after she got the answer out of me.

I’m the guy with the money.

The promise to serve fish is done, and I can see Miria is pleased.

Two days from now is good.

Tomorrow is too soon.

Four or five days would be too long.

For the day after tomorrow, we should be able to hold out til then.

The kiss of the day has returned to the regular light kiss.

Was the passion in the mouth to mouth transfer of the antidote a one time thing?

It’s alright because I can at least enjoy a passionate kiss with Roxanne.

It was the same the next morning.

I don’t think I can expect a passionate kiss from Miria.

After kissing three people, we head to Haruba’s 12th floor.

It might be good to fight against the boss of the Grass Bee on the 12th floor.

We teleported to the room that contained the thieves.

It would be bad if someone saw me using [Dungeon walk] in Haruba though.

When that time comes, I can just make Sherry an explorer.

We searched around the room.

When we passed into the right hand room, it was the boss room.

Just as we thought.

The thieves made their trap near the boss room. When a strong party comes through, they'll let them continue to the boss room.

It's still early in the morning, and there is nobody in the waiting room.

"The boss of Grass Bee is Killer Bee. You need to watch out for poison, and it will use its poison skill as well."

It's still using poison?
Sherry's weapon now has [Incantation interruption], so our anti-skill measures are perfect.

I kill the Grass Bee first, and then join the offensive against the boss. The boss is focused on Roxanne, and can't hit her. The boss is defeated easily.

We've defeated the 12th, 13th, and 14th floor bosses in Quratar. A 12th floor boss is an easy victory.

We left the 13th floor of Haruba without fighting, and moved to the 15th floor of Quratar. It's good that we can challenge it after already experiencing one earlier. We head towards the boss room relying on the map.

"Can you Miria?"

Miria is sent off.
Miria checks the waiting room, and calls us. There doesn't seem to be anyone this early in the morning.

We don't relax, even though we've won once. The Killer Bee was defeated as carefully and quickly as possible.

"The demon on Quratar's 16th floor is the Bitch Butterfly. Wind magic is its weakness. It is resistant to fire magic. It might try and use its paralyze skill when you approach."

"It has the paralyze skill? It's good that we prepared Sherry's weapon in time."

"Yes, I'll do my best."

The Bitch Butterfly is a huge moth more so than a butterfly. It flies about noisily, and even though it's elegant it isn't pretty. It's a worthless demon.

Its movement is a little slow.
The [Breeze ball] successfully hit.
I defeated it with seven wind spells.

"Roxanne, wind magic is effective. Can you guide us to places with only Grass Bee, Hat Bat and Bitch Butterfly?"

"I think so."

It seems like it's going according to Sherry's plan.
For the time being we'll fight on Quratar's 16th floor.
It's difficult, but we handle it somehow.
We just hunted on the 16th floor during the morning.

We finish hunting and return to the house.
I ask the three girls to prepare breakfast, and I head to Bode alone.
I appeared from the wall in the lobby.

"Is the Duke or Knight Captain here?"
"Yes, I think that the Duke is in his workroom."

I ask their whereabouts from a Knight, and enter inside.
It's the house of another person.
They don't seem to have gone out yet, because it's early.
I head down the passage to the workroom.

"Enter."

When I knocked at the door, there was a voice in answer.
It's Gozer's voice.

"It's Michio, I heard you were calling for me?"
"Oh, Michio? It's good that you came."

When I enter, the duke speaks as well while sitting in the chair.

"Well."
"Actually there might be some trouble."

“First of all, please sit.”

The duke is hasty, like usual.

I sat on the sofa, following Gozer’s instructions.

“Now for the troublesome thing.”

“Do you know of a thief called Heinz the Bandit?”

Gozer sits in front of me and asks.

“No.”

“He’s a rough thief that likes to see blood. I heard he got the job of bandit at the shrine of lies and truth at Helene. I don’t know if that’s true. Anyway, I’ve heard he is a strong opponent.”

The bandit I defeated?

I’m sure his name was Heinz.

Was I called about that thief?

“That sort of thief.”

“He’s a thief who is originally from the Selmar territory. He killed some members of Selmer’s order of knights. Heinz also has a pirate subordinate named Simon who uses a one handed sword. He also caused trouble for Selmer’s order of knights. Even without magic they are able to oppose the order of knights.”

Simon is the man I killed with [MP full release].

I’m sure he had the job of pirate.

It seems that he was good with the sword.

“The thief has entered your territory?”

“It’s not certain, but the information seems reasonably good. They might attack a village somewhere, or lie in wait in a labyrinth. Labyrinths don’t leave any remains behind when you kill someone, so murderers like Heinz favor them. There are three labyrinths in our territory. I think we need to consider this possibility.”

No damage has been confirmed.

After Heinz sets a trap, it might take a while.

How quick did they get the information after he entered their territory.

The information network of the order of knights seems to be pretty good.

“This being the case, we want to look after you Michio.”

“You contacted me to let me know? Thank you for that.”

Though the information is a bit slow.
I’ve already defeated them.

But, I can’t say that I’ve defeated them.
Then I might have to take out my intelligence card.
I’ll have to worry about that for a while.
Even though the order of knights is being vigilant for no reason, it’s not anything too bad.

“Bode’s labyrinth especially might need caution.”

“Bode, I see.”

“Heinz is an elf, but he seems to have many human subordinates. That’s the information we have. Tare and Haruba would draw attention because there are lots of elves near, so if Heinz was to enter a labyrinth I think Bode is the most likely candidate.”

Heinz was in Haruba’s labyrinth.
He outsmarted them.

“So you think he’s in Bode.”

“It’s possible, so we’ll let you enter labyrinths elsewhere for a while if you wish.”

“There will be patrols through our labyrinths, and people from the order of knights may ask to inspect your parties intelligence cards.”

“I understand.”

That’s bad.
I don’t know if I should keep quiet about defeating the thieves.
They said I could enter other labyrinths, so should I hole myself up in Quratar’s labyrinth for a while?

Chapter 94 : Narihira

*

“Here it comes.”

Roxanne’s voice resounds.

Orange magic formation appears under a Grass Bee in the second row. Sherry’s spear won’t be able to reach that far.

The Grass Bee shoots a needle.

Roxanne receives it with her steel shield.

At the same time, a Hat Bat and a Bitch Butterfly launch their attacks on Roxanne.

Roxanne gets on her left foot and maneuvers upper half of her body to dodge body slam of the Bitch Butterfly, simultaneously swaying her head to dodge the surging Hat Bat.

From the back, I invoke fifth Breeze Storm.

The bodies of the monsters stumble under the gusts of wind.

The Bitch Butterfly regains its balance and launches another attack on Roxanne.

Roxanne parries it with her shield and twists her body to dodge the onrushing Hat Bat.

While dodging, she hits it with her rapier.

I cast sixth spell.

Orange magic formation appears under the Bitch Butterfly which Sherry was confronting.

Sherry pokes it with her spear.

Miria receives the bee’s attack with her shield and slashes with her scimitar.

Roxanne side steps another attack of the Bitch Butterfly.

After evading the Hat Bat’s attack with ease, I invoke Breeze Storm for a seventh time.

Two Bitch Butterflies, two Grass Bees and a Hat Bat drop down.

“Uh-huh, I knew 16th floor would be difficult.”

Although I have obtained the Duke’s permission to stay in Quratar’s labyrinth for the time being, it’s difficult to hunt on 16th floor. Roxanne is, as always, able to dodge their attacks without much trouble. Still, it seems difficult.

Because we have already cleared 13th, 14th and 15th floors, however, it can’t be helped.

If it weren’t for Roxanne holding the frontline and dodging their attacks, we would have long been wiped out.

“Not at all. It’s not that difficult.”

It’s not that difficult?
She’s terrifying as ever.
Only thing going in our favor is that most of the monsters on 16th floor of Quratar’s labyrinth are weak against wind magic.
It’s again thanks to Roxanne that we can search for monsters that are weak against wind magic.

“I’m not exposed to successive attacks, so I can hold my own. Compared to the standards of labyrinth, these battles are not heated yet. They’re warm at best.”

If even Sherry says so, I wonder if it really is so.
Like I thought, people of this world don’t act cautiously.
Because Roxanne aggroes most of the monsters in the center of the front, Sherry and Miria find it relatively easier on the sides.

“Fine. Have sister.”

Even Miria is aware of it.

“It’s indeed all thanks to Roxanne.”

“Not at all. It’s because master takes all the monsters out with his magic.”

“Alright then, because I’ll be using my sword next, find fewer monsters.”

After hunting on 16th floor, my Explorer job has leveled up to Lv39. Because I have one more bonus point to spend, I use it to upgrade Short

Incantation to Incantation Omission.

It's great to have both four jobs and Incantation Omission at the same time.

I recover my MP and carry on hunting.

We encounter a group of four Bitch Butterflies and a Grass Bee. This combination is the most difficult on 16th floor of Quratar's labyrinth.

Nope. The most difficult combination would be that of monsters which are weak against wind magic and carnivorous plants which are weak against fire magic.

We keep at it, however, because Roxanne can dodge their attacks with ease.

I have yet to receive their attacks.

The reason why I said that four Bitch Butterflies are difficult is that Sherry's spear may not be enough.

Bitch Butterfly's skill is capable of inflicting paralysis.

If Roxanne were to become paralyzed, it would lead to total collapse.

If there are two Bitch Butterflies, there won't be any problem. Even three are manageable.

But four or more are beyond our capability.

The Grass Bee launches its ranged attack.

When there are four monsters, they often form two rows.

If there are five, one of them does go to the second row.

The Grass Bee shoots a needle from the second row.

This is why a group of four Bitch Butterflies and a Grass Bee is the most difficult on this floor.

I wonder if I should have bought more anti-paralysis pills.

But there hasn't been a single opportunity to use even that one pill which I have.

We finish hunting without having to use the anti-paralysis pills.

Next day. Early morning. We resume hunting on 16th floor of Quratar's labyrinth.

“Here it comes.”

Roxanne cautions us and receives the needle of a Grass Bee with her shield.

Exceptional body balance.

She stabs the Grass Bee with her rapier while dodging body slam of a Bitch Butterfly.

Dodging the butterfly like a butterfly. Stabbing the bee like a bee. She's terrifyingly strong.

Sherry evades a butterfly's attack.

Miria receives a bee's attack with her shield.

The bee in the second row activates its skill again.

Roxanne parries it with her shield with ease.

The Bitch Butterfly launches another attack. Roxanne sways her body lightly and dodges it.

The Grass Bee launches an attack on Miria.

Miria dodges it.

However, the attack of the bee, which Miria dodged, was received by me who was standing behind her.

Although I received the attack, I don't seem to have been poisoned.

I continue to cast spells.

When I don't use Durandal, I lend my Poison Resistant Hard Leather Cap to Miria.

Sherry is responsible to keep Bitch Butterflies from using their skills.

Therefore, she confronts Bitch Butterflies.

I cast Heal on Miria while launching wind magic attack.

We have reached the level where we can afford to take two to three attacks from monsters.

I switch my focus between attacking and healing.

I take the monsters out with wind spell.

“Okay.”

Miria gestures with her hand that she's fine, so I stop.

I ask of Roxanne to search for more monsters.

There are two Bitch Butterflies and two Grass Bees in the next group we encounter.

Sherry comes under a butterfly's attack but takes it out in the end.

After healing her, I pull Durandal out.

Killing two more groups of monsters, I fully recover my MP.

It's wasteful to use strengthening pill in this situation.

Next group comprises two Bitch Butterflies, two Grass Bees and a Hat Bat.

The Hat Bat flies past Roxanne.

I somehow manage to ward it off using my wand.

After several Breeze Storms, all the monsters drop down.

For a rearguard, Hat Bat is a nuisance for it can bypass vanguard.

The next group is made up of a Grass Bee and four Bitch Butterflies.

Although it's the most difficult combination, I feel rather relieved that there's no Hat Bat.

The Grass Bee launches its ranged attack. Roxanne receives it with her shield.

Her defense is impregnable.

One long range attack of a mere Grass Bee can't break it.

Bitch Butterflies close in.

All four of them are lined up in one row.

Roxanne lightly dodges body slam of one of the butterflies.

She receives the attack of the second with her shield.

Third one was trying to activate skill but Sherry interrupts it.

Can we keep this up?

While I was sighing in relief, orange magic formation appears under the fourth Bitch Butterfly.

Sherry won't be able to make it in time.

I can't cast another wind spell until previous attack cools down.

Sherry was able to successfully interrupt third butterfly's skill but the fourth one's activates.

The Bitch Butterfly emits smoke of powder from its wings.
The butterfly that activated the skill is closer to Miria than Sherry.
The smoke of powder envelops Miria.

Miria stops moving.
Her body stiffens.
I observe her body while casting another wind spell. It's not moving the slightest.
Is this paralysis?

"Should I give her the pill?"
"We should exterminate the monsters first."

On Sherry's advice, I cast another Breeze Storm.
A Bitch Butterfly approaches to attack Miria.
Because Miria was paralyzed, she couldn't dodge it.

I cast Heal and take the monsters out with another wind spell.
The monsters drop down.

"How much time will paralysis take to wear off?"

I look at Miria.
She's still unable to move.
Should I take the anti-paralysis pill out of my Item Box?

"It should not take much time. It will be better to use the pill during battle. If it takes too much time, we can use the pill then. For now, we can simply move her to a safe room."

"There doesn't seem to be any monster nearby."

Sherry and Roxanne give their input.
Should I give her the pill mouth-to-mouth?
Or should I wait some more?

I-It's not like I want to do mouth-to-mouth.
Because she's paralyzed, she won't be able to return it passionately.

Besides, it's not a good habit to force yourself upon people who can't move.

I imagine pulling Miria into my embrace, putting my lips on hers and

shoving my tongue into her mouth. It feels like I'm abusing her. Because she can't offer any resistance.

Th-This...

I should try this sometime.

Uh-huh

While I was lost in my fantasy, Miria moves. She blinks her eyes.

"Ah, are you fine?"

"Fine. Sorry."

"Don't apologize."

I was indulged in my fantasy for too long, it seems. Miria has recovered from paralysis.

Next time, I'll be sure to give her the pill mouth-to-mouth.

I'm regretting to have let this opportunity slip.

There doesn't seem to be any apparent aftereffect.

When paralysis wore off, Miria stood up normally.

We carry on hunting in usual manner.

We finish today's hunting without getting paralyzed again.

"Fish, desu. Quick, desu."

After we were done with hunting, we head to the fishmonger.

We will be making fish in the new pan today.

"Which fish should we make today?"

"White fish."

Miria says after closely examining every fish at the fishmonger.

There doesn't seem to be any better fish available.

"Is there anything else you need?"

"She says that she needs slime starch."

I ask after buying two white fish. Roxanne translates.

You might think that I bought two white fish because of 30% discount.

But I did it due to Miria's appetite.

Slime starch is the item dropped by Gummy Slime.
I buy it from the guild and return home.

Miria first pours some water and wine in the pan, then adds fish sauce and olive oil.

I leave the white fish to boil along with other ingredients which I had prepared beforehand.

A rather ordinary recipe.

“What do you need this slime starch for?”

“This, desu.”

Miria shaves the slime starch.

She dissolves it in water and adds a small quantity of the solution into the pan.

Is it some kind of seasoning?

It seems to be her secret ingredient.

Nope, it's something else.

I realize it when it was served.

It's sauce.

Is slime starch same as potato starch?

I give one whole white fish to Miria and slice the other one into three pieces.

One-third is more than enough.

Even if I leave some over, I'm sure Miria will clean it up.

I eat the boiled fish with the sauce which Miria prepared.

“It's really delicious.”

Although the recipe was simple, it's not bad.

It's quite tasty.

It has rustic taste perhaps due to starch sauce.

It'll taste even better if I dilute it with some sugar and wine.

Sweet and sour sauce, to be precise.

“Have eaten, desu.”

Miria seems satisfied.

It seems she has had her fill for she didn't snatch Roxanne's, Sherry's or mine.

We can do without fish for some time, i guess.

Next morning. I try to add wine and sugar to Miria's starch sauce. I boil some water, and then add sugar, wine, fish sauce and slime starch. I make stir-fried vegetables and serve it with sweet and sour starch sauce.

Uh-huh

Just like sweet and sour pork except there's no pork.

Had I added pork, it would have been just like sweet and sour pork.

I didn't go with pork and added vegetables instead because I was afraid that it might end up in failure.

"It's really tasty, Master."

"It's sweet and sour at the same time. I haven't eaten anything like it. It's delicious."

"Tasty, desu."

I receive compliments from the three, even though it's not sweet and sour pork.

In my honest opinion, it's lacking.

But I won't be discouraged by this failure.

I'll use slime starch in even more dishes.

Because I now understand how to make starch sauce and I have tried it already, I have lost interest in it.

I soak some goat meat in fish sauce and leave it to marinate.

"Miria, can you please shave some slime starch?"

"Yes, desu."

Evening. I receive starch from Miria upon returning home.

"A message from luke, the broker. There seemed to be a successful bid for Caterpillar Monster Card."

When we return home, there was a note at the entrance.

With Caterpillar Monster Card, we can make another Sacrificial Misanga.

It'll be third.

If we count the Ring of Determination, we will have four accessories. One for everyone.

Let's leave it for tomorrow.

I dredge goat meat in starch and deep-fry it.

Hokkaido cuisine, zangi. Otherwise known as tatsuta-age. (TN: Tatsuta-age is a Japanese cuisine which is called Zangi in Hokkaido.)

But it's not as red.

It's more crimson than red.

It's probably darker in color due to fish sauce.

It doesn't look so good.

When I try it, however, it tastes good.

Well, there were not many steps involved in the recipe, so it couldn't go wrong.

It's satisfactory.

Well, even in modern Japan, I had never seen tatsuta-age much.

Impassionate gods have never seen the red that is the Tatsuta River. (TN: From a poem by Ariwara no Narihira. You must have already noticed the wordplay by the author.)

This would do for now.

Chapter 95 : Bounty

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Next morning. After having breakfast, I jump to the merchants guild. I ask the three of them to do the dishes and cleaning. I don't want people at the guild to find out that Sherry is a master smith. And about the possibility of fusion once I get the monster card.

“Here, Caterpillar Monster Card.”

“Indeed.”

I had already confirmed that it's the real thing before receiving it. Still, I don't know when Luke will try to pass me a fake.

I wonder what I will do if he does that. Since Luke has relationship with the order of Harz duchy knights, I don't think he will try to do that. Does he know that I'm trying to claim indemnity?

Well, considering the procedure, it is more troublesome to produce a fake.

Still, I should better verify the card with the guild temple sometime, so that Luke doesn't get any strange idea.

Also, I would like to check the guild temple for once at least.

“And here, these are wanted posters of bandits. The order of Harz duchy knights entrusted me with these. They wish for you to be careful.”

Luke hands me the papyrus. Although these are wanted posters, there's no portrait drawn. Only a description is written in Brahim language.

Are these bounties assigned by the order of Harz duchy knights? Even though they have already been defeated. It looks like I made them waste their money.

I receive both the monster card and the wanted posters, and return home.

I pass the misanga and the monster card to Sherry.

“What is that?”

“Wanted posters of pirates.”

I take out the wanted posters.

Sherry glances at the posters from the side and reads.

“It is for Heinz the bandit and Simon the mad dog.”

“Simon the mad dog, you say?”

Roxanne cries in surprise.

“Do you know him?”

“Yes. He is a famous pirate from wolfkin tribe. I heard he is quite strong and is second to none in using one-handed sword. However, I heard that he was defeated by someone when I was a kid, so he doesn't seem to be invincible. I would really like to fight against him sometime.”

Actually, you have already fought against him.

Still, she says terrifying things so calmly.

“Well, it is impossible now. They are the same thieves we defeated in Haruba's labyrinth earlier.”

“The thieves from the other day?”

“Most likely.”

“That reminds me, one of the thieves was a wolfman. If so, was he Simon the mad dog? Then, this rapier...”

Roxanne looks at the rapier in her hand.

In comparison to his name, the weapon of Simon is shabby.

May be he was hiding better weapons somewhere else?

Or was he only an ordinary pirate?

Even Kobou made mistakes with his brush huh?

“Don't think about it.”

“To defeat Simon the mad dog, as expected of Master.”

Assuming the pirate we defeated was Simon, he was defeated by magic.

That would be a foul play.

Rather, I should say that I am lucky I didn't fight him with sword.

In the meantime, Sherry fuses the monster card.
She successfully creates a Sacrificial Misanga.

“You did it, as expected of Sherry.”

“Thank you.”

Sherry hands over the Sacrificial Misanga.
I receive it.

“This is for Sherry to wear. Where do you want to wear it?”

“I will put it on my foot.”

“Got it. Show me your foot.”

I tie the Sacrificial Misanga around Sherry’s ankle.
Small and delicate feet.
She is so cute.

There’s more thread left even after I bind it.
It is so because her foot is small.

“The order of Harz duchy knights seem to be quite troubled. They are not gonna check Intelligence Card when they pay the reward money.”

While I was folding the misanga around her ankle to tie it fittingly, Sherry voices her opinion.

“You think so?”

“It is written in the posters.”

They are not gonna check Intelligence Card?
If my job will not be verified, I can immediately turn in the thieves’ Intelligence Cards.
But why?

“They are not gonna do the verification?”

“I don’t think so. If they do that, other thieves will not bring the Intelligence Cards next time.”

“Oh, so this is in order to make other thieves bring the cards?”

“The one, who knows best where a thief is and what he is doing, is a fellow thief. If you pay them appropriately, they will kill anyone, even a thief. It is a technique that was used in the past when a strong thief

appeared.”

Using a snake to bite a snake?

Indeed. Only a thief knows thieves' ways best.

Let a thief kill another thief. It is more efficient.

In other words, the current bounty system, which doesn't allow rewarding a thief, protects thieves from betrayal of fellow thieves.

If a fellow thief's card can be encashed, then this will prevent thieves from forming groups.

They will kill each other quietly for reward. It will cause them to doubt each other. It will definitely help reduce the number of bandits.

“Err... then why do they check the cards and don't use this method instead?”

“Certainly, I think it is better to hand over the prize money regardless of who brings the Intelligence Card. But the Empire's laws prevent rewarding thieves since it will financially benefit them.”

Sherry seems to be in favor of rewarding thieves with the bounty. After all, it is rational.

Especially, if you think about the current security standards of this world.

However, it may only be effective for a short period of time. I'm not sure if it will work in long term.

Back in Edo period in Japan, they allowed gamblers to take control roles as well. I wonder if it went well.

They said that such special treatment caused the formation of gangs. I have heard that the origin of foreign mafia was a self-controlled aid organization in Sicily.

Even if the knights don't have enough power to deal with thieves right now, what will happen in the future when they do?

This may lead to undesired custom.

In that case, it will be better not to pay bounty to the thieves.

Next morning. I head to Bode with the Intelligence Cards.

I can encash these cards immediately if there is no verification of my Intelligence Card.

The thieves have already been defeated.
The more the time passes, the more the inconsistent information may spread.
The sooner it is done, the more difficult for inconsistencies to arise.
I hope that it will not be suspicious to claim the bounty only a day after the wanted posters were out.

My Explorer job just reached Lv 41.
Most likely, the higher the level goes up, the more the experience points will be needed to level up.
Right now, Miria is Diver Lv30. She has caught up with Roxanne's Lv31 Beast Warrior and Sherry's Lv31 Master Smith.
However, I don't believe the experience points needed to level from Lv1 to Lv30 are the same as the experience points needed to level from Lv30 to Lv31.

Or perhaps there is an range of levels?
Even if I defeat a Lv16 monster on 16th floor of the labyrinth, I probably won't even receive half as much experience as defeating a Lv40 monster.

I don't completely understand the mechanics of leveling up.
Even though I have selected Hero job, it is still at Lv37.
It is certain that the pace of leveling up differs for each job.

In any case, it seems It will take quite some time to get Explorer job to Lv50.
It is not a good idea to wait until I get Adventure job.
It is better to get over with it quickly.

It's also useless to bring Heinz's Intelligence Card to anyone other than the order of Harz duchy knights.
Also, I will get to hear from the Duke as to why the bounty was assigned to Heinz the bandit.
If there is a story behind it, might as well hear it.

Having taken the worst-case scenario into account, I warp to Bode's adventurers guild through the guild wall.
I enter the city of Bode and head to the Duke's castle.

If they ask to check my Intelligence Card, I can make excuse that I am still searching.

I hand the Intelligence Cards to a knight I know.

“Please wait a little. I will go and call the leader.”

The knight head to the back.

Not calling him would have made me happier.

Am I asking too much to just receive the reward?

I also considered aiming for a time when the Duke and Gozer wouldn't be around.

But it will lead to more troubles later on.

If I went to Bode at an inappropriate time, and got myself involved in an incident, I might get arrested.

If I appear at usual time, take usual attitude and behave as if there is scheduled appointment, wouldn't it look like there is nothing special going on?

After a while, Gozer appears.

“Michio dono, have you perhaps brought the Intelligence Cards?”

“I was attacked the other day.”

“Actually, we found a place yesterday on 12th floor of Haruba's labyrinth where protective cement was used.”

“Oh, it was probably the same place.”

Apparently, they have already found the location where the thieves set up ambush.

Just in time.

I am glad that I brought the cards today.

Also, it was correct decision to come here at usual time.

If I brought the cards at inappropriate time, they would have thought that I came here immediately after defeating the thieves.

“Is that so? I found it strange when we found the location of ambush but there were no thieves around. So I thought that they had already been defeated.”

Gozer explains.

That is exactly what happened.

That's great. This will also serve as an evidence that I visit the labyrinths in the territory of Harz duchy, as I promised with the Duke.

"Leader."

"How did it go?"

"One of the cards belongs to Heinz."

The knight comes back, and speaks with Gozer.

So it really was Heinz the bandit's gang.

"There is no mistake?"

"Yes."

"Well then, Michio dono, please come inside."

After having confirmed with the knight, Gozer invites me inside.

"Okay."

I follow him inside the castle.

I was escorted to a location I had never visited before.

"Are you alright after fighting with Heinz's gang?"

"Somehow."

"To be able to defeat Heinz's gang, I am really surprised. It really is a great accomplishment."

"Well, I managed to defeat them somehow."

Gozar and I talk as we walk through the castle's corridors.

Unfortunately, there was no Intelligence Card for the pirate who exploded.

That pirate must have been the strongest in Heinz's gang.

It would have been better had his Intelligence Card remained intact.

"The person who defeated Heinz is Michio dono?"

Gozar brings me to a room where the Duke of Harz was waiting.

"It appears so."

"Oh, as expected of the person I have taken notice of. Are you alright?"

“Yes.”

To even defeat a formidable foe, my impression to the Duke seems to have improved even more.

“Last is Elmer’s. No card of Simon?”

There is a white box inside the room.

The intelligence cards were placed inside the box.

There was a knight who was reading the contents of the Intelligence Cards.

There is nothing written on the Intelligence Cards regarding how or when they died.

Is this device used to read the cards?

“Simon’s Intelligence Card is not there? But Heinz’s card is there, right? Great job, Michio dono. By the way, had Heinz’s job advanced to Bandit?”

“Heinz’s Intelligence Card is there, right?”

Gozer repeats after the Duke.

I did bring the bandit’s Intelligence Card with me.

Apparently, it was Heinz’s.

Then the pirate was Simon.

“Yes, Leader. Heinz’s Intelligence Card is here.”

“And there is no Intelligence Card of Simon?”

“That’s right.”

Gozar talks with the knight.

“Do you have any idea where he could be, Michio dono?”

“There was one thief the card of whom I couldn’t collect. He was quite strong.”

I can’t say I killed him.

It may lead to the question as to how I managed to kill such formidable pirates.

And I have no evidence to show that I killed him.

“So Michio dono didn’t kill Simon? Was Simon perhaps on another

errand alone? Or may be they split up? Or could he be hiding somewhere else?”

“There will be no threat to Selmar territory if it’s only Simon who escaped. I will not allow him to have his way in my territory.”

“That’s right but...”

Gozer seems to be troubled.

He is concerned about Simon’s whereabouts since it is his responsibility as knight leader to maintain peace and security.

You don’t need to be worried, Gozer.

“This is the bounty.”

The knight standing next to the box operates it.

Money comes out of the box.

Does this device also serve as a safe?

“Is this the first time you are seeing where the guild temple money comes from, Michio dono?”

The Duke questions me.

Was it showing on my face?

“It is, yes.”

“It belongs to the knights guild’s temple, and a knight is appointed to carry the duties here. It is possible to conduct the ceremony to change the job to Knight right now, if Michio dono wishes to become a knight. Want to give it a try?”

I try to use Appraisal on the box.

Certainly, it belongs to the guild temple.

Is this place the guild temple?

It’s easy for me because I have Job Settings, but in general the job change ceremony is performed in the guild temple.

To become a knight, it is probably necessary to visit the temple of the knights guild.

“No.”

“Well, you rarely find an adventurer who intends to turn into a knight.

Also, it takes years of training as a warrior before you can become a knight. There's no substitute to years of training. If Michio dono could become a knight just like that, I would be in a bind.”

The Duke laughs.

It was a joke, it seems.

Humor has never been a strong point of mine.

The condition to become a knight is to level Warrior job up to Lv30 after all.

I select Warrior job when I want to use [Rush]. Currently, it is at Lv29. A little more to Lv30.

“Here it is.”

The knight hands the money to the Duke in a drawstring bag.

“You can exchange Intelligence Card for reward in any of the knights guild's temple. This really is a convenient device.”

“I see.”

“But it is less than I thought.”

The Duke questions as he checks the bag he received from the knight.

“It may indeed be less. Although Heinz the bandit rampaged badly in Selmar territory, Simon has yet to be taken care of.”

“It does seem to be less. I heard that some members of the order of knights were done in by Simon alone. May be they assigned more bounty to Simon, Michio dono.”

The Duke seems convinced by Gozer's explanation. He passes the money to me.

Like they announced, there doesn't seem to be any verification of Intelligence Card.

I am disappointed that I couldn't collect Simon's Intelligence Card for the reward.

Chapter 96 : Unreasonable Demand

*

I respectfully receive the reward.

“Although I arranged a special case with the Emperor’s council to not check Intelligence Card, it was in vain.”

The Duke says.

Well, it was surely not in vain.

Don’t tell me that he is going to ask me to have my card checked now?

“Did you negotiate directly with the Emperor or his council office?”

“It was difficult convincing them but I finally managed to convince them that it is best using thieves to catch thieves. Don’t you agree, Michio dono?”

The Duke and Sherry seem to have same opinion.

However, as it turned out, the Duke was hasty with this idea.

“Well, in short term, it seems fine.”

“Oh, so you don’t think it will be effective in long run?”

“Err... no. When you hire a thief to catch another thief, a clear distinction between the controlled side and the controlling side disappears. It may not go well in long run.”

This is bad.

I have expressed disagreement with the duke. Damn it!

“So you believe that having knights take care of thieves is better?”

Actually, you may be right.”

“Hmm... so Gozer isn’t as inflexible as I thought.”

“But I believe it is effective in the short term.”

I follow up hurriedly.

I wonder if it was alright to express an opinion different from the Duke.

It will be purged.

“Did you call me?”

A voice comes in from outside.
We can wrap up this topic now.
God, is that you?

“Is that you, Cassia? Please come in.”
“Okay.”

A goddess indeed.
The door opens and Cassia walks in.
As beautiful as ever.
She is dressed in a light blue gothic outfit with slight exposure of skin.

She is brimming with grace, serene and elegance.
She looks like a noble lady from a painting.
Rather, she is the real thing.

A maid follows behind her.
The voice from earlier seemed to belong to this maid.
She is a beautiful elf as well.
However, the magnificent beauty of Cassia stands out the most.

“Michio Dono have the same opinion as Cassia. He believes that it is a bad idea to use thieves against other thieves since there needs to be a clear distinction between those hunting and those being hunted.”
“Oh, is that right?”

Cassia looks at me and smiles lightly.
The smile of a goddess.

“Because there is a possibility of collusion?”
“That’s right. It’s not appropriate for a noble’s part to be played by anyone other than a noble.”
“Even if it’s an emergency, you need to consider when to hire a thief to catch another thief.”

I can’t help but stare at Cassia.
Earlier, I was concerned about disagreeing with the Duke, but it seems to have gone well.
It wasn’t purged.

“Well, that is no longer necessary. Rejoice Cassia for Michio dono has punished Heinz’s gang.”

“Oh dear.”

Cassia opens her eyes wide, and looks at me with a joyous expression. How much these blue eyes extend to.

I feel like I am being absorbed.

Actually, I would love to be absorbed into her.

“Only Simon managed to flee, but he can’t do much by himself. I wouldn’t be surprised if he has dropped dead already.”

That is indeed the case.

“Thank you very much. Heinz was active in the Earl of Selmar’s territory, my parents’ home. A few Acquaintances of mine were murdered by Heinz. Thankfully, Michio sama took revenge for me, too.”

Cassia bows.

Her beautiful, shiny golden hair cascade.

“No, not at all. I am grateful for your words.”

“I got worried when I heard they were in the Earl’s territory. The residents of Selmar will feel relieved with this, too.”

“I am honored to be of help.”

It is enough for people of Selmar just to have had Cassia worried.

“Was anyone in Heinz’s gang equipped with a ring?”

I am asked by the Duke.

I take out the Ring of Determination from my Item Box, and pass it to the Duke.

“By a ring, do you mean this ring?”

“Oh. No, it should be different from what I remember.”

Well, Ring of Determination was reborn by the Character Reset. It can’t go back to how it was before.

“I only found this ring.”

“Don’t worry. I do not doubt Michio dono. Gozer, what do you think?”

“Well, I think there were more scratches. May be the ring was polished?”
“Heinz stole the Ring of Determination from the Earl of Selmar. It originally belonged to my house. When i married Cassia, I presented it as betrothal gift.”

The Duke explains the situation.

So originally, it was an accessory that belonged to the Duke?

And then the Ring of Determination was presented as betrothal gift?

“Betrothal gift...?”

“It’s contrary to the custom of commoners. In case of commoners, males fight against monsters. Therefore, the number of males decreases while the number of females increases. For this reason, at the time of marriage, females need to offer dowry. If the dowry is not enough, it could lead to polygamy. However, in case of nobles, since very few nobles fight against monsters, males are not any less than females. Therefore, the male has to present a betrothal gift at the time of marriage.”

The Duke, thinking probably that I didn’t understand, explains about nobles’ betrothal gift.

Well, I did not even know about the dowry of commoners, let alone nobles’ betrothal gift.

In case of commoners, the female seems to pay the male money and goods at time of marriage.

In the past, men used to get killed in wars. I heard stories about Islamic religion allowing polygamy for this reason.

Is this similar to that?

“I see.”

“If this is the Ring of Determination Heinz had, I’d like to buy it by all means. Are you fine with it?”

“Does it have a history?”

“It is something my ancestors from five generations back received during fixation.”

It really seems that the Ring of Determination came out during fixation.

“So it has such a history.”

It can not be helped.
I don't see any reason to refuse.

“Then I will receive the ring and have it appraised right away.”
“Okay.”

The Ring of Determination was taken from me just like that.
What about the price?
Will It be the same as having to follow the price set by lords?
Since it concerns the Duke and Cassia, I don't think the price will be low
however.

It feels like receiving a blank cheque.
They will pay the price I write.
It will be a problem in itself.

“I want to take Michio dono to the Earl of Selmar. What do you think,
Cassia?”

The Duke throws a frightening suggestion.
I am fine with just getting the compensation.

“Yes. There should be words of thanks from the Earl of Selmar, of
course.”

Cassia agrees with him.
Now I have no choice but to go.

“There should be. Are you okay with that, Michio dono? They just need
to spare some time and bow their heads. It doesn't need to be formal. It
will not go bad nor will it trouble you. I would like Michio dono to go in
person.”

“I see.”

” The thieves were taken care of thanks to Michio Sama. I will appreciate
if you give the Earl of Selmar the opportunity to express his gratitude as
well.”

“I understand.”

Since Cassia is asking of me, I can't refuse.
I want to decline it if possible, but I can't find a reason to refuse.

“If I killed the thief which the Earl of Selmar couldn’t get rid of, It would be something I could take pride in.”

May be that is the true intention of the Duke.

I wonder if the relationship between the Duke and his in-laws is bad since he stole their beautiful daughter.

Can you please not involve me in your personal matters?

“I will arrange a day with the Earl of Selmar. It will not be immediate however. So Michio dono, can you come to Bode again in the morning three days from now? I will have the date decided by then.”

“Okay, three days. Then I will come here again in three days.”

I bow to Cassia and the Duke, and take my leave.

It is about time to end this conversation.

I don’t mind being forever near Cassia, but I can not say that.

There is also a possibility that I would be asked of more unreasonable demands.

Also, I should withdraw before I am asked to show my Intelligence Card.

“Michio dono, from here please.”

Gozar sees me off to the lobby.

“Gozer dono, is there perhaps a village or a port or may be a place where I can acquire a lot of fish from?”

“When you speak about fishing village, Hafen comes to my mind. It is famous for the quality of fish. If you wish to, I can ask one of our adventurers to take you there.”

As I thought, there seems to be a good fishing village in the territory of Harz duchy.

I conjectured that the Harz duchy is close to the sea when I heard that amber is mined there.

I guessed that the sea will be to the north.

“This is Hafen.”

The adventurer brings me to what seems to be the fishing market of the village.

The air is filled with smell of the sea and fish mingled together.
The sellers are displaying the fish and interacting with the buyers.

“You are not a member of the order of knights. How can I help?”

As soon as we arrive, an elf approaches us.
He appears to be from this fishing village.

Village Chief Lv3

“I want you to listen to this person’s request. With this, I am off.”

The adventurer who brought me heads back immediately.

“So, how can I be of help?”

“Is it possible to buy fish from here?”

“Yes. There is no particular restriction.”

Since the adventurer went home, I speak directly with the chief.
This looks fine to me.

That’s all I needed to hear.

“Is it always busy like this?”

“Every morning, we drop the net in different location. The quality and quantity of the fish caught is purely based on luck. The fish we catch are sold here. Today, It was quite a catch.”

“Okay. From now on, I will be coming here to buy fish.”

“We will be waiting for you.”

I make a new acquaintance and go back home.

After returning, I confirm the prize money.

39 gold coins and 52 silver coins.

395,200 Nars.

Although the Duke said it’s less, is it really less?

Among the eight Intelligence Cards I had, six thieves had low levels.
About ten to twenty each.

Those six probably value around 100,000 Nars.

There was one high level thief. The bounty for that one should most likely be 100,000 Nars.

And Heinz the bandit's bounty will be about 200,000 Nars.

It does seem less after all.

But can I say that now?

It is late now to say that.

Even if I complain, there is no reason for them to increase it.

“Now that I have turned in the Intelligence Cards, I can go back to Haruba's labyrinth.”

I tell the three at breakfast.

Also, since the thieves were killed, I don't think their companions will return to any labyrinth in the territory of Harz duchy.

I can insist that Simon's whereabouts remain unknown if it comes to that.

But I don't think they will stick to this matter.

“The monster on 13th floor of Haruba's labyrinth is Pig Hog.”

“The weakness of Pig Hog is water magic, right?”

“That's right.”

I confirm with Sherry.

The monster on 12th floor of Haruba's labyrinth was Grass Bee whose weakness was wind magic, while the weakness of Pig hog, the monster native to 13th floor, is water magic.

It would be more efficient to go to 16th Floor of Quratar's labyrinth, but I can't help it.

I can't afford to act out of convenience now.

Well, there is also the possibility of using guide to reach 16th floor of Haruba's and Tare's labyrinths, but it will be meaningless if the monster lineup is different.

It is safer to explore the floors in order then.

I should get the Adventurer job as early as I can, but I can not level Explorer job to Lv50 in two days.

“With the money in respect of bounty, we should consider increasing party members.”

“Yes, certainly.”

“I don't mean right now. We will wait until Miria gets familiar.”

“xxxxxxxxxxxx”

“Yes.”

I reiterate my intention to expand my harem.
But I will wait until Miria doesn't need Roxanne for interpretation.
And it will take time until she masters Barhim language to the level of being able to make conversations.

“Also, I sold the Ring of Determination to the Duke of Harz. Apparently, it was obtained by the Duke's ancestor during fixation. I am sorry, Miria.”

“So it was like I thought.”

“Yes.”

Sherry and Miria nod.

After all, when Sherry equipped the Sacrificial Misanga, Miria received the Ring of Determination.

However, It ended up being for just one day.

Miria doesn't show any sign of disappointment at all.
But it was supposed to be her equipment. Is she really okay with it?

“As compensation, the knight leader introduced me to a fishing village in the Harz duchy. How about we go there the day after tomorrow?”

I follow up with a suggestion.

“Wow. Yes.”

Miria's eyes shine when Roxanne translates.
As expected, she cares more about fish than equipment.

Chapter 97 : North Sea

*

“The territory of Harz duchy is to the north. There is bound to be lot of seafood in the fishing village.”

“Is that right?”

For some reason, Sherry cuts in the middle when I was speaking.
This is bad.

I heard that the North Sea on earth is full of treasures.

Though it may not be the same for this world.
I can't say, however, that the South Sea doesn't have a bountiful of fish.

“No. More likely, there is plenty of fish in the north.”
“I think there are more animals and plants existing in south because the wind in the south is warmer than in the north.”

“But that applies only to land.”

“Miria heard that more fish can be caught in the north, but she doesn't know the reason.”

If Miria says so, then it most likely is the case.
What a relief.

The conditions here seem to be similar to earth.

“Why is there more fish in the north? It is a mystery to me.”
“Mystery, desu.”

Sherry and Miria are getting along pretty well.
It is strange.
I am puzzled because these two are on opposite sides of Roxanne. [TL: he was saying both of them were setting as Sandwiching Roxanne (Roxanne in the middle of the two as sandwich)]

“There is only water in the sea. Therefore, basic nourishment isn't enough.”

“Is that true?”

“That's right. So, where does nourishment in the sea come from? When a

fish dies, it sinks to the bottom of the sea. The small insects disassemble the sunk fish. Then big bugs eat small insect, which in turn are eaten by small fish. Medium size fish eats small fish, and when big fish dies, it again sinks to the bottom of the sea. The nourishment in the sea circulates like this. Therefore, the nourishment exists in the bottom of the sea. While the bottom is rich in nutrition, there is little nutrition in other parts. The number of fish in the sea will not increase without enough nutrition. This is the basic cycle of the sea.”

I teach them what I learned in biology class.
I don't think they will understand bacteria, organic matter or food chain if I explain.

“xxxxxxxxxxxx”

“Water is cold at the bottom of the sea. In southern sea, the surface heats up during the day, so the water temperature increases. Therefore, it's difficult for the warm water at the surface and the cold water at the bottom to mix well, so the nourishment at the bottom does not spread around the sea. On the other hand, in northern sea, both the water at the bottom and at the surface is cold, so it gets mixed well. Therefore, the nutrition at the bottom tends to spread around the sea. This is the reason why the North Sea has plenty more fish than the South Sea.”

I wait for Roxanne to translate what I explained.

“As expected of master. Miria says it is her first time hearing this.”
“Hmm... I smell a lie.”
“Amazing, desu.”

Sherry and Miria show opposite reaction.
While Miria is honest, Sherry is critical. [TL: any other word for Critical?]
Miria's response is probably due to Roxanne 's education.
But Sherry doesn't seem to trust me at all.

“What do you mean by 'you smell a lie'?”
“Hmm”
“But it really is truth.”
“You aren't trying to deceive me?”

“I am really not trying to deceive you.”

Why would I?

I don't think I ever lied to them. [TL: seriously you never lied???]

“You found something wrong in what I said?”

“.....”

Here we go again.

“The surface of the South Sea is warm, and the North Sea is cold. Up to this point I understand. But wouldn't that make the bottom of the North Sea colder than the South Sea? But the temperature does not change according to you.”

“That's a good question. If the water becomes cold, it will freeze and the ice will float to the surface.”

“Ice will float to the surface?”

Huh? Does sherry not know about ice?

Oh, apparently this world does not have a refrigerator or freezer. [TL: seriously, you need electricity to have those just to let you know]

“Ice will float on the water. Have you not heard stories how the surface of lake freezes in winter?”

“I have heard that.”

“It is the same thing. When it becomes excessively cold even in the North Sea, the surface gets covered in ice, so the water at the bottom doesn't become cold anymore. For this reason, the water temperature at the bottom does not greatly differ between the two seas. Only the surface temperature differs.”

“Hmm... I see. I feel some of what you just said sounds logical.”

Oh

I have finally managed to convince Sherry.

Victory for science.

Although this step is small, It is a great step forward for mankind.

After finally convincing Sherry, we head to 13th floor of Haruba's labyrinth.

I needed five Water Storms to kill two Pig Hogs and two additional Breeze

Balls for Grass Bee.

A total of seven shots.

“So it is as I expected?”

Seven shots. It is not that different from 16th floor of Quratar’s labyrinth.

Battle duration is almost the same as well.

I think we can clear all the way till there.

“It will be fine. We can already fight on 16th floor of Quratar’s labyrinth, so It will not be that difficult here.”

In Roxanne’s opinion, it’ll be safe here.

“However, the efficiency is bad.”

“Even if battles are long, we haven’t suffered any damage.”

The battle duration for 13th floor here is same as 16th floor (of Quratar’s labyrinth).

“Well, there is no helping it.”

“There is the request of the duke as well.”

There is no problem in exploring 13th floor of Haruba’s labyrinth but exploring 16th floor of Quratar’s labyrinth will help me in becoming adventurer quickly.

Later that day. After exploring 13th floor of Haruba’s labyrinth later, I get some chores done.

First, I receive the maid clothes for Miria from the clothing store in the Imperial capital.

Has it already been 10 days since Miria arrived?

It will be better to get more familiar with her before increasing harem members.

Evening. I return home with Miria’s maid clothes.

Roxanne and Sherry bring their own maid clothes as well to the living room.

“Then I will teach Miria how to dress up.”

Roxanne says and starts to take off her clothes.

When Roxanne takes off her clothes, her big and soft breasts show. I can't get used to them no matter how many times I see them. They are the best no matter how many times I look at them.

A big and fascinating chest is hidden in graceful, blue housemaid clothes.

Swaying, shaking, squeezing, but remaining hidden.

That's outrageous.

Outrageous indeed.

They are held down beneath housemaid clothes, so they won't move.

This suppleness is wonderful as ever.

As for Miria's maid clothes, it is similar to Roxanne's and Sherry's maid clothes except for the apron.

Small cat ears on top of maid clothes look great.

"But why are you changing here?"

If you changed in the bedroom, I would have been able to push you down to the bed.

Or perhaps you didn't want me to do that?

"Well, we change here and then master will carry us to the bed."

So it was like that.

Of course I will carry you.

I pick Roxanne up as I put one arm on her back and the other one under her knees.

I hold her smooth body on my arms while I slowly and gently carry her to the bed.

I stare at her breasts jiggle like a baby.

I can feel her softness and suppleness in my arms.

Everything feels great.

Sherry's petite body is lighter.

I place my arm above her delicate feet, and hold her tightly to my body.

I carry her small body easily.

Lastly, it is time to carry Miria.
As I hold her, her ears start twitching.
Miria became quiet as I gently carry her in my arms.

Now that I have carried them to the bed, it's time to eat them.
Of course I will eat them up.
When I was eating the three of them, I forgot to prepare for the meal.
It was delicious.

Next morning. We go to the fish market in Hafen.
There is a strong scent of fish and the sea.

“o, o, o, o” [TL: it is cutier to keep romaji here]

I watch as Miria tries to say something.
She wants to say something.
I get what she wants to says.

“When would you like to eat it? At breakfast or at dinner?”
“I would like it for dinner. Although I'll have to wait, it'll be more delicious.”

Roxanne translates her answer.
She seems fixated over other things at the moment.

“Then choose your favorite.”
“Yes, desu.”

We follow around the market after Miria.
There was a good variety of fish on the market.
Although little, lobsters and crabs are being sold as well.
Before long, Miria starts a deep conversation with an old lady in a shop.

“Are they able to communicate?”
“I don't know. The Bana language she is using is a little different, but understanding each other is possible if they speak slowly.”

Both Roxanne and Miria speak the same Bana language.
But it is not so in case of this old lady and our catgirl.
The language that Miria and the old lady speak differ as much as Spanish differs from Portuguese.

“This, desu.”

Miria looks back toward me while pointing to a fish.
The small fish looks like Mackerel.
Has she decided on Mackerel?

“Eight of this one, desu.”

“But there is nothing to put it in.”

I don't not have a shopping basket.
The bread is held in hands and vegetables are normally carried in the
backpack at the time of returning home.
I want to avoid fish odor coming from the backpack.
Miria may like it though.

“xxxxxxxxxxxx”

“xxxxxxxxxxxx”

“She is saying we can have a bucket for 20 Nars.”

Roxanne negotiates with the old lady in the shop.

“Then a bucket and 8 of that fish.”

When Roxanne translates and places the order, the old lady leaves the
shop and goes somewhere.
Probably to bring the bucket.

“xxxxxxxxxxxx”

While pointing at the fish, Miria explains more about it.

“Internal organs of this fish need to be cleaned carefully, so it doesn't
bleed.”

“I see.”

So you need to carefully handle it huh?
Or the taste will change.
Although modern-world fishing is vastly different from here, there are
some similarities.
As expected of Miria.

The old lady is back with a bucket.

It's a flat tub with handles, like the one used for delivery from sushi bar.
Miria puts eight fish in the bucket.

"That's 28 Nars, Desu."

Roxanne translates the price.

That's cheap.

1 Nar for each fish?

30% discount doesn't seem to be effective in the old lady's case.

"Is this all?"

"Yes, desu."

Since Miria nods, We go back home.

"They are small. Is this really okay?"

"It seems the fish were caught in seine. The fisherman who caught the fish said she can also catch fish smaller than her palm. The small fish are cheap, but if prepared carefully, they can be very delicious."

"I see. As expected of Miria."

"Yes, desu."

Miria sticks her chest out proudly.

I pat her head.

We keep the fish in the kitchen until evening.

In the evening, Miria cuts it down into three pieces and sautes it.

It's has crunchy texture but chewy to eat.

It's delicious.

"It is delicious."

"Yes, desu."

Miria finishes eating her fill quickly, and starts staring at the dish when I distribute it to others.

When the dish moves to left, Miria's eyes follow it to the left.

When it returns to right, Miria's eyes return to the right.

"...I don't think I can eat any more fish."

"I think I have eaten enough as well."

"Me too."

I knew it would come down to this.

“You can eat the remaining fish, Miria.”

“Yes, desu!”

We were forced to concede today again.

Next morning. It is the day I agreed with Cassia.

I assume the worst situation and warp to Bode’s adventurers’ guild, and then walk to the castle.

I doubt it will be pleasant introducing a person of unknown origin to the Earl.

They may even ask to check my Intelligence Card as well.

Still, I can’t think of an appropriate way to decline a request from the Duke and Cassia.

It was my grandfather’s will.

→ What exactly was his will?

It is a formal occasion.

→ Am I not always granted audience with the Duke?

Because my party member died in the fight with the thieves, I can’t be the only one to receive honor.

→ Didn’t I say that others are safe?

I have suffered critical injury after shameful defeat to a monster in the labyrinth.

→ It can be healed using recovery pills.

I have to go back to my hometown because my parents died.

→ It will be a problem if they find me in Quratar.

Sudden illness.

→ It will buy me a few more days at best.

No. I have really been feeling pain in my stomach for a while now.

Well, I can always runaway without saying anything, but I may not be able to continue being adventurer if I am declared as fugitive.

Well, there is nothing serious at present to run away under the cover.

There's no helping it since I have already come this far.
I can quit later if it needs be.

I sort my thoughts as I enter the castle.
Both Cassia and the Duke were waiting in the lobby.

Cassia is wearing elegant light purple dress, with hair accessory resembling tiara.

She really is beautiful.

The Duke is wearing flashier clothes than usual.

Both are dressed up.

"Oh, if it isn't Michio dono. We have been waiting for you. But why did you come from outside?"

"Err... no, I was just-"

"Well, it doesn't matter now. Are you coming with us?"

How can you say it doesn't matter?
So there is no longer a need to hear anything from me?

"Where?"

"We are headed to the Earl of Selmar's place."

"Right now?"

"That's what we talked about three days ago."

Didn't you say you inform me in three days?

"I am sorry, Michio Sama. I tried to arrange for a time that would work with the busy schedule of his highness. Today was the best time to visit the Earl of Selmar's place."

Cassia bows.

A faint fragrance drifts to me as her beautiful hair waves.

Did Cassia wear a perfume because she is visiting the Earl of Selmar?

It is sweet fragrance.

Cassia's dress is elegant and pretty.

Gorgeous dress and hair ornamented with jewels make Cassia even more beautiful. [TL: actually I think he meant that cassia make them looks better, not sure though]

If I am going with Cassia, I don't care about anything else.

"It doesn't matter; it will be settled quickly. If Michio dono likes the place, he can visit again any time."

"I'll be in your care then."

"Very well."

I bow to Cassia in return.

I'll just ignore the Duke. I'll ignore him.

The Duke is unusually impatient today.

I should have expected it would come to this.

Chapter 98 : Bluff

*

“Well then, ready to go?”

“What about my clothes?”

“I don’t mind if you stay as you are.”

“And the sword?”

“There will be no problem if you put it in your Item Box.”

I try to find various excuses, but he rejects all of them.

I joined the party of an adventurer of the order of knights, and was taken to the Earl of Selmar’s residence.

Via [Field Walk], we arrive at a place that looks like a lobby.

Doesn’t it have the same construction as Bode’s castle?

“Six people, including the Duke of Harz, have arrived.”

The knight from our party announces to a knight from the other side.

“I have been waiting for you. Please allow me to be your guide.”

The knight from the other side responds respectfully.

It seems there was already an arrangement.

It would be troublesome otherwise.

It’s great that the one who set up this meeting was Cassia, not the Duke.

“I will be in your care.”

“The five people, except the adventurer, please follow me. As for the adventure, please wait here.”

The guide knight heads inside.

But I am supposed to be an adventurer as well.

“Let’s go then.”

The Duke nods at me, and goes inside.

Do I take that nod as ‘there’s no problem?’

Cassia follows after him.

I follow them inside since I can not afford to fall behind. [TL: 39,

rearrange]

After walking for a while, and then going up stairs, we finally arrive in front of a big door.

“The Earl is waiting inside.”

“Mhm, you two wait here.”

The duke entrusts one of the knights in our party with the Orichalcum sword.

Only the three of us go inside: the Duke, Cassia and myself.

It seems even the Duke is not allowed to carry a weapon beyond this point.

I have already put my weapon inside my Item Box, and it seems Cassia didn't bring any weapon with her.

The knight guiding us opens the door.

It isn't a large room.

It is a small, throne room.

A plump elf is seated on a chair in the center.

So he is the Earl of Selmar.

40-year-old Lv21 Knight.

Considering his age, his level is not high.

An elf can be plump?

Eventhough he's plump, he's good looking, which pisses me off.

A huge curtain is hanging behind the chair.

I have seen the pattern on the left before.

It is the emblem of the Harz duchy.

The Duke walks arrogantly toward that emblem.

“Come inside, Michio dono.”

Cassia calls me.

I thought the order would be the Duke > Cassia > me, but it seems to be the Duke > me > Cassia.

I bow, and follow after the Duke.

I was instructed to bow my head.

This should be fine.

The Duke doesn't bow. I didn't expect him to bow anyway.

Cassia follows from behind me and lines up next to the Duke.

I could smell her perfume when she passed by my side.

That's a relief. I have been hidden by the two people standing in front of me.

"Your excellency, I am glad you came. It's been a long time, Cassia."

"Yes. I am glad uncle is in good health above everything."

Cassia replies to the Earl of Selmar.

Earlier, Cassia said it was her home, but it was apparently her uncle's.

Let's continue with the conversation without touching any sentimental topic.

"And that person is?"

"This person is Michio dono. He splendidly defeated Heinz the bandit."

The topic moves to me before long.

"Oh, how fortunate."

"This person defeated Heinz without any trouble. Michio dono is also assisting us with clearing the labyrinths in our territory."

"I am envious as our territory only has the order of knights."

I am getting a chill down my spine from the Duke's and the Earl of Selmar's conversation.

This conversation seems strangely hostile.

I am really lucky.

That he's on my side.

I didn't think I would need support here.

Is this an appropriate place for such a conversation?

Is it alright for the heads of their territories to behave like this?

This is not right. It sounds more like kids' quarrel than a meeting.

I could even say they are oblate (children) wrapped up as adults.

I am not sure if their mental age is as high as their physical age.

"Of course I noticed that. Your knights were useless in capturing Heinz

or even clearing the labyrinths.”

“Your knights couldn’t defeat Heinz as well.”

“Does the Earl of Selmar wish for Michio dono’s assistance?”

“It is questionable relying on your knights if they must rely on others.”

It’s reaching new lows with every passing moment.

“Come to think of it, the gang of Heinz were equipped with a ring. Isn’t that right, Michio dono?”

“Oh, yes.”

I answer the Duke while bowing.

“It came as Ring of Determination with Armor Appraisal. Do you have any idea, Earl of Selmar?”

“N-No. I don’t.”

“I thought so. I will be keeping the ring then. If you say you need it, I am willing to sell it.”

I heard that Heinz stole the Ring of Determination from the Earl of Selmar, but it was apparently not made public.

What would happen if this secret is out?

Well, if it’s made public that a thief stole from the Earl, he would look foolish.

If an item, which was presented as a betrothal gift, gets stolen from you and the person, who presented the gift, recovers it, wouldn’t you lose face? Did the Duke bring me along for this?

He wanted my testimony that Heinz had the Ring of Determination?

“By the way, I heard that Heinz the bandit was defeated by an adventurer. Such a thing is impossible.”

Suddenly, the direction of the conversation changes.

“Him, may be?”

“May be not. There was probably some mistake.”

“O-Of course not!”

The Duke panics.

Is the adventurer job really that useless?

The adventurer of the order of knights was also asked to stay at the lobby.

Adventurers can move anywhere using [Field Walk].

I guess it is to prevent them from wandering around the castle.

Did the Duke know and just ignored it?

“If you brought an adventurer to the throne room inside the castle, there would be suspicion of ill-intention toward the territory of Selmar.”

“It would be.”

“It is easy to check the Intelligence Card, but to doubt the person that Duke brought alongside him.”

The Earl of Selmar is trying to set him up.

I wonder from where did he hear that I was an adventurer.

The Earl of Selmar is Cassia’s relative.

There is a possibility that it was the maid attending to Cassia.

“So then.”

“Apart from that, how can I show my sincerity?”

Prostrate on the ground somewhere if you really feel any sincerity inside you.

Sincerity is that tough to show.

“No way, you will not.”

“Of course I don’t doubt you, but there still remains a little doubt.”

“Then.”

“The question still remains unanswered.”

Most likely, the Earl of Selmar is confident that I am an adventurer because of the Duke’s attitude.

Does he intended to press this on for some sort of concession?

The Duke made me testify that Heinz had the ring. The Earl of Selmar pointed out that I was an adventure and I shouldn’t have been brought along.

Are both of them going to pull out as a draw?

“Uncle!?”

“There is no doubt, of course, toward neither the Duke nor Cassia.”

The Earl of Selmar rejects Cassia's objection.
The fight between the Duke of Harz and the Earl of Selmar doesn't matter.
The result of their fight doesn't matter.

But it is unacceptable if it is going to trouble Cassia or make her suffer.
I raise my head.

"Okay, I understand. I'll have my Intelligence Card checked if it will help clear your doubts."

The knight at the back approaches me.

"But I can't allow you to insult Michio dono."
"I don't mind."
"Not only Michio dono, but to insult Cassia whom I have brought along."

The Duke is enraged.
It is not possible for the Duke to know that I am not an adventurer.
It is my first time seeing this attitude of his.

In other words, the Duke's speech was a bluff.
I won't be troubled by having my Intelligence Card checked but the Earl of Selmar will be. He has already taken the bait, all that's left is raising the latch. [TL:I think he is talking about catching him like a fish]
Let's make the Earl of Selmar drop out from the game.

Like the Duke, I guess he is also political personality. After hearing me agreeing to it, he immediately proceeds with it.
It seems he is accustomed to political bargaining.

"No, there's no need to go that far. The Duke and Cassia need to bow and apologize."
"I will not allow the Duke and Cassia sama to bow for my sake. Please go ahead and check."

As for me, however, I'm not bluffing.
I extend my left arm to the knight in front of me.

Cassia anxiously stares at me.
The Duke watches me in silence while maintaining a poker face.

“...Do it.”

Did he see through their bluff from the change in their expressions? Did he lose the chance to pull back? Anyways, the Earl gives the order to proceed.

The Duke leaves it to heaven.

The knight reads my Intelligence Card.

“Michio Kaga Sama. His job is Explorer.”

The knight announces.

Of course, there is no way it will show as adventurer.

Because I am not an adventurer.

The Duke and Cassia have surprised look. The Earl of Selmar has frozen.

“I will inquire you further regarding this matter some other day. For today, allow me to excuse myself.”

The Duke turns and goes toward the exit in large strides.

Cassia chases after him as well.

The knight, who read my card, hurriedly runs to open the door.

The two knights, who were waiting outside, rush immediately to escort the Duke.

“The sword.”

The knight holds out the Orichalcum sword.

The Duke receives the sword, and continues onward in a hurry.

I follow after him, too.

The duke doesn't say any word until we return to Bode from the lobby.

“I am sorry, Michio dono. The protective cement is used for the Earl of Selmar's castle but there is an old-fashioned tradition that does not allow adventurers inside. I did not think he will bring that up.”

After arriving, the Duke complains.

“The story of Michio sama being an adventurer, he most likely heard it from one of the maids that I brought with me from my home. I should have forbidden her from mentioning it.”

“It is a little late now. I was careless as well.”

“I didn’t think the Earl of Selmar will come up with this kind of harassment.”

Cassia shares the same opinion.

But I don’t understand what was that sudden accusation toward the Duke and Cassia about.

“Still, I was surprised that Michio dono changed his job to explorer. When your Intelligence Card was being checked, I broke into cold sweat.”

“I thought something like that might happen.”

“It is not impossible to change job from Adventure to Explorer. And it seems some places still have the old custom of not allowing adventurers inside an aristocrat’s home. But to have foreseen it, well done. As expected of Michio dono. Perhaps that was the reason why you didn’t come into the castle through the wall of the lobby?”

The Duke is making his own assumptions and drawing his own conclusions.

I am really glad that I thought of the worst case and came into the castle from outside.

“It turned out fine by chance.”

“Well done. By the way, how will you go back home? If necessary, I can send someone with you.”

“My friends are waiting outside.”

I properly decline.

Normally, in order to change back, I must change job at some adventurers guild.

I still don’t know if I can visit any guild, or If i need to visit specific guild to change my job, but I shouldn’t let him know about that.

“As for the ring that I kept the other day, it was undoubtedly the Ring of Determination. I will pay twenty gold coins for it. Is that okay?”

“I am grateful.”

“Twenty gold coins?”

It is more expensive that I thought. [TL: well he is happy u shoved it in earl face]

No matter how generous he is, If I think about the prices of the other accessories, the market price for this ring should be about 100,000 Nars. Which means, it's double the price.

As it was arranged already, another knight brings a drawstring bag (pouch) immediately.

The Duke hands it to me.

“Then Michio sama, thank you for your time today.”

When I receive the drawstring bag (pouch), Cassia expresses her gratitude as she heads inside.

I am glad that I get to smell her sweet fragrance until the end.

“Then I will take my leave.”

“Mhm, thank you for your help today. I hope to see you soon.”

There is no reason to stay here since Cassia has left.

I walk until I was out of the Bode castle.

In order to make sure that I was not being followed, I walk till Bode's labyrinth.

“How far has the exploration progressed?”

“10th floor.”

I talk with the explorer at the entrance, and then head inside.

if I was being followed, they would not know which floor I went to once I entered into the labyrinth.

I only go to 1st floor though.

From the small room on 1st floor, I immediately go back home.

“Sorry, did I make you wait?”

“No, it is alright.”

The preparations for breakfast were already done when I arrived at home.

I was planning on coming back after hearing the appointed day.

I didn't think I will be taken there immediately.

These kind of things happen.

The duke likes to play tricks.

I sit down on a chair and breathe heavily.
I am tired today.
Even though it is still morning.
It feels like I have lost a few years of my life.

But I am not that tired to take a rest yet, so I enter the labyrinth.
By the end of hunting for the day, my jobs increase by two.
Once Warrior hits Lv30.

Bounty Hunter Lv1
Effects: Small Increase in Dexterity | Slight Increase in Strength | Slight Increase in MP
Skill: Ignore Life and Death

Knight Lv1
Effects: Small Increase in Endurance | Slight Increase in Intelligence | Slight Increase in Spirit
Skills: Defense | Appointment | Intelligence Card Operation

Bounty Hunter and Knight.
Both jobs acquired from leveling up Warrior job?

Had I got the job earlier, I could have set the Knight as first job when they checked my card earlier at the Earl of Selmar's place.
The Duke would have certainly been surprised.

Well, I don't think I should put myself in danger for only a petty prank.
The condition to acquire Adventurer is to have Explorer Lv50.
All the adventurers already possess Explorer job.
Because the person he believed to be an adventurer turned out to be an explorer, the Duke didn't object.
If I was knight instead of adventurer, even he would be suspicious.

Chapter 99 : Regional Activities

*

“Do you know about [Ignore Life and Death] skill of Bounty Hunter?”

I ask Sherry.

“I read this skill is used to give death blow to monsters and bandits.”

“I see.”

Nope, that’s what I thought too.

There is no doubt that Ignore Life and Death skill is a single target attack skill.

When I invoked the skill, it prompted me to select a target.

However, I was only prompted to select a target. There was no option to trigger it.

Or perhaps the skill only did slight damage?

I attacked Grass Bees many times before taking them out in 8 spells. So if it did any damage, it was insignificant.

There is a possibility that it relies on weapon. If that’s the case, the one I have is useless.

I can’t expect much of the rod in terms of attack power.

By the way, when I switched Monk with Bounty Hunter, I needed 8 spells to take monsters out, even though they were weak against that magic.

Five Water Storms to kill Pig Hogs, with another three Breeze Balls to take out Grass Bee.

To make sure, I fight another group of four monsters. Five Breeze Storms were needed to kill two Grass Bees, with two more Water Storms to take out two Pig Hogs.

(Since Grass Bees have poison, it is better to defeat them first if they are same or more in numbers.)

The only thing I changed was exchanging Monk with Bounty Hunter. Monk is set as forth job, but the effect seems to be the same.

When it leveled up to 10 then 20 and 30, I didn’t notice it, but when it

levels up, the effect seems to increase indeed.

Well, it was reduced from Monk Lv40 to Bounty Hunter Lvl. A little drop in status is unavoidable.

I increase jobs to Six, and open job settings to add Monk and Knight. Monsters were defeated in seven spells since Monk is back.

Monk was effective even as sixth job.

As an experiment, I switch Bounty Hunter and Knight jobs with high level Alchemist and Merchant jobs to test 'Increase in Intelligence' effect, but there was no change.

I knew such an unreasonably large effect would not exist.

I added two jobs with same effect, but the status doesn't seem to have increased by the same degree.

If it were the case, it would be great to add seventh job.

So the bonus is small then?

I am starting to think [Ignore Life and Death] may be a recovery skill, not offensive skill, as it took eight spells to defeat the first monster. Regardless of the target's health, it remained alive after using the skill. The result remained the same with or without using the skill. However, the skill belongs to Bounty Hunter which is not a healing job.

"It can kill the monsters on first few levels with a single blow. I also heard the more experience you get, the stronger and easy to trigger it gets."

Sherry further explains.

It will really be the strongest skill if it can deliver 100% guaranteed death blow without any risk of backfire.

Does it mean the trigger chance is affected by a parameter such as level?

So it might activate against level 1 monsters.

It will probably not activate here since it is only Lvl.

Although it hasn't used MP yet, it doesn't mean it's a no-cost skill.

It would not be categorized as skill if only strength was needed to use it.

I take a look at the skills of Knight job next.

There is no prompt to select target in case of [Defense].
But there are no other options either. It seems to be a fully defensive skill from the name.

May be it increases defensive power?

I use it with Durandal, but I still don't notice anything.

[Intelligence Card Operation] seems to work normally.
I am interested in what kind of operation is possible, but it is not a good idea to do it right now.

What does [Appointment] do?
It asks me to select a target as well.
It doesn't look like an offensive skill, as it tries to select Roxanne.

Whoops
When I use [Appraisal], her job was Village Chief Lv1 instead of Beast Warrior Lv32.

The skill is to appoint head of village.

I try to appoint Sherry and Miria as well.
Only Miria gets appointed as Village Chief Lv1.
I can't appoint myself though.
It seems I can't specify myself as target.

Perhaps I couldn't appoint sherry because she was carrying a recovery medicine in her Item Box?
Earlier, I couldn't change Explorer job when I had some items in my Item Box.
May be the reason it couldn't change from Master Smith is similar since she has something inside her Item Box?

Since [Appointment] assigns Village Chief as first job, Master Smith needs to be removed first.
I take a look at Party Job Settings, but it seems she doesn't have Village Chief job yet.

"Sherry, do you know about Knight's [Defense] skill?
"It is a skill to increase defense for a while. It is usually used in boss battle."

“I see. So it’s good for boss battles huh?”

“That’s right.”

Like I thought, it is a skill that increases defense.

Well, I can shut out almost all the boss fights, but it will be a useful skill in the future.

“It is a really useful skill. In the future, a knight will probably be necessary. Would anyone of you like to become a knight?”

“If I will be of use to Master, I would like to do it.”

“It will require a long period of training as warrior to become a knight.”

Roxanne immediately raises her hand. Sherry shows her concern. Is there even such a problem?

Miria’s Diver is Lv30 already. In fact, it didn’t take much work.

“It is alright. It will work out somehow.”

“Will I use medicine?”

“Can you become a knight using medicine?”

“There is a medicine called ‘Dope Medicine.’ It’s believed that if you use it, you can become a little stronger. If taken in large quantity, it is possible to acquire superior job. But it’s said that the person who uses this method is weaker than the one who spent years in training and gaining experience.”

Is there such an item?

If change of job is possible, it must be a level up item.

There is a drawback, though.

It would only increase level, but parameters would most probably remain same.

It’s better if I don’t use it.

“I see. But we are not going to use the medicine.”

“We are not?”

“If she is willing to help, Miria is suitable for it.”

I can’t say that to Roxanne.

“But I would like to hear Roxanne’s opinion first.”

Actually, I'm enough as a knight.
But it would be nice if someone becomes a knight, and appoints me as Village Chief.
Then I will go to the Duke and tell him that I have become head of a village.

I really don't think that Roxanne will need [Defense], but It will not be bad to have.
When fighting against stronger monsters, it is possible for some of them to have attacks that even Roxanne can't dodge.
If you are specialized in dodging, it will hurt when enemy attacks hit you.
At that time, it will be reassuring to have [Defense] as an option.

"Yes."
"If only one person changed job, we won't need to change the current hunting floor. Because multiple members can't acquire Knight job, it is a good idea for Roxanne to become one."

Miria's job changes back to Diver Lv30. Roxanne becomes Warrior Lv1.
We will try 13th floor according to Sherry's advice.
There should be 'Increase in Strength' and 'Increase in HP' effects from Hero job, and the effects should stack with the effects from Miria's Diver job as well.
Even without retreating to lower floor, she will not be killed in one blow.

...Forget about getting killed in one blow, the monster attacks can't even graze her.
Roxanne is not getting hit by monster attacks.
No sign of getting hit.

And she's only a Warrior Lv1.
In other words, it wasn't due to her parameters but her ability.

Rather, after losing 'Increase in Agility' effect from Beast Warrior job, it took more strikes of Durandal.
May be it is just my imagination.

"Miria."
"Yes, desu."

During battle, Roxanne issues orders.

Upon hearing her name, Miria returns to the back in a hurry.

She seems concerned about Miria's tendency to act alone.

There are times when she steps forward too much.

Are the people of catkin tribe not good at fighting as part of group?

"She didn't show such behavior at first, but nowadays she occasionally starts heading to the front alone."

This shows how much she has got used to fighting.

Her level is hardly different from Sherry's.

If Roxanne is in front, the Grass Bee's long range attack will be focused on Roxanne.

For Sherry's spear to cancel the opponent's skill, we need to keep proper formation.

Even so, hearing just one word from Warrior Lv1 Roxanne, she obeys. She replied politely as well.

Even though I said there is no need to use 'desu' inside labyrinth.

In the evening, after leaving Roxanne exposed to attacks, we finish hunting.

I go to Quratar to buy ingredients for dinner.

While shopping, I was called by the old lady from the hardware store.

She is the person who introduced me to the landlord.

"Great. I was about to go to your house."

"Due to the heavy rain from the other day, a part of the drainage broke."

"Heavy rain..."

I haven't heard about it.

Does it rain here heavily?

Because I warp to labyrinth and stay there, the weather outside doesn't really matter.

Since it is raining these days, is it already that time of year?

"Permission has been granted by the town lord; we will start doing the repairs the day after tomorrow. We will work from past noon until

evening. At that time, please do not throw anything into the sewage. Dredging and planting of licorice will also be done. Also, if possible, can you please send one person? We need one from each house.”

Regional activities huh?

It is something like a neighborhood association.

That’s bothersome.

“I cannot avoid responsibility.”

I reply appropriately, and then ask the three at dinner.

“It is alright. I will go.”

“It will be bad if no one participates. I will go.”

Roxanne and Sherry reply.

As expected, there’s no option to skip.

“No, I will be going. It doesn’t really matter.”

“Please Master, don’t participate.”

Roxanne stops me.

“Will it be bad if I participate?”

“You are not concerned about your face, but it is drainage cleaning nonetheless. They will look down on Master.”

“I see.”

I don’t get it. Is it because it is sewage?

It is a dirty place indeed.

Is it a kind of work that free people don’t do?

「xxxxxxxxxxx」

“Miria says she would participate at any cost.”

“I am in, desu.”

I wonder why.

I think she is getting the wrong idea.

“We are not going to fish.”

It’s not impossible.

If the fish is able to swim upriver, there is a possibility.

Even if it's possible, I don't want her to do it.

"Yes, desu."

"Even if there is, don't eat it."

"Yes, desu."

Her eyes are swimming already.

"Instead of ordering her not to eat, it will probably be better to buy her one to eat."

"I think it will be troublesome if we don't have fish for dinner."

Roxanne and Sherry seem to have same concern.

"I will go, desu"

Miria keeps insisting on going.

"Miria is going to participate then, will it be fine?"

"There should be other beastkin among the participants, so it will be alright."

"There may be someone I know."

"The servant of the hardware seller is a beastkin. She will most probably be participating. I will ask her to take care of Miria."

When did Roxanne have time to interact with neighbors?

If she says it will be fine, it will be, I guess.

"And the work should not be that difficult, so it will be okay."

"It will be okay. We will have fish for dinner."

Sherry says to console me.

I feel anxious about letting Miria go.

She obviously has different motive.

I will feel relieved if her motive is not the fish in the river the drainage is connected to.

Two days later. Since it has been decided that Miria will be participating, we go to the fish market in Hafen in the morning.

I intend to convey to her that she can eat fish without having to catch one.

I also brought the bucket.

“There will be fish for tonight’s dinner. Can you find small fish like the other day?”

“Yes, desu.”

Miria looks around the fish market with serious expression. Before long, we were in front of the same place as before. In the end, she went to the old catwoman’s shop. Perhaps they have reliable method of processing fish.

“8 fish, right?”

“Yes, desu.”

It is the same mackerel fish as last time. Miria places the order, and puts the selected fish in the bucket.

This shop has shrimps as well. It looks like ordinary shrimps. Can I cook them same as kuruma shrimps?

“Is it possible to bake shrimps?”

“Yes.”

“Will it stay fresh till dinner?”

I ask Roxanne.

Roxanne translates what I said to the old catkin lady. The old lady pokes a shrimp. The shrimp jumps.

“It’ll be good for two to three days.”

It is still alive.

“Then add 8 shrimps as well.”

Roxanne translates my order. The old lady wraps the shrimp in leaf and puts it in the bucket. After putting the shrimps in bucket, she counts the fish inside.

“It is 1 Nar for two shrimps. The total will be 12 Nars.”

Even though I didn’t understand the words, I knew she was counting.

I pay twelve Nars and return home.

Once we entered the labyrinth, Miria told me how to cook them. After that, she went to repair drainage.

Miria doesn't care that the shrimps are alive.

The fish was cut into three, the head of the shrimp was removed, and the back side stripped.

The way to cook shrimps doesn't seem different from the Earth.

Chapter 100 : Skill.

*

A number of people have gathered near the Dobu river. Seeing from a distance, everyone was dressed quite shabbily. For sewage cleaning, several slaves have been gathered. Even the slaves from around the neighborhood have been gathered as well.

No, shouldn't that be natural?
A well is located a short distance away.
Even just fetching water is already a hard job.
Everything's good for me however, since I can just get water by using water wall.

Society seems to be hugely affected by the restrictions in technology. If you want to live a bit luxurious with the technology of this world, a slave really would be essential.
The hierarchy between the ones who live a good life and those who support them can be seen clearly.
There are many houses that have a slave employed.

There's also the case of science and technology restricting society. There's no such thing as forensic science in this world. DNA test, fingerprint system, even the blood type is not even known.

What would happen then?
The investigation that the knights do can't really be called investigation. If someone is doubtful just from asking questions, he's already proclaimed as the criminal.

In this world without forensics, there isn't such a thing as evidence either.
Because there's no luminol, identifying the murder weapon is impossible too.
A confession or testimonies from eyewitnesses are all that can be relied

on as evidence.

If there's a strange person in town, that guy would be blamed as the criminal if anything ever happens.

I lived in a different world and have completely different customs with my neighbors; I don't even remember their faces.

A sociable environment isn't really formed in this world.

Even if one is established temporarily, in case something happens, it would collapse at once.

Quratar is a city where a lot of explorers are gathered.

It's originally the town where most people are strangers.

For this world, the companionship between neighbors isn't much either.

Nevertheless, one still needs to attend a minimal amount of regional activities.

It is troubling for those weird people in case something happens.

What happens in case a robbery or murder occurs?

If there is a guy who did not attend the regional activities, he will be branded the culprit.

They are tortured until they confess.

So that one is not unnecessarily accused, it is necessary to attend the activities.

This is what I understood from the things Sherry told me.

I was completely persuaded to not be truant.

It is a necessary skill to live in this world.

It is the reason why I made Miria participate in the cleaning of the Dobu River.

Of course, one can refute in case of accusation of being a criminal.

A trial will be held.

A trial of ordeal or a trial of battle.

A trial of ordeal, that is to say, a trial based on God.

The defendant is made to pick up a pebble that is put in boiling water.

If the defendant is able to pick it up successfully, then the defendant is innocent, if he fails, however, he is found guilty.

There's also having the defendant's hand and feet bound by ropes and then dropped onto water, the defendant is innocent if he floats and guilty if he doesn't.

Poison is also drunk, and the defendant is proven innocent if he survives. As for those who are guilty, it already goes without saying.

In the trial of battle, one must fight the accuser, the witness/-es and all else who has testified.

Winning will prove innocence, losing will prove being guilty.

It also saves the trouble of executing those who are guilty, so its two birds with one stone.

I would never want such a trial.

It can't be helped since technology for investigating is underdeveloped. There isn't any other way of determining criminals.

Even an alibi is uncertain in this world where field walk exists.

It is extremely common as well to decide the culprit by way of lottery.

A person was killed in a certain residence.

There are no traces of anyone coming from the outside.

The suspects are the six people who live in the house.

If it's in a TV drama then this is when an excellent detective will make its appearance, in this world's case however, this is when an excellent dice will make its appearance.

Visually, it's a toy, but in fact it's actually God's representative.

The dice determines which is the culprit using God's intention.

Of course, if five people's testimonies match telling on to the one remaining guy, he will be considered as the criminal.

Then, it becomes a five-on-one battle to prove the sixth man's innocence.

Because it is only disadvantageous for the accused and not those who testified, the difference in the number of people is not considered a problem.

I have three slaves who are all beauties.

It is likely to have already caught people's eyes.

I try to be as discreet as possible, blending in with the surroundings to live properly and brightly.

It is another skill necessary to live in this world.

「Master, a messenger sent by Luke has arrived. He seemed to have gotten a successful bid on a slime monster card.」

Immediately after having sent off Miria, a messenger from Luke has arrived while I was still at home.

「Which skill can be acquired from the slime monster card, Sherry?」
「When applied to protective gear, Physical Damage Reduction is applied, it is possible to fuse it as well with a kobold monster card to further the effects, but it isn't necessary to go that far.」

It's possible to reduce physical damage?
A slime is really a slime it seems.

「What would be good to put it on? For the time being, should we go to the merchant guild for shopping? 」

We went to the center of Quratar and bought vegetables and the monster card.

If it's put into the hard leather jacket, it would become something only for my exclusive use.

Because there's already Poison Resistant Hard Leather Hat and Waterproof Leather Mittens, would shoes be the next one?

It's already good enough if I'm in the rear, If I'm in the front however, I would want to equip it.

Replacing shoes is difficult.

Replacing gloves can be done, though troublesome.

As for equipment I can change easily, it would be the hat.

Though there is still an empty skill slot on the Poison Resistant Hard Leather Hat, I'd rather not attach the skill there.

Since the equipment having skills has not yet been publicized.

Once it's known that I applied multiple skills, sooner or later everyone else will be able to do so as well up to some degree.

I handed a leather hat and the slime monster card to Sherry.

It was a hard leather hat to be applied with the skill physical damage

reduction.

「I did it.」

「As expected of Sherry.」

「Well done, Sherry.」

Sherry fuses the monster card casually.

Because that was the equipment left by the thieves, there was only one empty skill slot.

I immediately equipped it and went to the labyrinth.

We don't need to help with the river, and there is no reason to wait in the house.

Three people: I, Roxanne and Sherry entered the labyrinth after a long time.

It was all right to go even to the 13th floor of Haruba's labyrinth.

Though it can't be said that there's not really any problems.

I had to receive a lot of blows coming from the demons.

It's good to have made the Hard Leather Hat of Endurance

Because the vanguard role was left to three people including Miria, the burden on me this time is huge.

Because they appear before I can employ Durandal, I wasn't able to weaken them first.

I was able to do this properly before Miria came.

That's what I recall.

I barely dodge the rush of a Pig Hog.

I stared at the pig hog's eyes and cast water storm.

Two pig hogs fall.

An enemy has disappeared in front of my eyes.

It was safe however, the one remaining Grass Bee was being kept occupied by Roxanne.

I drove a breeze ball next to the side of Roxanne who was playing with the Grass Bee with quick movement.

I killed it without difficulty.

Roxanne guides us to the next opponent, a pig hog and two Grass Bees.

Sherry hits the Grass Bee casting a skill with the spear with incantation interruption.

With that, I confronted the Pig Hog.

The Grass Bee emitted a mist of poison

There's no other way, I left the Pig Hog for later.

It was a long battle, but I was somehow only able to receive just one attack throughout all that.

The following group was one Pig Hog together with three Grass Bees. Roxanne received the range attacks of the Grass Bees using a shield with ease.

While keeping an eye on the bees that came out front, I cast Breeze Storm.

I dodge the charge attack of the Grass Bee
The bee which attacked from the back has its skilled delayed and was forced to fight out front.
It's also necessary to take caution of the Grass Bee's Roxanne's fighting. I glanced at it from the side and confirmed that it wasn't aiming at me.

It's safe.

The Grass Bee saw me shifting my vision and took it as a chance to attack.

I twisted my body in a panic, but was still hit by its charge.

I cast a fifth breeze storm in revenge.

Three Grass Bees fall.

At the same time my body was flushed and felt painful.

Poison.

I seem to have receive poison from the charge attack of the Grass Bee earlier.

Is it because I haven't worn the Poison Resistant Hard Leather Hat?
Probably because it's my second time receiving poison, I was incredibly calm.

It physically hurts.

My chest tightens.

But still, the priority is to defeat the demon.

I threw a Breeze Ball towards the demon.

No, it's wrong.

The opponent is a Pig Hog.

I made a mistake.

I'm actually calm enough to realize that I made a mistake.

I threw a water ball.

My body really hurts.

How much more should I throw?

I threw another water ball.

I can still count how many I threw.

Calm down.

Sherry came in front of me.

The antidote.

The antidote pill.

The mouth-to-mouth feeding.

I try to comprehend the situation.

I embraced Sherry, giving in to my desires, I pressed onto Sherry's lips.

Sucking strongly, the sensation of soft lips is indulged.

On this occasion I should already be satisfied.

I should decide calmly.

I swallowed the antidote pill received from Sherry's mouth.

I chased Sherry's tongue sticking onto it.

Our tongues were intertwined.

The tongue of Sherry was gently responding to my advance.

I am relieved of pain gradually.

The heaviness felt in my body was gone.

My mind also seems to have cleared.

What am I doing?

I should probably just enjoy it as it is.

No. What happened to the demon?

Sherry released my mouth, flustered.

It was good.

The opponent seems to have been annihilated already.

「Thank you, Sherry. I'm already okay.」

I breathe deeply.

Preparing a glass, I poured water using water wall.

I ask Roxanne for mouth to mouth feeding of the water.

After spending ample time, I caught my breath.

The labyrinth is dangerous.

Only one person is missing and the situation became completely different.

We shouldn't overwork ourselves.

We returned to the house earlier than usual.

We've already done a lot of things.

I will heat the bath firsthand.

I poured in water carefully as not to spill it.

I took a bucketful of water from the bath tub that was filled using water wall and set it aside.

Since there might be a little more time before Miria comes back, I heated the water some more.

It will be just us three for a long time while Miria still hasn't come back.

What should we do in such a long period?

I guess it should be the usual.

「I'm back, desu.」

When it was over, Miria came back.

She was covered all over with mud.

Though it was just clothes taken on a bargain from the slave trader, she returned with it all sappy.

「I've told Mira to take off her dirty clothes. You've already prepared the water, and I'll wash her off.」

「I want to wash her myself.」

「Is that so, that's fine. Because Sherry and I already received some affection.」

The acknowledgement of Roxanne who was fussing over her was obtained.

「Miria, sorry for the trouble today. I have already heated up the bath, let's enter together.」

「Bath, desu」

Miria entered the bath.

I washed her whole body beforehand before entering the bathtub.

I washed all her places thoroughly. Without exception.

The whole body of Miria got covered in bubbles as I wash her thoroughly.

After rinsing her with water, Her hair was washed.

After her head, her whole body was washed again.

I washed her twice, just to be safe.

TN: Sure, to be safe..

「Miria, I'm sorry for putting you to work today.」

「Dinner, Fish, desu」

「Seriously?」

「Fish Want, desu」

Though we converse while washing, the conversation naturally shifts because Roxanne is not here as an interpreter.

There seems to have been no fish in the Dobu River.

Sherry and Roxanne came late, and also washed before entering the bath.

「You planted plants?」

「Yes! Desu.」

「Licorice, a plant often planted in the bank of a river. The licorice has poison in the root, flower as well as the leaves, because of that animals don't come near it. The bank is then prevented from collapsing from the burrowing. Besides, the poison comes off when washed off with water so when push comes to shove, it can be an emergency supply of food.」

Sherry explains to me about the so called plant.

The wisdom of life.

There is such a convenient plant in this world.

Diver Lv31, Village chief Lv 1, Pirate Lv 1, Villager Lv 5, Merchant Lv 1, Explorer Lv 1, Warrior Lv 1, Herbalist Lv 1, Swordsman Lv 1, Monk Lv 1.

Miria hasn't been able to acquire the Farmer job.
Even if you plant that poisonous plant, is Farmer job not acquired?
Or is it not to plant, but rather you should be the one to harvest?

「Sherry, please go with Roxanne and prepare soup, I'll be cooking.」
「Certainly.」

Sherry left the bath with Roxanne.
Miria and I remained in the bath however.
We're continuing.
TN: Scene change go!

「Please tell me if you want to eat anything, Is shrimp okay? What does Roxanne want to eat?」

Preparing for supper, I asked Roxanne.
The pan was put on the earthenware stove that's like a charcoal stove.
Olive oil is then warmed.
I prepared ingredients and arranged it on the table.
Fish, Shrimp, Sausage, Ham and various vegetables.

The powder that was made from slime starch and shell powder was put into flour, lightly melting it in water then adding egg.
The ingredients were then deep fried.
Sprinkling the powder onto the shrimp then turning on the heat afterwards.

「I, like master, also would like to eat shrimp.」
「I would like the ham.」
「Fish, desu」

Naturally, it would be the fish for Miria.
I add more coating to the shrimp, sliced the ham and deep fried them together with the fish.
In other words, this would be tempura.

I applied a mixture of lemon juice and vinegar before serving it.

「Is it good?」

「The food that master makes is always the best」

「It's delicious」

「Amazing, desu」

I'm the only one that can use chopsticks.

I continued deep frying.

This shrimp tempura can be said to be the same with the tempura from my world. There's a crispy texture with chewy insides.

「Would you try the vegetables next?」

「Thank you.」

「I'll try the mushrooms.」

「Fish, desu」

I used a mushroom which seems to be the same as my world's shiitake mushrooms.

Though I haven't deep fried it, it should taste ok.

「How about the sausages?」

「I like what master likes.」

「I'll eat more shrimp.」

TN: Eat your goddamn sausage.

「Fish, desu」

...

「You guys should also eat the fish before it runs out.」

「Thank you」

「Then I would like one fish as well.」

「Fish, desu」

Before Miria could finish all the fish, I took one and tasted the deep fried fish.

It's crunchy.

The deep-frying went considerably well.

If gluten had formed, the food wouldn't be this crispy and crunchy. Good thing I used the Slime Starch to reduce the gluten.

Furthermore, Shell Powder that was the equivalent of baking soda was also used.

This would be the art of deep-frying.

TN: Apparently the kanji/symbol used for deep-frying is the same as tempura. I used deep-frying instead because I can't imagine a fish tempura or a mushroom tempura.

Chapter 101 : Preparation

*

We have found the boss room of 13th floor of Haruba's labyrinth. While exploring, we found a small room. The door opened, and I walked inside the room. I immediately understood that it was the waiting room since it had only two doors. One in front and one behind.

"Is the boss room ahead?"

"The boss Pick Hog is the upgraded version of Pig Hog. A really tough monster that attacks using its fore paws. Well, I think Roxanne-san will be alright, but please be careful."

The door inside the room opens. I bring out Durandal in a hurry.

"The three of you handle Pick Hog, I will take care of Grass Bee."
"Okay."

The monster accompanying the boss was Grass Bee. I finished it quickly.

I join the attack on Pick Hog. Pick Hog is the boss of 13th floor. It is one size bigger than Pig Hog. Its fore paw attack is similar to a drill. Standing on its hind legs, it swings its fore paw down on Roxanne.

It is similar to what wild boars do on their short legs. Is it okay not to help? Such thoughts rushed through my head. Roxanne lightly avoids its swing.

As expected of Roxanne. Had I been there instead, I would have been hit. No, I will never get hit because I always attack from behind. I cautiously slash using Durandal.

With careful attacks, we manage to defeat Pick Hog without any accident.

Well we had already defeated bosses up to 15th floor in Quratar's labyrinth.

13th floor couldn't have been a problem.

“Sherry, which monster appears on Haruba's 14th floor?”

“It's Sarracenia.”

Sarracenia huh?

The carnivorous plant-type monster, Sarracenia, whose weakness is fire magic.

We proceed further on 14th floor under Roxanne's guidance.

After killing Sarracenia with 5 [Fire Storm]s, I then kill remaining Pig Hogs with 3 more [Water Ball]s.

Next, we fight against a group of three different types of monsters.

First, I kill two Sarracenias using 5 [Fire Storm]s.

After that, I finish one Grass Bee using 3 [Breeze Storm]s, and then I slaughter the remaining Pig Hog with a single [Water Ball].

9 attacks in total huh?

“Hmm... Even though there were three types of monsters, I needed one extra spell to finish them, unless I made an error in the count. Please guide us to another group of three types of monsters.”

“Understood.”

I instruct Roxanne.

The battle duration is longer, but we can fight on Haruba's 14th floor.

I can finish a group of one type of monsters using 5 spells. If someone survives, Roxanne can deal with them.

That much can not be avoided.

Having reached Haruba's 14th floor, I move to Bode's labyrinth in the afternoon.

Every now and then, I drop by Tare's and Bode's labyrinths to keep a tab on the progress of their exploration.

There may be an easy floor similar to Quratar's 16th floor.

“How far has the exploration progressed?”

“11th floor.”

The explorer at the entrance replies.

The exploration of Bode’s and Tare’s labyrinths is progressing slower than Vale’s labyrinth.

Because there are three labyrinths, the Duchy’s order of knights had to split up.

Or perhaps, they decided to focus on the exploration of Haruba’s labyrinth?

The party led by the Duke and Cassia, and also the party led by Gozer were exploring Haruba’s labyrinth.

Gozer’s party will blaze through Bode’s 11th floor in no time.

However, it is probably wasteful for such a high level party as Gozer’s to explore 11th floor while they can explore higher floors.

It is rational to break through floors one by one without diverting the focus.

So far, I have not directly contributed to the exploration.

Since it is acceptable to just enter the labyrinth, there doesn’t seem to be any problem.

And I defeated Heinz the bandit.

Since it helped the knights in reducing the number of patrols, I helped them at least that much.

“I will stop by the furniture store before heading home.”

“Furniture store?”

“The bed is getting smaller for us, we can’t keep using it as it is right now.”

I thought about it when we were in the small room on Bode’s 1st floor.

And I would like to rid myself of this uneasiness as soon as possible.

Whenever I express that I will expand my harem, I get tensed.

Fearing that someone may object.

Nope, I don’t plan to increase it just yet.

It is just preparation.

Preparation for when I have to expand it.

So I am feeling a little guilty.

“I see. It would certainly be great. Thank you for caring about us.”

I am feeling even more guilty now since the bed is actually for my selfish motives.

I jump to Quratar’s adventurers guild and head to the furniture store.

“I don’t think we should buy a large one. May be another bed similar in size to the one we have? I am thinking of setting them side-by-side. What do you think?”

I propose that while checking the beds.

The current bed we have is quite large.

It should be able to accommodate 3 more if I add another bed next to it.

I am not sure if two beds can be attached though. It may create a gap in the centre.

Since I sleep in the centre, I would rather not have that.

Depending on how I arrange it, the gap may not be directly below my butt, so there may not be any problem.

“It will be too big.”

“I will eventually increase the number of party members.”

Even though I was tensed, I tried to appear composed.

I must keep reiterating that I will increase the number of party members. It will be awkward if someone objects when the time comes.

“Is that so?”

“A-Also, it will be wasteful to throw the current bed away.”

I give her another reason in a hurry.

Things may not go as smoothly as I thought.

“I understand. Let’s go with what you said.”

“Next time, can we buy a shelf?”

“Shelf?”

With this, I can use 30% discount.

Since the owner of the furniture store is a merchant, 30% discount should be effective.

The more the party members, the more the luggage. Like I said, it is preparation.

Had I said that I would be buying a shelf and had then suggested buying a bed too, it would probably have been better. Oh well, it's too late now.

Men play it fair.

They break through the front.

They caress it and shove it in from the front.

Only cowards do it from the back.

I'm envious!

I leave the matter of choosing the shelf to the three.

They will be the ones using the shelves mainly.

So it's better to leave it to them.

Their group, with Roxanne in the middle surrounded by Sherry and Miria, is clamoring while deciding on the shelf.

I'm observing them from the side without throwing in my opinion.

It took them quite some time to choose.

I purchase the bed and the shelf they chose, and return home.

"Stay here until the furniture arrives. We are already done with the labyrinth for today. You guys will be preparing the dinner. In the meantime, I'll head to Vale."

"Vale? Trading house?"

"That's right, but I'm not going there to add another member. I'm going there to gather information in order to make preparation. Also, I have to express my gratitude to the slave merchant for introducing me to the trading house in the Imperial capital."

"I understand."

Roxanne consents.

As for the number of party members; the more, the better.

It is necessary to expand the party.

Roxanne and Sherry both are aware of this.

However, not much time has passed since I bought Sherry. You don't find beauties like Roxanne and Sherry every time you visit the trading house.

Therefore, this time, I'm going there only to gather information.

There can be up to six people in a party. You can't randomly add party members. I must be careful in choosing the next member of the party.

If I go to the trading house in the Imperial capital, there's only that beautiful woman who was unwilling to be my slave. If I go to Alan, the slave merchant in Vale, he may introduce me to more trading houses.

And I have one more thing to ask him about. The slave merchant in the Imperial capital mentioned slave auction.

Sherry may know about it but I can't ask her about such a thing. So I'll ask Alan, the slave merchant.

"Well then, I'm leaving."
"Okay, take care."
"Take care."
"Take care, desu."

After having been seen off by the three, I leave the house. I jump to Vale's adventurers guild and head to Alan's trading house thereon.

There's no change in the townscape at all.

"Is the owner here?"
"Wait here, please."

I was led inside after I asked the person who came to receive me. It's the usual waiting room.

"Oh dear customer, welcome."
Alan appears before long. I was then led to the back room.

"I went to the trading house in the Imperial capital last time. I thank

you for introducing me to that slave merchant.”

“Yes, I heard that there was a successful transaction and that both the parties were satisfied.”

Even though he was forced to offer me 30% discount?
They have no way of finding it out, it seems.

“We’re good for the time being but I intend to add another party member in near future.”

“Exploration of labyrinths seems to be going well for you. That’s good.”

“Thanks to Roxanne and Sherry.”

When I went to buy Roxanne, I was short of money, so I had to wait before buying her.

But now I’m intending to buy a fourth slave.

From this slave merchant’s viewpoint, things must be going well for me.

“Since I explore labyrinths, quality of party members matters more to me than the number of party members. Therefore, rather than increasing the number of party members in a rush, I’m searching for good combat-ready slaves carefully.”

“Well said.”

Actually, there’s no other option for the party size is limited to six. And then there’s my vigor.

Because I have Sex Maniac, I have to go for more.

“You need a party member that’s strong if you are to challenge higher floors. For stronger slaves, you might want to give the slave auction a try.”

“Auction?”

Fortunately, the conversation moves to auction without my asking.

“The slave auction is held on holidays, that is four times a year. The slave auction is held at Quratar’s merchants guild. On holidays, normal auctions are called off and the guild is reserved for the slave auction only. In the slave auction, many combat-ready slaves, who are suited to be explorer or adventurer, are exhibited.”

“And I can pick a strong one from among them?”

“Yes. The entrance fee is 1,000 Nars per person. It is designed to filter out

those who attend only out of curiosity and those who try to manipulate the price. In case your bid succeeds, the fee can be appropriated toward the bid.”

1,000 Nar is indeed quite high if you’re a spectator. However, to those bidding for slaves in excess of 100,000 Nars, it’s not that much.

Furthermore, if my bid succeeds, the fee will be returned. If all the people attending the auction place a bid in order to have their fee refunded, the price will go up.

Ingenious.

“Would doing so not drive up the price?”

“At the very least, the price can’t be manipulated, I believe.”

The slave merchant grins.

“Will Alan-dono be exhibiting his slaves?”

“Of course, it’s a stage for slave merchants after all. Unfortunately, due to some circumstances, I have let go of the centre of my exhibition’s attraction already.”

That must be Roxanne.

I don’t know what the circumstances were.

If I feel the need to know, I’ll have Roxanne tell me.

Had Roxanne been sold at the auction, it wouldn’t have been for 420,000 Nars.

30% discount isn’t effective in an auction.

That’s right.

There’s a drawback of buying at an auction. 30% discount isn’t effective there.

Should I keep my search restricted to trading houses then?

But there’s less than a month till the next holiday.

It’s likely that they won’t show me their best slaves.

If they have good slaves, they will try to sell them at the auction.

Even if I visit trading houses after the auction, I will only find leftover

slaves.

So, should I try the auction even if it'll cost me a bit more?
Even a bit is a lot for a miser if it comes to money.
However, the charm of the auction is that there will be many to choose from.

“I guess I can find a good member for my party at the auction.”
“Indeed. I look forward to meeting you at the auction.”

I wrap up the conversation and head home.

“There will be an auction on the coming holiday. We will go there to look for a new member for our party. Expansion of our party is necessary to increase our battle strength.”

I talk to the three after returning home.
It is better to make their mind up beforehand.

“I understand.”
“At the auction, we will definitely be able find a good member for our party.”
“Miria wants to be elder sister, desu.”

Like I thought, Sherry knows about the auction.
There's no knowing if the next member will be younger than Miria though.
Well, she will be senior at least.

“Don't ask for a little sister for yourself.”
“Okay, desu.”

After that, we try our new bed.

“Roxanne, please cherish it until the number of members increases.”

That doesn't mean that I won't love Roxanne anymore.
My love won't change with the number of members.

Chapter 102 : Whole Fish

*

We are halfway through 14th floor of Haruba's labyrinth. When the battles are short, hunting is smooth. The longer the battles get, the more strenuous the hunting becomes.

The monsters here are not as easy for a battle to be over in a flash, but they are not so strong either to get us fired up.

This is rather a concern. Because the battles here are longer, I may get exposed to consecutive attacks and may get myself into precarious position if I lose my focus. However, even though I am aware of it, I keep losing my focus.

“Miria!”

“Yes, desu.”

I regain my focus with Roxanne's shout. She was reprimanding Miria. Miria was going solo again. Although she sticks to the formation, there are times when she goes ahead on her own. I empathize with her for I tend to lose my focus too.

My thoughts on 14th floor: it's boring and slow. Finally, only one monster is left. Roxanne is yet to receive an attack. Her performance is incredible as ever.

In the end, instead of breaking through 14th floor of Haruba's labyrinth, we decide to check on the progress of the exploration of Bode's labyrinth.

“How far has the exploration progressed?”

“Just reached 12th floor.”

We drop by Bode's labyrinth in the afternoon, and ask the explorer at the entrance.

“Which monster appears on 12th floor?”

“Mabream.”

“Mabream, desu!?”

For some reason, Miria repeats after the explorer.
Her serious eyes seek me all of a sudden.

Her serious eyes turn sparkling.
Looks like she wants to bring something up.
I wonder what.

“Mabream is a fish-type monster. It drops white fish.”

Sherry tells me the reason.
Fish huh?
Miria is still staring at me.
Rather than sparkling, her eyes are burning with appetite.

“T-Then can you take me to 12th floor?”

I can not help it.
I take out the emblem of the Harz duchy from my backpack.
Upon seeing the emblem, the explorer joins our party.

“Okay, please follow me.”

Following the explorer, we enter Bode’s labyrinth.
We are in a small room with an ordinary door.
It is the same room you can find on any floor of a labyrinth.
The explorer leaves us here and heads back immediately.

“Mabream is a monster that specializes in long-range water magic attacks. It is resistant to water magic. Earth magic is its weakness.”
“Earth Magic huh? Can I ask of you for a small group since it is our first time fighting against this monster?”

After Sherry briefs, I ask of roxanne to guide us.
Mabream is a fish-type monster. It looks like a fish that has two long legs growing down its body.
Actually, looking only at its head, it looks more like a fish than a fish-type monster.
Nope, I am not sure anymore if it is its head or its body.

To top it off, there are two long and skinny legs stretching out. It is truly disgusting.

Whatever. If they say it's fish-type, then it must be fish-type. Even though it looks like a badly designed Martian.

I shoot a [Sand Ball].

After 4 shots, it collapses.

Mabream turns into smoke and disperses.

What remained was a white fish.

“Yes, desu!”

Miria jumps at it and brings it over excitedly.

Her eyes seek me again.

What does she want to say? I can guess what she wants.

“This is our dinner for tonight, I guess.”

“Okay, desu!”

Miria bows her head.

We already have one, and I will be unnecessarily torturing her if I leave it for tomorrow.

But it looks like it would have been fine even if I had delayed it by a day.

We hunt near the entrance of the floor for a while.

Since the exploration of Bode's 12th floor has only just started,

It is best to not go further inside just yet.

I need the exploration of the floor to progress further in order to avoid the trap room with large number of monsters.

I can't guarantee our safety if we set foot in that trap room.

I cast [Meteor Crash].

The red-hot meteorites crash onto the monsters.

One shot?

Just one [Meteor Crash] seems to be enough for Mabream.

Mabreams seem to be weak against fire magic as well.

How do I know which monsters can be dispatched in one shot and which monsters can't be?

I am getting confused even more.

“Since [Meteor Crash] seems to be effective, I think we can proceed further inside.”

“I guess.”

“I don’t think there will be any problem.”

“Instead of searching for monsters, how about we explore this floor?”

I instruct Roxanne to stop searching for monsters.

I felt bored while we were on Haruba’s 14th floor.

But here, I might be able to set off some fireworks.

[Metoeer Crash] is an area of effect magic attack.

If I were to use it inside a small room with a lot of monsters, it would be massacre.

If they can be killed in one shot, it doesn’t matter how many monsters there are.

I want to light things up to let out all the frustration I built up on 14th floor.

While heading deep inside 12th floor, I cast [Meteor Crash].

We are searching for the room packed with monsters, taking out the monsters all the while.

I’m not using [Sand Storm] too much. I’m relying on Durandal to recover my MP.

There’s no knowing what may happen inside the labyrinth.

Also, it’s possible that they won’t be dead in one [Meteor Crash] next time.

I should save some MP for contingencies.

As always, when you try to find something, it is always difficult to find it.

But I carry on searching.

And I have finally found it.

The door opens. When I enter the small room, fish-type monsters were there in the middle.

It’s a big catch.

It's a great catch.

It's fishing time.

Unfortunately, there are no seagulls here to set the mood.

As planned, I try to wipe them out in one shot.

I invoke [Meteor Crash].

Suddenly, it feels as if all my MP has vanished.

It feels as if something has left my body.

It feels as if I'm getting engulfed in darkness.

D-Damn it!

How can I be this stupid?

How can I be this foolish?

I had no idea I was this incompetent.

I had no idea my abilities were this lacking.

The consumption of MP of an area of effect magic attack increases with the number of monsters.

If it's not the case, then this is harassment.

May be because I used a bonus spell?

This world is against me.

I'm down.

I'm depressed.

I'm Hayashi Shrio.

When a person doesn't know how to write the kanji for depression, he ends up writing the kanji for Hayashi Shiro.

Hayashi (林)

Shi (四)

Rō (郎)

Looks like

Depression (鬱)

Doesn't it?

“As expected of Master.”

“All those monsters were wiped out in one shot.”

“Amazing, desu.”

The monsters seem to be dead, but I can't hear them clearly.
The stress I released earlier is back again.
I intended to release my stress but ended depressed instead.

I open my Item Box.
I swallow a handful of strengthening pills.
Having recovered my MP, I get back on my feet.

So there is such a drawback of using area of effect magic attack.
Because I have been fighting against four or five monsters, I didn't notice it.

One more monster wouldn't have made that much of a difference.
But the room was brimming with monsters.

A lot of dropped items are lying scattered around the room.
Needle Woods, native to Bode's 11th floor, were mixed in as well.
They dropped branches and leaves.
There are a lot of white fish.

Miria excitedly brings something over to me.

"It is whole fish."

"Whole fish?"

"A rare item dropped by Mabream."

Sherry tells me.

So it's a rare drop.

Miria passes the whole fish to me.

It's whole indeed, complete with head and tail.

Even Appraisal says 'whole fish'.

"Then this, too, will be for tonight's dinner."

"Eat, desu!"

"It's a rare drop and will sell for a high price. Are you sure about this?"

"Whole fish is rare. It is usually eaten on special occasions."

Roxanne and Sherry urge me to reconsider.

In this world, it seems to be eaten on special days.

Even though a lot of white fish were dropped by the monsters, there was

only one whole fish.

It does seem to be quite rare.

“Oh well, it is too much for one person anyway.”

The whole fish is bigger than even my hands. Twenty? Thirty? No, about forty centimeters.

Even a piece of it will be more than enough for a person.

However, If it is Miria, I'm sure she can eat it all by herself.

“A small piece is fine. Miria, too, says that she is fine with a small piece.”

“The head of the family eats the first piece of whole fish. The rest is distributed among the family members.”

So it is not one for everyone kind of fish huh?

Although we got only one whole fish, I decide to stop exploration of Bode's 12th floor.

I still have no idea how to keep stress from building up, but we resume the exploration of Haruba's 14th floor nevertheless.

We return home in the evening.

“Master, there is a message from Luke, the broker. There seemed to be a successful bid for Bat Monster Card.”

When we arrived at home, there was a note left by Luke, the broker. The process of upgrading equipment seems to be going smoothly.

“It increases rate of evasion if fused with an armor. If fused simultaneously with Kobold Monster Card, the effect gets doubled.”

Sherry starts explaining the moment I look at her.

She seems to have learned her role well by now.

For dinner, Miria simmers the whole fish with wine and fish sauce. Salt doesn't seem to have been added.

The flavor is similar to Mediterranean cuisine, Acqua Pazza. (TN: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acqua_pazza_%28food%29)

“Wow! It's really delicious.”

I first show them how to use chopsticks.
Although there's fat, the texture is firm.
Yet it melts in the mouth.
Delicious!

As expected of a rare drop.
White fish doesn't come even close.

After me, Roxanne and Sherry help themselves to the boiled fish prepared by Miria.

"It is delicious."

They're delightfully eating the boiled whole fish.
Their smile is delightful indeed.

"Can I have a little more."

"Yes, desu."

During the meal, the fish was distributed by Miria.
Was preparing white fish along with whole fish a bad idea? We didn't get to it because of the whole fish.
It would have been even better had there not been that unpleasant look about Miria's face while distributing the fish.
It gave the feeling that something was off.

Next Morning. I collect the Bat Monster Card from the merchants guild.
I immediately hand it to Sherry upon returning home.

"Roxanne, take off your shoes and pass them to me."

"Wha-okay."

Roxanne takes off her hard leather shoes.
And puts them on the table.
It will be a good idea to enhance Roxanne's equipment this time.

Apart from Sacrificial Misanga, there is a need to enhance her equipment more than others'.
In order to compensate for the drop in her level.
Roxanne can dodge most of the attacks and hardly gets hit, so it is not necessary to enhance her armor.

Therefore, I need to attach those skills to Roxanne's equipment that match her fighting style.

This skill increases rate of evasion which is perfect for her. Sherry and Miria are not receiving attacks that frequently, so it is not needed to increase their evasive ability for the time being. As for me, when I head out to the front, I equip Durandal, so I can compensate for it with Durandal's HP Absorption skill. Roxanne will make full use of this skill.

Since Kobold Monster Card will only double the effect, I don't see its need at this point.

I am thankful for that.

Another successful bid for Kobold Monster Card will take more time and money.

And it may be a good idea to first try the skill out before using Kobold Monster Card.

"Well then, can you please fuse the card with these shoes?"

"Certainly."

Sherry picks up the hard leather shoes, with one free skill slot, which we looted from the thieves.

She performs the card fusion casually.

She is completely used to it by now.

"As expected of Sherry."

"Brilliant as always."

"I did it!"

"Amazing, desu."

When I use Appraisal, it was showing as Hard Leather Shoes of Willow. Is willow used here to draw comparison with the wind?

"I plan on having everyone try it, but Roxanne will have a go first."

"Okay."

I pass the Hard Leather Shoes of Willow to Roxanne.

Once Roxanne had equipped it, we moved to Haruba's 14th floor.

From what I saw, there was no apparent change after she equipped it. Well, even before she equipped it, the monsters hardly ever managed to land attacks on her.

If it is just about evading attacks of the monsters, it is the same as before.

I borrow the shoes from Roxanne to try it out myself.

I don't feel any change in particular.

It's just that there is no apparent change like when I use bonus points to increase my status or when I change jobs or when I level up.

I even try to suicide attack a monster using Durandal, but I still don't feel any significant difference.

Well, it did become easier to evade the attacks than before to some extent.

If the difference was considerable, I wouldn't hate it this much.

If I look at the total number of attacks received, it has probably decreased.

I let Sherry and Miria try it out as well.

Albeit slightly, the number of attacks received has decreased.

Well, they hardly receive attacks to begin with.

Still, Hard Leather Shoes of Willow could prove to be a good equipment for Roxanne.

At some point, it may be a good idea to decrease the attacks received by Sherry and Miria as It will increase the efficiency of hunting. But it is not a matter to consider for now.

“This equipment will be for Roxanne. Are you fine with it?”

“It's a good idea.”

“Okay, desu.”

I confirm with Sherry and Miria.

“So Roxanne, it's yours from now on.”

“It is better than Master's equipment, Master should be the one to use it.”

“I have tried it already. It will be more effective if Roxanne uses it.”

“Okay, thank you.”

Roxanne bows her head.

To make her stronger, the Hard Leather Shoes of Willow were hence passed to Roxanne.

Chapter 103 : Coming across

*

We have cleared 14th floor of Haruba's labyrinth. When it comes to labyrinths, Haruba's and Quratar's are the best. There's no such thing as finding the boss right at the entrance. Exploring a floor takes time.

While there are instances of finding the boss room in the left having started the exploration from the left, there are instances of finding the boss room in the right having started the exploration from the left, too. The time required to clear a floor depends mainly on luck. Nothing can be done about it.

In case of 14th floor of Haruba's labyrinth, the time required was short.

The objective of our party is not just exploration. Because we have Roxanne in our party, we can hunt efficiently as well. For this reason, we keep moving from here to there to somewhere else. Which increases the time required to clear a floor.

But there's no knowing when you may find yourself at a dead end, so gaining experience in the meantime is efficient. There's also a possibility that we can't take out monsters on a floor. Therefore, efficiency aside, you have to keep leveling up or the floors may become too difficult to clear. Even though we are stronger by the standards of this world, the difficulty increases with every floor.

That said, there's no such thing as safety margin. Even if you're adequately leveled, one wrong step in labyrinth may lead to your undoing. It is also said that you can be surrounded by multiple groups of monsters if you take too long to exterminate a group of monsters.

If you laugh at incompetence of others, others will soon laugh at you. In labyrinth, survival is the top priority.

It's a noteworthy horse that can return its rider to safety.

"Can we perform well on higher floors with the level of our strength?"

"Umm... well, that's..."

Sherry finds it difficult to answer my question.

"Forget about it, what about other parties?"

"If there are combat slaves in the party, they go for higher floors as much as possible."

"Is that so?"

"Yes."

Roxanne answers in Sherry's stead.

"Umm... they try to go for higher floors as much as possible. The higher the experience you gain, the quicker you become strong. Although the danger on higher floors is great, it doesn't mean that total annihilation is the only outcome of failure. Owner of the party normally has access to recovery magic and recovery medicines, therefore, the danger to the owner of the party is not as great."

Sherry explains.

In other words, slaves are sacrificed in emergency situations?

Although the danger is great on higher floors, combat slaves are subjected to most of that danger.

The risk to the owner is minimal.

Now I know why sherry was hesitating.

If the owner doesn't know that, it's better for the slaves.

Combat slaves have it tough after all.

"But there will be no such thing in our party. It will be troublesome for me if Roxanne, Sherry and Miria are not there."

"Thank you very much. Still, it's better to go for higher floors."

"Okay, thank you very much."

"Party members are irreplaceable."

"...Thank you, desu."

Miria was the last to express her gratitude because she was waiting for

Roxanne to translate.

The boss of Haruba's 14th floor was Nepenthes which we had already defeated on Quratar's 12th floor.

The Nepenthes couldn't land an attack on Roxanne, the dodging ability of whom had increased even more due to Hard Leather Shoes of Willow.

I was in charge of attacking the boss.

"Which monster appears on 15th floor of Haruba's labyrinth?"

"Bitch Butterfly."

"Its weakness is wind magic, right?"

After defeating the boss of 14th floor, I ask Sherry.

"It is."

"Because we have already fought against Bitch Butterflies on Quratar's 16th floor, we can afford to skip trial, Roxanne."

"Try to search for groups with more Bitch Butterflies than Sarracenias."

Sherry interrupts.

"Why?"

"Have you forgotten that Bitch Butterflies are resistant to fire magic?"

They are?

I don't remember hearing such a thing before.

She always briefs about the attribute of magic which the monsters are weak against.

Or perhaps I didn't pay attention to any information more than that?

If I use [Fire Storm] against a group of Sarracenias and Bitch Butterflies, I may be able to take out Sarracenias but Bitch Butterflies will still be standing.

I need to be more careful regarding composition of monster groups, it seems.

Since I'm a Wizard, I'm surprisingly able to use my head.

"I see. As expected of Sherry. From now on, I will ask for your input before issuing instructions."

"Okay."

“Well then, Roxanne.”

“Understood.”

The first group Roxanne guides us to comprises two Bitch Butterflies and a Sarracenia.

I first take the Bitch Butterflies out in six [Breeze Storm]s.

With three more [Fire Ball]s, the remaining Sarracenia drops down.

The monsters seem to be becoming stronger which is within expectation.

“Sherry, do magic attacks not work at all against magic resistance?”

“I don’t think there’s such a thing. But I don’t know exactly how effective it is. And it also differs from monster to monster. I’m sorry.”

“Should we test it then? Roxanne, search for a group with more Sarracenias than Bitch Butterflies.”

“Understood.”

I ask of Roxanne.

We find a group of one Bitch Butterfly and two Sarracenias.

The Sarracenias drop down in six fire spells. The Bitch Butterfly collapses in four more wind spells.

Four spells huh?

Not as much as I thought.

“Guide us to groups with more Sarracenias.”

“I see. Understood.”

There are a maximum of four monsters in a group on 15th floor.

If Sarracenias are more, Bitch Butterflies can be no more than one.

If there are two of each, we first take Bitch Butterflies out.

The higher the floor, the more difficult it gets. With the number of attacks required increasing by one, duration of battle increases as well. It may become quicker with [Transcending Life and Death] but it’s not useable for the time being. (TN: Ignore Life and Death has been changed to Transcending Life and Death.)

“Thank you, Sherry. Had I not tested it, I wouldn’t have got it.”

“Not at all.”

Six fire spells inflict damage to Bitch Butterflies equivalent to two wind

spells.

It's quite a difference now that I think about it.

It's important to take magic resistance into account as well when shortlisting combination of monsters.

I try to use [Meteor Crash] next.

I was able to take out Sarracenias in one shot but Bitch Butterfly is still standing.

As a result, I have understood one thing.

To confirm it, I undertake another experiment.

I move to 12th floor of Haruba's labyrinth and use [Meteor Crash] on Grass Bees.

Grass Bees turn into smoke in just one [Meteor Crash].

Because I have leveled up, I was able to take out Grass Bees in one shot.

Is that why I was able to take out Mabream Lv12 in one shot?

So it wasn't due to attribute of magic.

To confirm my notion, I have to try a floor where I can take out Sarracenias or Fly Traps, but not Bitch butterflies or grass bees, in one shot.

"Which reminds me, I once fried the goat meat dropped by Pan after marinating it in fish sauce."

I talk to Miria.

It's the Tatsuta-age I made back in the days.

"Okay."

"If I do the same with fish, it'll be delicious, right?"

It's believed that bream tempura is so delicious that Tokugawa Ieyasu deteriorated his health from excessively eating it which resulted in his death.

It will be a similar dish.

Moreover, it will be a whole fish.

It will surely be delicious.

"Eat, desu!"

It was an expected reply.

“But we can’t eat it tonight because it has to be kept for some time after applying fish sauce. We will have it for tomorrow’s dinner. It will be to celebrate our clearing 14th floor. Roxanne, Sherry, are you fine with it?”

“Yes, thank you very much.”

“I think it will be delicious.”

With the approval of the two, we move to 12th floor of Bode’s labyrinth. I take Mabreams out in four [Sand Storm]s.

Four spells without Monk?

The monsters turn into smoke.

And dissipate.

One of the dropped items was whole fish.

This fish will be for the tomorrow’s dinner.

“Wow, desu!”

Miria jumps at it and brings it over to me immediately.

“It is quite rare for Mabream to drop whole fish. As expected of Master, you have got a whole fish at the first attempt.”

The reason as to why I don’t have Monk is that I had already replaced it with Cook.

Cook has a skill that increases drop rate of rare items.

Even then, I was quite lucky to have got a whole fish at the first attempt.

I don’t mind it, however, for Miria respects me even more now.

I receive the whole fish from Miria.

Although it’s whole fish, it has neither bones nor internal organs.

Also, how can a monster, Mabream in this case, remain after it’s dead.

How can this be possible?

“It is believed that every Mabream has a bream in its body. Therefore, it’s also called Bream’s Bream.”

Sherrys tells the puzzled me.

Is that why it looks the same as the monster?

Oh well, it doesn't matter.

We carry on hunting.

We have collected two whole fish after hunting about ten Mabreams.

“Whole fish, desu!”

Miria brings it over.

She seems to have learned this brahim word.

I put it in my Item Box.

“I have heard that whole fish doesn't stay good to eat for too long.”

“Miria is saying the same. As expected of Master.”

“Ah, but I have also heard that it stays good for long if cooked.”

Sherry, who seems to be hesitant, is correct.

As you would expect from Sherry.

I nod to Sherry and decide to leave.

With two whole fish, Miria will surely be satisfied.

“Umm... Master, I'm sorry.”

When we were about to leave, Roxanne apologizes all of a sudden.

“What happened?”

“I can smell an acquaintance. They're coming here from the entrance.”

“Acquaintance?”

This is such a convenient ability she has.

“You should better leave. Because I'm in close proximity to them, they must have smelled me. If I leave, they may get suspicious of me.”

“Are they not a friendly acquaintance?”

“Sort of.”

“Is that so?”

This acquaintance is someone Roxanne doesn't want me to see.

However, using [Warp] now doesn't seem to be a wise decision.

If Roxanne can smell them from here, they must have smelled us from there.

If I run away now, they'll find out.

This can be such an inconvenient ability at times.

If they ever visit 12th floor of Bode's labyrinth, we may encounter them again.

Miria will surely want more fish.

If they have smelled us on 12th floor of Bode's labyrinth, Haruba's labyrinth won't be safe either.

"If they are close to us, they must have smelled me, too."

"There's no helping it then. Let's wait here."

"I'm sorry. They may say strange things, please don't pay any mind to them."

"Are they really that despicable?"

Roxanne seems to detest them.

She will hate to meet her acquaintances after becoming a slave even if she doesn't hate them.

And if she hates them, she will hate to meet them even more after becoming a slave.

"They are a sworn enemy from back in the days."

"No matter what happens, Roxanne has allies now."

"Thank you very much, Master."

I try to provide support to Roxanne.

I gently put my hand on her shoulder.

I put the Rod of Offerings back in my Item Box and wait for this acquaintance of Roxanne.

"Ohoho~ if it isn't Roxanne."

A party of six appears before long.

A party of four beast warriors, an adventurer and a monk.

Their levels are quite high.

Beast Warrior... Lv99!?

"Long time no see."

"Even though it has been such a long time, you're still a stupid woman as ever."

The one having conversation with Roxanne is a female Beast Warrior Lv29.

Appraisal shows her as a female.

She's 19. Three years older than Roxanne.

Is this woman the acquaintance of Roxanne?

About her looks, no comments.

There's no comparison with Roxanne.

"You haven't changed either."

"Don't you compare the now-me with the previous-me! I have been gaining strength for all these six months!"

"Really?"

This woman's social status seems to be higher than Roxanne's for she has slightly lowered herself.

She seems to have a family name as well.

A person having a family name seems to be rare in this world.

Her pride seems to be bloated, too.

Her long hair is curled into drills.

Her hair is shiny like a doll's.

Doolittle was the first ever air-raid on Japan. (TN: Romaji for 'shiny like a doll' looks like romaji for 'Doolittle'.)

Women of low social status can't grow long hair.

Hair care being the reason.

It's a proof that she can spend on her hair.

It's a proof that she's wealthy.

"Albeit faint, I caught your seedy smell while we were on our way to the labyrinth. This much is nothing for me."

Didn't Roxanne say that they were at the entrance?

"What brings you here?"

"Roxanne, you're still an illiterate woman who knows nothing. I feel so pity for you that I can't help but tell you. Simon the mad dog has become active as of late. His wanted posters have been circulated as well. My family don't want anything to do with him but they can't ignore the

prospect of bounty.”

“Simon the mad dog huh?”

“Simon the mad dog was one of the two experts of wolfkin tribe. He defeated Sabo once but this time, we will prove that Baradam family is the strongest in the tribe.”

Sabo Baradam is the male Beast Warrior Lv99 who is standing beside her.

He does look strong.

He’s Lv99 after all.

“Err...”

Roxanne appears to be troubled to speak.
Because Simon is already dead.
It’s impossible for Sabo to defeat him now.
But there is no evidence.

“You’re still an undisciplined woman as ever. Although you are able to speak Brahim somewhat, you don’t seem to be fluent at it yet.”

This woman seems to have misunderstood the reason as to why Roxanne was faltering.
She thinks that Roxanne is unable to speak because she’s not good at Brahim.

“Err... not at all.”

“Your turning into a slave was actually helpful. I must thank you for that. It’s regretful that, due to various reasons, your family couldn’t earn enough.”

“To do such a thing... you!”

Roxanne is at a loss for words at the woman’s revelation.
I have heard about it before.
That Roxanne was sold into slavery because her family couldn’t pay tax.
So it was all plotted by this woman?

“It was easy for me with the influence of my Baradam family. The reason as to why I did this is because you, Roxanne, are a bitch who seduces men!”

“I don’t.”

“Although you’re denying with words, your actions speak louder. How many men have you seduced already?”

“I know because the eyes they look at you with are totally different from the eyes they look at me with! I know because he was my fiance!”

“I have no idea what you’re talking about.”

I see.

So it was same for the men of wolfkin tribe, too.

Her chest is just that alluring.

It was inevitable.

“Now that you’re a slave, you have seduced a weak human. Well, this is what you were famous for. Seducing, that is.”

“Please refrain from using ill words for my Master!”

Roxanne raises her voice.

Chapter 104 : Duel

*

“Oh my, is Roxanne ordering me now?”

Upon Roxanne’s raising her voice, the eyes of her unfriendly acquaintance turn into that of a sworn enemy’s.

“Not at all. I don’t mind your speaking ill of me but I won’t allow you to speak ill of my Master.”

“Then I challenge you to a duel.”

“Duel?”

“If you want me to respect your master, you will have to make me respect your master. So Roxanne’s master, would you please allow your slave to have a duel with me?”

The woman loosens her cheeks and forces a smile.
Roxanne turns toward me.

“Master...”

“I will issue the challenge to you if the duel between Roxanne and I receives your acknowledgement.”

“What is this about?”

“Only free people can take part in duels, therefore, challenge to a duel is issued only to a free person. However, it is not necessary for you to take part in the duel yourself. You can nominate your proxy. It is a slave’s duty to protect their master after all.”

Sherry explains.

No, I wanted you to explain this situation, not duel.

Roxanne and the woman were talking too much too fast, so I couldn’t follow their conversation.

“If you nominate Roxanne to take part in the duel in your stead, I will issue the challenge to you.”

This woman isn’t explaining the situation either.

Roxanne is a slave, so the challenge can't be issued to her. This woman can issue the challenge to me and I can nominate Roxanne to be my proxy. If I don't accept her challenge, will this woman not be able to have a duel with Roxanne?

So in this world, people challenge others in duels, not in courts? Duels seem to be common here. It's troublesome, however, that duels are so common here.

"Is she stronger than you?"

I whisper in Roxanne's ear. If we compare their levels, Roxanne who's Beast Warrior Lv32 should be stronger than this woman who's Beast Warrior Lv29. If the odds are in our favor, I may accept her challenge.

"We took part in a mock battle about half a year ago. Most of my attacks missed."

"And her attacks?"

"I didn't let her hit me, of course."

Yeah, of course.

"I don't know what cowardly methods you used six months ago to pull a draw but the me now is a lot stronger than the me six months ago. This time, I won't let you run away with your tail between your legs like a bitch that you are. I will crush you completely."

Roxanne, too, has become a lot stronger in these six months, just so you know.

Half a year ago, she must have been Beast Warrior Lv6 at most. This woman, who is Beast Warrior Lv29 now, couldn't have been below Lv6 half a year ago.

"Master, please allow me."

"Only if you think you can win."

"W-What might you mean by that?"

The woman seems to disagree with Roxanne's and my conversation.

“I can’t imagine Roxanne losing but-”

“Then please accept the challenge and allow me to shatter the disillusion of both the master and the slave.”

This is troublesome.

Because it’s a duel, I might even lose Roxanne if she loses on an off chance.

This really is troublesome.

That said, I can’t imagine Roxanne losing to this woman.

Even if I win, there is nothing for me to gain from this duel.

This is troublesome indeed.

“Having come all the way here and having issued the challenge, it will be an insult to our Baradam family if you turn us down. Or do you perhaps want me to issue the challenge?”

Sabo, Beast Warrior Lv99, who has been keeping quiet till now, opens his mouth.

“Master, Sabo is the strongest Beast Warrior in our tribe. Please let me have a duel with her.”

“I don’t think I will lose to him, though.”

He’s Lv99, don’t you know?

“What did you say!? I will not allow this woman to slander me like this!”

Sabo gets angry.

I thought that he was obediently following the woman but it doesn’t seem to be the case.

Still, I have no idea as to why this woman thinks she can defeat Roxanne.

Are they perhaps on to something?

Have they got a hold of some special item or spell?

“I don’t think Roxanne-san will lose to her. Even if it happens on an off chance, she has ‘that’.”

Sherry whispers in my ear.

By 'that', does she mean Sacrificial Misanga?

Roxanne and the woman both have Sacrificial Misanga equipped.

However, even if you have Sacrificial Misanga, it can't keep you from getting hit.

"It's a waste to give such a precious equipment to the likes of Roxanne. However, if she drops to her knees during the duel and begs for her life, I may spare her. Baradam family is famous for their benevolence after all."

She seems to have heard Sherry's words.

And she probably understands the meaning of 'that'.

Well, she has one too, so it's not surprising.

However, it will be this woman who'll be asking for mercy if it comes that.

"Okay, okay. I get it."

I don't think I have any other option but to accede to this duel between these two.

"Thank you very much, Master."

"Ohoho~ you have finally accepted. Roxanne, you better not be regretting it now. Well then, let's head to the office of Harz duchy knights. If you back away now, it will really be distasteful."

The woman turns around and heads toward the exit.

Other members of her party follow behind her.

"Will it be alright?"

"It'll be alright. There is no monster near the small room at the entrance."

When I ask Roxanne, she bows in respect and answers.

I didn't ask about that.

"Permission of the order of knights is required for a duel. We should go, too."

Sherry, too, bows in respect and advises.

Because I grew up in modern Japan, this affair seems awkward to me.

Duels are so common here yet I had never heard about it till now.

Are duels really that common in this world?
Roxanne's and Sherry's attitude suggests so, at least.
I let out a heavy sigh and head to the exit.

"Wait here."

When we arrive at the castle of Bode, the woman enters inside by herself.

Shortly afterwards, she comes back with Gozer.

"I, Gozer of the order of Harz duchy knights, confirm that she's a free person."

Gozer raises his eyebrow upon seeing me but continues without any hesitation.

Because as a third party, he is supposed to be neutral.

"Okay."

Roxanne takes a step forward.

"It will be Roxanne, huh? Do you have any objection to the duel?"

"None."

"Well then, the challenge to the duel, issued in accordance with the principle of self-defense, has been accepted. You have the right to nominate a proxy. Do you want to nominate a proxy?"

"No."

Upon Roxanne's answer, Gozer glances at me.
Did he think that I would fight myself?

"The other party wants the duel to be private. Do you accept?"

"Because I'm afraid that you will be using cowardly methods yet again."

The woman explains the reason.

I don't understand the logic behind this reason, though.

Roxanne turns toward me.

Well, I don't want to make it public either.

I nod in approval.

"I accept."

“Alright then, only the members of the two parties will be allowed.”

Gozer heads inside the castle.

“I will not let you escape this time.”

The woman stomps the ground and goes ahead.

We follow them inside.

Gozer leads us to a corner in the courtyard of the castle.

There are neither trees, nor grass. Weed is growing sparsely.

Is it a training ground for the knights.

“Is this the place?”

“Because you don’t want to do it publicly, I had to prepare an appropriate place immediately.”

“Most of the duels are private, therefore, the order of knights keep a place ready.”

Sherry whispers in my ear.

So that the duel can be started right away?

“Roxanne, would you like to use my sword?”

If you are to fight immediately, at least take Durandal with you.

Durandal has both [HP Absorption] and [Incantation Interruption] skills.

I may be exposing it to Gozer but there’s no helping it.

“There’s no need. I’m more apt at using one-handed swords.”

Roxanne declines my offer.

Is that so?

I may pull out another bonus equipment but it will be a bad idea to go into the duel with a weapon which she’s not familiar with.

I may give her a full face helm in that case.

But they may raise an objection if I help her out with my equipment.

I have seven jobs at the moment. Is it alright to have so many active jobs?

Job effects are shared by all party members.

I have yet to test the accurate effect of seventh job, though.

I select bonus spell, [Partilization].

I haven't used it yet but it shares the effect of an item with a party member.

If I consume recovery medicine, Roxanne will be recovered.

I select [MP Full Release], too.

For contingencies.

Even though Roxanne and Sherry know about it, Gozer doesn't.

It's distasteful to help her in the midst of a duel but I can't afford to lose Roxanne.

I select [Lv99 Death] as well.

I have already confirmed that it's a single target magic attack.

Single target magic attack can be used against people.

I open Party Job Settings interface and switch Roxanne's job back to Beast Warrior Lv32.

Was it a bad decision to have had her level Warrior up all this time?

Well, I'm sure she can win against the woman even with Warrior Lv25.

"Here, desu."

"Thank you, Miria."

Miria passes a hard leather hat to Roxanne.

Roxanne had Hard Leather Shoes of Willow equipped beforehand.

I'm not sure if it's necessary but it's better to go in there with the best possible equipment.

"Would you two please come in front?"

"Coming."

"Roxanne, losing is not an option."

"Sister, all the best, desu."

Both of them proceed.

"Ohoho~ in a duel, lives are on the line. I hope you are prepared, Roxanne. I won't allow you to drop to your knees and beg for your life. Today shall be the day you die."

The woman goes back on her words just like that.

Baradam family doesn't seem to be as benevolent as she claimed.

“Ready.”

“Let me tell you something, Roxanne. Six months back, I didn't have any party member but this time, I have Sabo. Baradam family is concentrating all their efforts on Sabo. He has already consumed a lot of dope medicine. You understand what that means, right?”

Like I thought, dope medicine seems to be a level-up item. Is it because of dope medicine that he's Beast Warrior Lv99?

Job effects are shared by all party members and the effects increase with level.

At Lv99, the effects must be considerable.

So the odds of her victory rest with her party members, huh?

“...”

“You seem to understand the meaning. Serves you right. Well then, drop dead already!”

The woman keeps taunting while Roxanne stands there silently, holding her sword.

She tightens the grip on her sword and swings it.

Roxanne lowers her body slightly and dodges it.

She follows it up with another downward swing. Roxanne dodges yet again.

So far, so good.

Roxanne is composed as ever.

Even with shared job effects of a Lv99 party member, this woman is unable to hit Roxanne.

Roxanne dodges yet another attack of the woman.

With the least possible movement, she is avoiding the oncoming slashes. She sways her head to dodge the point of the sword and then draws her shoulder back from the line of the sword.

Because the woman was already committed to the attack, Roxanne thrusts her rapier after dodging the attack.

The woman jumps back and then falls over.

“I’m a lot stronger than I was six months ago. How can she still dodge my attacks?”

“Kuku~ you attack recklessly as ever.”

The woman stands up angrily and voices hatefully.

She swings her sword again.

Roxanne lightly sidesteps.

“You were stronger six months ago.”

Nope. It’s Roxanne who has become a lot stronger.

It doesn’t mean that her opponent has weakened.

“Even though I’m so close... why...? How...?”

Sigh

This won’t work against Roxanne.

Roxanne tends to dodge attacks by a hair’s breadth.

Because at this distance, the opponent completely commits to the attack.

Having missed their attack after coming so close, the opponent tends to think that they can land the next attack.

The reason being, their sword misses by a centimeter-no, a millimeter.

Normally, it is impossible to achieve such a feat over and over again.

Therefore, they tend to perceive it as a fluke.

When this woman engaged Roxanne in a mock battle six months ago, she must have had similar train of thought.

Therefore, she thought that she could win next time.

But the result is same.

Like I suspected, it’s Roxanne whose ability far surpasses others’.

Being a Beast Warrior Lv6, she was able pull a draw against a Beast Warrior Lv29.

And now that she’s a Beast Warrior Lv32.

It’s not a contest anymore.

“I knew that I had become stronger in Master’s company, so I wanted to measure the level of my strength but this battle is not serving the purpose.”

“Kuh! This can’t be happening!”

“Are you done?”

Roxanne expresses her loss of interest and thrusts her sword.
Her rapier hits the throat of the woman.
The thrust pushes her away.

The woman falls over.
Flat on her back.

One hit was enough for her.
One thrust of Roxanne’s rapier.
It won’t be funny if she’s dead already.

“N-Not yet...”

Albeit shakily, the woman is trying to stand up.
While she was trying to stand up, a string falls down her knee.

It’s Sacrificial Misanga.
Was one attack of Roxanne enough to kill her?
When I used Appraisal, Sacrificial Misanga had disappeared from the list
of her equipment.

This woman understands it as well.
That there’s no use in standing up now.
Next time, there won’t be any Sacrificial Misanga to her rescue.

“Although you plotted for my family to become poor, I must thank you.
Because of you, I was able to meet such a splendid Master.”

Roxanne firms the grip on her sword.
One more stab and it will be the end.

“Roxanne.”

I call out to her.
It’s enough.
It’s better to end it as is.
There’s no need for Roxanne to dirty her hands.

Chapter 105 : Round two.

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“It’s alright?”

Roxanne took a few steps back, and then turned to look at the woman. She looks at my expression, and seems to have guessed what I want to say.

“I don’t mind.”

“This match, it would become a draw.”

“That’s fine... isn’t it?”

I check with Sherry.

“There isn’t any problem, so it’s alright.”

After hearing Sherry’s answer with a doubtful look, I beckoned to Roxanne.

It’s better to make Roxanne leave it like this.

“Use this.”

A voice from one of the opponents party members calls out. It seems to be Sabo.

“But...”

“It’s okay. He didn’t give her a sacrificial misanga. Now you can have an honorable draw.

“Ah, but...”

What is Sabo saying?

What is an honorable draw?

“I did my best.”

“You did.”

“As expected of Roxanne.”

“It was great-desu.”

Something still seems to be happening, and Roxanne is paying attention

without being negligent.

The opponent on the ground isn't moving anymore.

This is how it looks when the match is over.

This is the end of it.

“I'm always watching Master fighting, and I was wondering if I was able to become a little stronger myself.”

“I see.”

“The results of being trained by Master.”

I don't think it's just that.

“The other party is giving up, do you want to end in a draw?”

Gozer comes closer and asks.

“Yes.”

Roxanne answers, after glancing my way to see me nod.

“Is that alright for you too?”

Gozer goes to the opponents party and asks.

Sabo steps forward.

“There's no other choice.”

“Then, this duel is a draw.”

After Sabo gives his answer, Gozer declares it.

Sabo comes forward.

He approaches the woman sitting down.

“You are a disgrace to the Baradam house.”

Sabo wields his sword.

He beheads the woman.

“Aaa.”

What the...

My voice leaks out accidentally.

“I handed her a suicide ball, and I thought she would use it rather than suffer defeat. For someone not willing to go to those lengths, we have no

use for them in the Baradam household.”

Sabo disregards the dead woman, and makes a declaration. The suicide ball is an item that does large damage to an enemy in exchange for your life.

Is that what he meant by honorable draw? A double K.O?

“What have you done?”

Gozer steps in.

“This is a problem for the Baradam household. This woman is under my control as the head of the Baradam house. There is no problem in this treatment.”

“I understand. I will check your intelligence card to confirm it.”

You understand it Gozer?

Gozer withdrew his objection easily.

Even if murder is performed in front of your eyes, it seems there is no problem if it's a household issue.

“The draw is convenient. This is a disgrace against the Baradam house. We lost the duel, and it's a great dishonor that the decisive blow was not given. For this disgrace I demand a duel with that woman.”

While showing Gozer his intelligence card, Sabo points at Roxanne.

“A rematch from a side that lost a duel can be refused. However, that isn't the case this time because it was a draw.”

Sherry informs me.

So, a draw is no good?

There can be a rematch if it's a draw.

It wasn't good after all.

“Can we run away?”

“We'll be a laughing stock if we do.”

“Please let me handle it.”

If you live, but are laughed at, it's still better to escape. That's what I think, but Roxanne won't agree.

“I’ve taken 50 doping pills by instruction. It will be good if you are prepared.”

“The theory says that he can’t get any stronger even if he takes more than 50.”

Sherry explains Sabo’s words.

The theory that doping pills raise your level but not your overall skills seems to be promising.

If he increased his level by 50, did he raise his level to 49 himself?

Is that how it is?

Is Roxanne stronger?

Roxanne would be stronger if you consider his Lv99 to be just Lv49.

If the attacks of a Lv29 could not touch her at Beast Warrior Lv6, then the attacks of a Lv49 might still not touch a Beast Warrior Lv32.

“Well, I’ll handle this one myself.”

“Um, well, Sabo’s strength is well known. It would be dangerous.”

“If Roxanne did it, it would be too easy a win.”

Would it be bad?

There’s the chance that his level was above Lv49, and some of the doping pills were useless.

Still, Roxanne might be able to manage it somehow.

“What! How dare you say that!”

“Sabo is probably considerably strong. He is quite famous among the wolf tribes. I can’t put Master at risk. If anything should happen...”

“It’s alright Roxanne. Your Master is not that weak.”

“Ah, yes.”

Roxanne tries to convince me, but I ignore it.

I don’t want to lose Roxanne.

I can’t take the risk.

He killed that woman.

If there is a chance for him to win, Sabo will not hesitate to kill Roxanne.

I can win, but it isn’t certain.

“The other party appears to be strong. I won’t be able to go easy on him.

Even if he is killed there won't be a problem?"

"Yes."

"It's alright."

Sherry and Roxanne gave their approval.

There isn't any problem?

"You accept the duel?"

"Is there a problem if I fight myself?"

"The side who received the duel request can pick a person to represent them. Their representative cannot be denied no matter who it is."

I speak with Gozer after he came over.

"I will have to kill him, because I can't afford to take it easy."

"That's always an expected outcome in a duel."

"As I said, no matter how strong you are, I won't lose."

Sabo shouted.

"I don't need a representative. After fighting the assistant instructor, it's time for the master of the dojo to step forward."

"I don't understand your reason."

"I don't want to risk Roxanne. If you don't want to die you will stop now."

"I don't need your bullshit."

I gave you a chance to stop, and you won't stop?

This is not just a threat.

"It's best not to anger me."

"That's my line!"

"I didn't sleep much last night, but I'm in my usual condition today. I don't even need sleep to fight you."

"Let's hurry up and start."

It's no use.

"Then, if there are no objections, shall we begin?"

"Oo!"

Sabo yells, and I nod.

I don't pull out Durandal.

I'm not sure if I can win by fighting head on.

I should plan an alternative.

I can use [Overwhelming], and medicine to replenish myself.

The opponent might try to use the suicide ball, and might use items.

I can use the [MP Full Release].

I can win.

“Both of you, come forward.”

Gozer begins the duel.

Sabo charges in.

Is discussion useless?

I use [Lv99 death], and indicate Sabo as the target.

There is no visible change.

Sabo is still approaching.

[Analyze] no longer shows sacrificial misanga in his equipment.

[Lv99 death] seems to have been effective.

I charge forward and use [Lv99 death] again.

Sabo swings his sword down.

I use [Overwhelming].

Everything becomes slow motion.

[Overwhelming] isn't used for fast movement.

I use it to avoid the sword.

My movements are good.

I grab Sabo's arm, which has already lost its power.

I pull his arm while being careful not to touch the sword.

I move my leg.

I was able to move his center of gravity without much effort.

The effect of [Overwhelming] ends.

Sabo is on the ground.

“Um...”

“It only just began.”

Roxanne and Sherry call out to me as I came back straight away. Even Roxanne doesn't seem to be able to work out what happened.

"It's over."

"It was amazing. I saw you move your feet and grab his arm, but I don't understand what you did."

She saw everything.

I didn't really do anything.

Still, Roxanne seems to have seen everything.

"Defeating him with such swiftness, without even drawing your sword..."

"Wow, desu."

Sherry and Miria give praise.

"He is most certainly dead."

Gozer confirmed Sabo's status.

Gozer probably doesn't understand what happened either.

[Lv99 Death] seems to be an incantation that gives death to someone if they are Lv99.

At least they don't explode like [MP Full Release].

"I heard that Sabo is extraordinarily strong. Nobody from the Baradam house will be able to act up now. To defeat him so easily. As expected of Master."

"Well, I wonder. Roxanne might be stronger."

I wasn't able to understand how strong Sabo was after all.

It could be said that I didn't really need to understand it.

"But... Sabo was..."

"That woman who fought against the young lady was certainly strong, but for someone to exceed Sabo..."

Sabo's party members are surprised as well.

The remaining party members are now four people.

"I, Gozer of the Harz duchy's order of knights, testify that this was a fair

duel. There may be no retaliation for this outcome.”

Gozer instructs Sabo’s party members.

Should I say something?

The follow up is important.

I don’t want to worry about them coming for revenge.

“The circumstances were unavoidable because it was a duel. Please don’t hold a grudge against me.”

“Ah, yes, I understand. I don’t intend to cause a dispute with someone who defeated Sabo. But, the equipment.”

“The equipment?”

I thought there might be problems, but there won’t be a grudge?

Leaving them the equipment is better than causing them to want revenge.

“The equipment of someone defeated belongs to the winner. However, they don’t often take it. Some people challenge others to duels to get equipment, especially if there are strong emotions from having equipment taken from you.”

Sherry tells me.

The equipment belongs to the winner.

Therefore there are people who duel to get equipment.

To show that I am not like that, I should leave the equipment.

It seems a little confusing.

“Roxanne, what do you think?”

“I don’t really have a grudge.”

“We don’t need the equipment.”

I informed the other party members after hearing Roxanne’s answer.

Though Sabo had equipment with skills, this is for the best.

There might be retaliation if I take the equipment.

“Thank you... we’ll take the equipment and intelligence card home, we leave disposal of the remains to you.”

“I understand.”

“Thank you very much.”

The party members thanked me, and spoke to Gozer.
The remains are unnecessary?
Thinking about it, not even bones are left when you die in the labyrinth either.
It's common thought to just let it fade away.

But, they are taking the intelligence card with them.
It's better proof than a lock of hair to show that someone has died.

I thought about being appointed village chief Lvl by a knight so I could check the hand, but I don't need to do it.
Maybe when they check the intelligence card they can see what happened in their mind.
Maybe show the fight, but I don't think that's possible.

"Ok, this way."

Gozer leads us.
The leftover work is for the order of knights, and we are led into the castle.

"Master, I'm sorry."

Roxanne apologizes when we arrive in the lobby.

"It's alright. It's my fault for wanting the draw."

"But..."

"It's fine."

"Ok."

Maybe Roxanne is just as shocked as I am today.
It's not something we should worry about.

"I was quite surprised Michio. What did you do to the opponent? Even I don't understand it. The opponents sacrificial misanga was cut, so there must have been at least two attacks. I didn't think you were just an average adventurer, but that was quite something."

Gozer is amazed.
Not an average adventurer, I'm not even an adventurer.
I seem to be admired?

“He was a formidable opponent. If I had done any less it might have become dangerous.”

“That woman, Roxanne, also made a show of overwhelming ability. Before the other party comes out, please leave early for today. I was here by chance, but the duke is away today. We will have a detailed discussion about this next time.”

I’m not looking forward to next time.
There’s no way out of it.
For now, I go home.

“Roxanne, are you alright?”

As soon as we arrived at the house, I spoke to Roxanne.
Roxanne is probably in the most shock.

“Yes. I’m alright. Um, what that woman said, don’t worry about it.”
“About the weak man? I’m not worried about that.”

Things like that happen.

“That. Well. About me leading a man around by the nose.”
“I don’t mind.”

I say so, and smile.
It’s a false accusation, though it might be true that the eyes of men looking at Roxanne change.

Roxanne also smiles.
I watch her face.
Are you alright?

That night after going to bed, I heard Roxanne.

“I’ve probably caused trouble for my aunt’s family.”

As the four of us lay there, Roxanne mutters.
Roxanne was a burden for her aunt’s house.
That woman prevented income from going to the aunts house.

Are you worried after all?
It’s not something you should worry about.

“Forget about today.”

“When my uncle approved of me becoming a slave, he added a condition with the slave trader that I could not be sold to members of the wolf tribe. Even though he was a mean uncle, that was to protect me I think.”

If that woman was annoyed with Roxanne to the end, she probably would have bought Roxanne after she became a slave.

Though the uncle reluctantly sold Roxanne, he took strategic precautions. This may have been the circumstance that Alan the slave trader mentioned.

If there is a condition for not selling to the wolf tribe, you can't sell her at an auction where anyone might buy her.

“If I think about it, I should express my gratitude to that woman. Without her it wouldn't have been possible for me to buy Roxanne, so my thanks to her. So don't worry about things too much.”

“Yes. Thank you.”

“You and I just have to be happy. It's the best revenge against that woman.”

That's a proverb from somewhere in Spain.

Living happily is the best revenge.

I lightly embrace Roxanne with one arm, and draw her close.

Roxanne silently lays her head on me.

Her head is on my shoulder.

While feeling the weight, I fell asleep.

Chapter 106 : Waste

*

Next evening. When we return home, there was a note left by Luke the broker.

It should be a good news.

I hope it's not a bad news.

It can't be a summon from the Duke for the message arrived today. It should be from yesterday, not today.

Had the message arrived tomorrow, it would have been highly likely for it to be the Duke's.

Even more so had it arrived the day after tomorrow.

Within four to five days, the Duke will surely send a summon.

Even if it's today, there's no problem.

It was a good idea to return home before going for shopping. Is this what you call premonition?

Nope. It's not premonition, it's desire.

Not facing the problem is not the solution to the problem.

Even if ten days will have passed after the duel, the Duke will investigate if he finds even a minor detail that appears suspicious.

It will be really funny if that comes to pass.

Oh well, the business in ten days' time can be take care of in ten days' time. I should first take care of today's business.

Luke contacts me mostly in case of successful bid.

The Duke's message will take long to reach Luke.

And then Luke's message will take a few days to reach me.

Even If it's the Duke's message, I'll just visit Luke first.

I'll hear the story from Luke before visiting the Duke.

All of this will take around ten days.

“Master, there seemed to be a successful bid for Caterpillar Monster Card.”

Roxanne reads Luke's message out.
I'm unusually cautious today but Roxanne seems to be her usual self.
Let alone today, even if I received such a shock yesterday, I wouldn't be this calm.

As usual, she dodged attacks from monsters with little movement.
There's a possibility that she's not as calm inside as she appears outside.
This possibility is frightening, so I won't think much about it.

"It's still bright outside, so I can make it there in time. I'll head to the merchants guild.

"Very well. Miria and I will do maintenance of the equipment then. There are enough vegetables to make soup. As for dinner, can you please take Sherry with you to buy ingredients?"

"That's fine with me."

"Whole fish, desu!"

Like Miria said, tonight's dinner will be whole fish tatsuta-age.
I have already left the whole fish to marinate in fish sauce.

I jump to the merchants guild with Sherry.
I buy the Caterpillar Monster Card.
There was no message from the Duke after all.
Alright!

"Let's make one more dish for dinner? Miria will eat most of the fish by herself."

"That's right. Then I'll stir-fry something."

After buying bread and ingredients for stir-fried food, we head back home.
I hand the Caterpillar Monster Card and a misanga with an empty skill slot to Sherry.

Sherry fuses the card casually.

"Amazing. It's at your fingertips now. As you would expect from Sherry."

"As expected of Sherry."

"Wow, desu."

“This will be for Miria.”

I pat Miria who was admiring Sherry.

I play with her cat ears.

With Sherry having successfully fused the Caterpillar Monster Card, we now have four Sacrificial Misanga.

All the members of our party have a Sacrificial Misanga now.

“Okay, desu.”

“Alright then, Miria, where do you want to wear it? Ankle?”

“Thank you, desu.”

I have Miria sit on a chair.

I wrap the misanga around her foot and tie it.

I haven't withdrawn the instruction to Luke of buying Caterpillar Monster Cards.

We will have more members in our party. Also, we need spare ones in case existing ones break.

Later, I fry the whole fish.

It can no longer be called whole fish, however, since it has been sliced into several pieces.

While I was frying the fish, Miria was beside me the whole time.

She stepped back only when oil splashed.

“Oil may splash again.”

“Splash, desu.”

“I think we need an apron.”

Apron exists in this world.

However, it's for the purpose of safety at work. It barely qualifies as an apron. It's not true to the essence of the word 'apron'.

Its fabric is thick, safety being the reason.

I can put it on myself but I can't stand Roxanne and other girls wearing it.

I want Roxanne to wear a pretty apron.

That's right. It's a dream of every man.

A dream of every man.

Because it was an important thing, I said it twice.

“Apron? I think it would be better to have one.”

“It’s just that there are no pretty aprons.”

“That’s right.”

Roxanne seems to agree with me.

I want fashionable aprons for them.

There is a frilled apron attached to the maid outfit but it can’t be detached.

Even though you’re only a step away, you hit a wall; it’s the same feeling.

Well, they’re not full-time housewives, so it can’t be helped.

In this world, those who wear pretty clothes don’t cook.

And those who cook can’t afford to wear pretty clothes.

Considering this, it is highly unlikely for pretty aprons to be sold.

“Then let’s visit the clothing store in the Imperial Capital and have it tailored.”

“Umm... are you sure?”

“I want Roxanne to wear pretty clothes.”

“Okay, thank you very much.”

For now, I fry the whole fish without apron.

When the dark tatsuta-age was ready, I put it in the dish.

“Alright, let’s start eating.”

“Yes, desu!”

When I bring the dish to the table and sit down on a chair, Miria leans forward.

Miria watches me closely as I put the first piece of the whole fish into my mouth.

Under the crispy layer of slime starch is the juicy whole fish.

When my teeth bite through the crispy texture into the soft meat, I feel a burst of heat.

The spicy taste of fish sauce spreads around my mouth.

It melts on my tongue.

Delicious!

It is more delicious than I imagined.

I give it three-stars.

Because it's near perfection.

“Delicious.”

“Every food which Master makes is great but this one is the best.”

“This is amazing.”

“Delicious, fish, not eat, desu.”

Does she mean that she has never eaten such a delicious fish?

Miria seems to be pleased.

Tatsuta-age vanishes quickly.

Not just Miria, even Roxanne and Sherry hold their platters out for more.

But when only a little was left, they hold themselves back.

Miria, however, is still at it.

When only one piece was left, I reach out for the dish.

Can I please eat it?

“Miria can have it.”

“Okay, desu!”

When I decline it, Miria gleefully stuffs the last piece of tatsuta-age into her mouth.

She moves her jaws slowly.

When she was finished eating, she droops her shoulders.

Ah, I understand how she feels.

Well, it was just that delicious.

“We will have next celebration when we break through Haruba's 15th floor.”

“Eat, desu!”

When I announce that, her eyes brighten up.

With this, she will show enthusiasm in the labyrinth.

Next day. We visit the clothing store in the Imperial Capital.

It's a shop that sells gorgeous outfits for women.

But there are no aprons being sold.

Apron doesn't seem to be an item which can be put on display in such a

shop.

“I need an apron, preferably made of thin fabric, which can be put on while cooking.”

“Apron?”

“It should cover only the front. It should have a strap as well, so it can be tied around the back. It should also have frills like the apron in imperial maid outfit.”

“Oh”

I ask the same male attendant from earlier whom I asked about maid outfit for Miria.

He should understand what type of apron I’m talking about.

Still, the splendor of apron is unimaginable even if you know about maid outfits.

You need to be a connoisseur.

“Is it possible?”

“Which fabric would you like? If you want thin fabric, silk would be better if you ask me.”

“It will get stained a lot. I need a fabric that can be easily washed.”

Silk apron, huh?

I don’t think it would be better, however.

“Because we will have to design it from the scratch, additional cost will be charged. It will not be much more than the cost of fabric, though.

Apron made of ordinary fabric will cost you 1,000 Nars while the one made of silk will cost you 1,300 Nars.”

“Hmm... so there’s such a thing.”

It’s quite high.

Is that so because I’m commissioning a custom order?

It goes even higher if I choose silk.

“Which color would you like? We can arrange for a color that matches the sheen of silk.”

“White will be fine.”

He’s persistent.

“White would be great, indeed. White would look great with the sheen of silk.”

Color and fabric are secondary to me.

“It would?”

“Just imagine. Body wrapped from chest to knees in smooth silk. Silk that is soft to touch and glossy in appearance. We promise you the best possible article.”

S-Stupid.

Does he think that I don't know?

I know how a silk apron looks and feels like.

Such a thing as silk apron.

It's expensive but I place the order.

“Can you please make both an ordinary one and a silk one for the three of them?”

“Certainly. May I have the measurements then?”

“Thank you very much.”

Roxanne thanks me and then goes ahead with a female attendant.

“Shoulder straps shall be decorated with frills. Hem shall be decorated with lace. If there is anything else, please specify. It will be ready in five days.”

This man knows it after all.

I have been beaten squarely.

I pay 30% discounted sum of 4,830 Nars.

It's quite an expense.

Although it's not a sum that is painful to pay,

I want to save as much money as I can for upcoming auction.

Next day. Another situation arises that requires me to part with money. When we drop by the weapons shop, a lot of weapons were lined up in the inner part of the shop.

The inner part of the shop exhibits high-tier equipment.

There were not many equipment exhibited in the inner part of the shop till today.

“There seemed to be a large shipment.”

“Yes, we received a lot of equipment from a certain family.”

Wholesale, huh?

If you sell in bulk, you can receive a large sum immediately.

I'm envious.

“There are many estocs. Do you want to have a look?”

“Sure. Thank you.”

Estoc | One-handed Sword

Skills | Empty | Empty | Empty | Empty

Hmm...

I find an estoc with four empty skill slots.

I was able to find such an estoc because there was a bulk of it.

Rapier can have a maximum of three empty skill slots. Four seems to be the limit for estoc.

“What do you say, Roxanne?”

“Umm... are you sure?”

“Have a look.”

“O-Okay.”

I hand the estoc to Roxanne.

The number of empty skill slots is same as two-handed counterpart, Damascus steel sword. Is the performance on the same level, too?

To replace Durandal, I need [Incantation Interruption] at minimum along with [HP Absorption] and [MP Absorption].

There are a few Damascus steel spears but they don't have any empty skill slot on them.

I look at Sherry and shake my head.

“Okay.”

Replies Sherry.

She seems to have understood the underlying meaning.

There are a few staves as well. They seem to have empty skill slots. Among those with empty skill slots, there's an exquisite piece of equipment.

Furthermore, it's a Staff of Offerings with [2x Increase in Intelligence] skill. It's an upgrade to my current equipment.

Staff of Offerings is the weapon which Cassia uses.
Same weapon as Cassia, huh?
That's a must.

"It seems to be a good weapon."

Roxanne passes the estoc back to me.
I purchase the staff and the estoc.
Gold coins fly away like birds with newly grown wings.
It's painful to see.

After we were done at the weapons shop, we head to the armor shop.
There was nothing new at the armor shop.
Did they sell only weapons?

"Did they not sell any armor?"
"So you have heard already. You have good ears."

The armor merchant overhears me muttering to myself.
He sidles up to me while rubbing his hands.
So they sold armors after all.

"Kinda."
"I have indeed received some stock. I haven't put it on display yet. It's in the back of the shop. Do you want to check it out?"
"Can I?"
"Yes. Here, please."

The armor merchant leads me to the back of the shop. (TN: Never go to the back of a shop with a stranger.)
I enter the inner part of the shop from behind the counter.
There were many equipment lined up.

“There’s quite a number of equipment.”

“I purchased these equipment just today.”

“Were the equipment sold by a certain family?”

“Apparently. It’s impossible to get a hold of a bulk of such good equipment otherwise. The family was quite influential but it seems to have met its end. They were gaining influence through force but the reckless use of force proved to be their undoing. The strongest man of the family seems to have died. There’s a rumor that he was killed in a duel.”

Duel?

I think I have heard this story somewhere.

“Killed?”

“Now that they are no longer strong, they are paying for their domineering attitude. They seemed to have raised a lot of funds through debts but they never repaid those debts and kept pushing the date of repayment forcibly. The debts have now grown enormous.”

That’s harsh.

So it was their attitude in general.

I thought their attitude toward Roxanne stemmed from their enmity toward her.

Well, I must thank Baradam family for these equipment, at least. There’s a Damascus steel forehead protector with four empty skill slots and a dragon leather jacket with three empty skill slots.

“This is?”

“It’s alba.”

“This piece of clothing increases magic power and greatly increases magic defense. It’s an equipment for priests, monks and wizards.”

Alba seems to be a body equipment. This one has two empty skill slots. It’s my first time seeing this equipment.

The armor merchant told me the name of the equipment while Sherry explained the rest.

“It’s made of holy silver. Because making it requires expansive use of holy silver, it is considered high-tier equipment and is rarely available in

market. Equipment such as loafers are focused on fashion but this one is focused on performance. Because magic defense is great to have against monsters that use magic attacks, even those who don't have magic-based jobs use this equipment.”

The armor merchant is trying to sell its features.
Increase in magic power is indeed attractive.
There are empty skill slots as well.

Also, there are dragon leather shoes and dragon leather gloves with one empty skill slot.

One empty skill slot is not much but I decide to buy them in the end.
It's a rare opportunity.

Once I have monster cards fused with them, they'll be even better.

Therefore, it's not a waste.

It's an investment.

Even though tens of gold coins have vanished just like that.

Chapter 107 : Raising Funds

(TN: Not to be confused with 'Fundraising')

*

Currently, I have one green magic crystal and one yellow magic crystal at hand.

The green magic crystal is the one I have been working on. Because I have been accumulating magic in this crystal for a long time now, it will likely turn yellow by the auction.

The yellow magic crystal is the result of merging the magic crystals we obtained from Heinz's gang.

I have no idea as to how much magic has been accumulated in this crystal because it belonged to the thieves.

It may contain magic equivalent to 200,000 monsters or it may contain magic equivalent to 900,000 monsters.

If I can accumulate magic in this crystal equivalent to 1,000,000 monsters, it will turn into white magic crystal which can be sold for a million Nars. Whether I can do that before the auction or not, there's no knowing. It's a gamble.

A guaranteed 100,000 Nars or a probable 1,000,000 Nars?

For now, I enter the labyrinth with yellow magic crystal and start accumulating magic.

Should I change it?

Green magic crystal can easily be turned yellow before the auction and sold for 100,000 Nars but I'm not sure if I can turn yellow magic crystal into white magic crystal and earn a million Nars before the auction.

Not necessarily. I can merge the magic crystals into one.

If the yellow magic crystal doesn't turn white by the auction, I can merge the crystals into one.

If I had just merged all the crystals into one and worked on yellow magic crystal, it would have turned white by now.

There are still some days left till the auction.
I can definitely earn more money.
If I can't turn the yellow magic crystal into white magic crystal before the auction, I can just sell the green magic crystal turned yellow for 100,000 Nars. If I feel the need for 1,000,000 Nars, I can merge the crystals into one and then aim for white crystal.
There's another option. Selling two yellow crystals for 200,000 Nars, that is.

The more the options, the better.
Which means working on green magic crystal is wise.
After the green magic crystal turns yellow, I should leave it as is.
If the yellow magic crystal doesn't turn white before the auction, I can either sell it for 100,000 Nars or I can work exclusively on it. It's better to work on it exclusively rather than selling it.

There's one more problem and that's skill.
Currently, I have my bonus points invested in experience based skills.
As a result, I had to neglect [Crystallization].
If I intend to earn more money before the auction by selling magic crystals, I have to invest bonus points in [Crystallization].

Auction is held four times a year.
If there's a chance, I have to grab it.
And to do that, I have to make sure that I'm fully prepared.
I want to become an adventurer as quickly as possible but the situation demands otherwise.

The policy has been decided.
I replace [Increase in Gained Experience] with [Crystallization 64x].
I equip alba and challenge Haruba's 15th floor.

If earning money is the objective, there's one more option. And that is to farm whole fish on Bode's 12th floor.
But there's no need to go to that extent.
On 16th floor, the maximum number of monsters in a group will increase to five. To accumulate magic quickly in the magic crystals; the higher the floor, the better.

One monster will give me magic equivalent to 64 monsters.

Kaga Michio | Male | 17 years old

Explorer Lv42 | Hero Lv38 | Wizard Lv41 | Monk Lv41

Equipment | Rod of Offerings | Hard Leather Hat | Alba | Dragon Leather Gloves | Dragon Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Roxanne | Female | 16 years old

Warrior Lv26

Equipment | Estoc | Steel Shield | Damascus Steel Forehead Protector | Dragon Leather Jacket | Hard Leather Gloves | Hard Leather Shoes of Willow | Sacrificial Misanga

Sherry | Female | 16 years old

Master Smith Lv32

Equipment | Steel Spear of Power | Poison Resistant Hard Leather Hat | Chainmail | Water Resistant Leather Mittens | Hard Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Miria | Female | 15 years old

Diver Lv31

Equipment | Rapier | Iron Shield | Strengthened Hard Leather Hat | Chainmail | Hard Leather Gloves | Hard Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Alba is a knee-length outfit.

An outfit that you can see a father in a church wearing.

And it's white. It looks like I'm wearing an apron.

I try to fight with the alba equipped.

I finish Sarracenia in three [Fire Ball]s after having taken out Bitch Butterflies in five [Breeze Storm]s.

Because the number of attacks required has decreased, it has been ascertained that alba increases magic power.

It doesn't make it easy but it does make it easier.

Only an upgrade alone doesn't reduce the duration of battle.

I must be grateful that an equipment which is not even a weapon was able to, albeit little, increase my magic power.

“I look totally like a wizard now.”

“That’s right. I will have to be more careful with guiding to the monsters.”

“Isn’t it useless to use rod now?”

You don’t see many adventurers and explorers wearing an alba. I should better be careful.

I will have to depend on Roxanne more than ever.

“Priests and monks wear it, too.”

Like Sherry said, I can deceive people as a priest or a monk. As long as I don’t encounter Gozer or other members of the order of knights, there will be no problem. I should better not head outside of the labyrinth with the alba equipped.

Alba is light and can be tied around the waist with a strap. It doesn’t hinder movement. Even if I use Durandal with the alba equipped, there will be no sense of incongruity.

“Although a monk using a sword looks odd, a monk fighting as a vanguard is fine, right?”

“Yes. Because the more the firepower in attack, the better.”

Roxanne confirms.

That party size is restricted to six, it is not a good idea to reserve a place for healer.

Even a monk can go berserk with a sword, no?

I try staff, too. As expected, the effect of [2x Increase in Intelligence] skill isn’t much different from my Rod of Offerings.

We shortly reach the boss room of Haruba’s 15th floor. Because the duration of battle has shortened? Or because of Miria’s enthusiasm?

“So, what kind of monster is Bitch Butterfly boss?”

“Madame Butterfly. It’s basically stronger version of Bitch Butterfly. The chance of paralysis is higher, so we need to be cautious.”

Sherry briefs while we enter the boss room.
Because we never broke through 16th floor of Quratar's labyrinth, this is our first time fighting against Bitch Butterfly boss.

“XXXXXXXXXXXX”

Roxanne translates it to Miria.
Teaching her one word at a time is taking long.
Miria has to get familiar with Brahim quickly.

When we enter the boss room, two monsters appear.
A Bitch Butterfly and a Madame Butterfly.
Madame Butterfly has a large eye pattern on its wings.
It looks more like a moth than a butterfly.

There is not much hair on its body.
However, there's long hair growing around the eye pattern. It looks like eyelashes.
The eyelashes are fascinating. Just like a 'madame'.

Also, there's distinct bluish-black eye-line.
Truly a 'madame'.
As far as the eye pattern is concerned, it looks really like a 'madame'.

Because it's a monster, however, it must be pushed down.
I take the accompanying Bitch Butterfly out swiftly and join the attack on the Madame Butterfly.
I attack it cautiously.
I will get paralyzed if I receive Madame Butterfly's attack.

Well, there's no way for Roxanne to make such a blunder.
I carefully connect it with Durandal from behind.

Oops

Madame Butterfly swings its large wing.
Its wing covers the entire area.
I lower my head to dodge it.
Because I was careful, I was able to dodge it.

Miria seems to be fine, too.

There's no need to be worried about Roxanne.

Sherry nudges with her spear from a distance, so she should be fine as well.

Everyone seems to be safe.

We switch back to attack.

Our group of four takes the monster out.

Madame Butterfly drops down.

It turns into smoke and dissipates.

“Magic crystal, desu!”

Miria cries excitedly.

Is there really a magic crystal?

I can't see it but [Appraisal] shows a magic crystal. Miria runs to the magic crystal.

Miria grabs the magic crystal, not the dropped item, and brings it over to me.

It's a black magic crystal.

How did she notice something that appeared out of nowhere?

“As expected of Miria. Well done.”

“Yes, desu.”

I lightly pat Miria's head.

It's unfortunate that I can't play with her cat ears because she has a hat on.

“Which reminds me, we previously found a magic crystal in a boss room. Are magic crystals easily found in boss rooms?”

“In a boss room, the position where a boss appears is fixed. Also, boss monsters possess more magic.”

Sherry explains.

Respawn point is fixed, indeed.

Because respawn point is fixed, the place where the boss collapses is nearby. It helps the magic to build up at the same point.

The magic of boss monsters is more, huh?

I was of the idea that the rate at which the magic accumulates in a magic crystal is same for every monster but it doesn't seem to be the case. Should I undertake another experiment?

“Can we fight against this boss once more?”

After arriving at 16th floor, we retreat back to 15th floor. When I checked my backpack, the green magic crystal had turned yellow. This green magic crystal turned yellow in just one day. As expected, the effect of [Crystallization 64x] is considerable.

Or perhaps it had already accumulated enough magic until now? With [Crystallization 64x], I will have to kill just 157 monsters to accumulate magic equivalent to 10,000 monsters. At this rate, white magic crystal doesn't seem to be a far cry.

“It's yellow already. As expected of Master.”
“Thank you.”

I put the black magic crystal, which Miria found, in my backpack and put the yellow magic crystal in my Item Box. I put the newly formed yellow magic crystal carefully in the innermost part of the Item Box. I have two yellow magic crystals. They may appear same but they are completely different. I don't want to make a goofy mistake of forgetting which one is which.

I reduce [Crystallization] to 32x and defeat the boss again. As to why I didn't keep it at 64x that's because there are two monsters to take out in the boss room. After I take the accompanying Sarracenia out, we finish the Madame Butterfly.

I drop my backpack and check the magic crystal inside. The crystal had turned purple from red.

“Purple magic crystal already? It's absurd as always.”

Sherry is surprised.

“Like Sherry said, the boss seems to possess more magic.”

“I did say that defeating one boss is equivalent to defeating many monsters but to get a purple magic crystal by defeating just one boss...”

“It’s to be expected of Master.”

“Amazing, desu.”

“Well, this much is nothing.”

I grab the straw provided to me by Roxanne.

Although I defeated two monsters with [Crystallization 32x], it accumulated magic equivalent to 100 monsters.

It means a boss possesses over twice the magic of a normal monster.

If we assume that Madame Butterfly possessed twice the magic of Sarracenia, then it should have accumulated magic equivalent to 96 monsters with [Crystallization 32x].

However, if magic of 4 monsters was already accumulated in the black magic crystal, which Miria found, then it’s possible for it to turn purple with magic of 96 monsters.

Further investigation will be bothersome.

I can do it but not now.

As to how much magic Madame Butterfly possesses compared to normal monsters, it can be accurately calculated.

If magic equivalent to 100 monsters can be accumulated, I can keep on killing boss monsters until the magic crystal turns white.

Wait a minute. When you kill 100 monsters, does the crystal turn blue or purple?

There is no such level as 30 monsters or more.

Even if there is, I won’t bother testing it.

In any case, turning the yellow magic crystal into white magic crystal before the auction seems to be possible with [Crystallization 64x].

“Haa...”

“So, which monster appears on Haruba’s 16th floor?”

“Ah, umm... the monster native to Haruba’s 16th floor is Clamshell. It does not use poison attack but its attack may inflict paralysis. It also splashes water as long-range attack. It’s not water magic, however. It’s considered physical attack. It also has digestive property. It’s resistant to

fire magic. Earth magic is its weakness.”

Sherry briefs with dissenting expression.

“Shell powder, was it?”

“Correct.”

The item dropped by Clamshell is shell powder.

I won't have to buy it from now on.

“They are resistant to fire magic like Bitch Butterflies. This is 16th floor, however, so we have to avoid Sarracenias. Roxanne, search for places with few monsters.”

“Understood.”

I ask of Roxanne to guide us.

Fire magic is the weakness of Sarracenias while Bitch Butterflies and Clamshells are resistant to fire magic.

If there are more Sarracenias, we will have to finish them first but that will make things difficult.

Because Bitch Butterflies and Clamshells are resistant to fire magic, the overall battle will be longer.

Onward from 16th floor, the maximum number of monsters in a group is five.

Ideally, there should be no more than two Sarracenias in a group.

Roxanne can take on one of them. Because there will be one more, there's a chance of receiving attack.

But the duration of battle will be shorter.

However, Sarracenia is native to 14th floor of Haruba's labyrinth.

Because there's a difference of two floors, there shouldn't be too many Sarracenias here.

Even if there are Sarracenias in a group, they should be in minority.

We shouldn't face much trouble.

“Umm... Pig Hogs are resistant to earth magic.”

Sherry points out.

They are?

We encounter a group of three Clamshells and two Pig Hogs.

It's my job to consider various combinations and appropriate magic. Similarly, Roxanne's job is to guide us to suitable locations. Roxanne's job is difficult.

Chapter 108 : Clamshell.

*

The Clamshell is a bivalve demon. TN: bivalve is the term for something with two shells... I think.

It's about one meter in size.

It's small for a demon, but quite large for a bivalve.

If Roxanne stood on one naked, it would be a true Birth of Venus. TN: Birth of Venus is a painting by Sandro Botticelli from the 1480's.

Even though it's large, it doesn't wave.

It's quite plain.

I was expecting a large tongue.

It's not on it's side, but standing upright.

Despite being a bivalve.

It's a mystery how it stands upright without any feet.

How it moves is also a mystery.

It moves towards us while standing.

It's speed is about average.

Since earth magic is it's weakness, I use [Sand ball].

The Clamshell approaches, and Roxanne takes the front.

There is only one demon, and Sherry is to the side using her spear to pierce it.

Miria is to the other side.

I have a position between Miria and Roxanne.

The Clamshell makes a charge, and is deflected by Roxanne's shield.

Next, it's mouth opens up and it spits out water.

Roxanne tilts her upper body and avoids it.

There's also an attack like that?

It would hit me.

It's good I'm to the side a bit.

The shell moves again, and the mouth opens wide.

It jumps towards Roxanne like that.

It tries to sandwich her in it's two shells.

Roxanne pierces it with her Estoc, and then dodges it calmly.

After avoiding the shellfish, she pierces it again.

She has plenty of room.

I was scared and stayed back a little.

I was at a diagonal position in the back.

“It bites?”

Being sandwiched by a one meter bivalve.

It might be considerably powerful.

“It seems so.”

Roxanne answers like it's nothing to worry about.

“Even though the library book said there was a good chance of being paralyzed if you are bitten, I think being paralyzed might be a certainty after witnessing it.”

“If the movement is large, it won't be able to hit easily.”

There it is.

Sherry & I share a glance.

Roxanne is ahead of everyone at being able to do these things in the heat of battle.

I use a fifth [Sand ball].

Isn't it defeated with five?

I used a sixth shot... but the Clamshell was defeated before it.

“Oh, it's defeated.”

“I did it.”

The bivalve falls to the floor of the cave.

Sherry's spear seems to have been the last nail in it's coffin.

It became smoke and disappeared.

“You did it, Sherry.”

“It's amazing, desu.”

“Thank you. I think it was largely because Roxanne pierced the inside of it when it’s mouth was open, and because it’s an aquatic demon Miria’s power might have been strong as well.”

Sherry is pleased.

It’s the first time Sherry defeated a demon I tried to use magic on. Roxanne’s weapon has changed to the estoc and our offensive ability has increased.

“Is there extra damage from attacking the inside?”

I confirmed it with Sherry.

“The hard shell didn’t show much damage after our attacks, so I think so.”

“Ah, I see.”

It seems like a good thought.

It’s not a demon I understand well.

There are various differences when Sherry defeats a demon.

If I don’t deliver the final blow, [64x crystallization] does not work.

[Increase acquired experience] is also a skill I have.

If I don’t deliver the final blow, there might be no bonus to experience.

Sometimes there’s just no helping it however.

Even if I don’t finish it, we might get the experience because my magic did most of the work.

Sherry attacked about 4-5 times.

With three people it would be about 12 times.

Sometimes it’s going to happen.

It would be crazy to demand that they don’t attack.

We take on a group next.

There are three Clamshell’s, and one Bitch Butterfly.

“It’s coming.”

Roxanne calls out.

Roxanne moves her body slightly.

Water goes past in the position her upper body was in.

It doesn't seem to be magic, but cannot be blocked by the shield. Getting wet is also unpleasant, so evading it is better than trying to deal with it.

It's good that I'm not right behind Roxanne.
I've been seeing battles for a while.
I can foresee the danger of being behind Roxanne.
Even I am learning every day.

The Clamshells and Bitch Butterfly approach.
The Clamshells come forward after shooting water without delay.
It is neither magic or a skill that they use to shoot water.
There is no delay because they don't need to use a magic formation?

There is a three person vanguard against the four of them.
I defeated the Clamshell's with six [Sand storm]'s.
This isn't one of the times where I can defeat them all in the same number of shots.

I need to use another three [Breeze ball]'s to defeat the Bitch Butterfly.
Magic is the decisive blow this time.
Three people pick up the dropped items.
Miria passes me Shell Powder at the end.

"Here, desu"
"A clam is a bivalve, is this where the clam ingredient comes from?"
"Yes, it's an item from the Clamshell. It's a rare item, but doesn't seem to be as rare as whole fish."

Sherry tells me.
It's like that afterall?
Miria seems to want to say something.

"The clam is dinner tonight, and tomorrow's dinner will be deep fried whole fish."
"Tomorrow's dinner, desu."

I'm not sure if she's happy or upset.

She might be pleased.

She might be upset that it's not til tomorrow.

The fish needs time to marinate in the fish sauce.

“Next, please lead us to a place with three kinds of demons.”

“I understand. I know the smell of a group with 3 Clamshells and 1 Bitch Butterfly, I'll do my best to find a group like that with a third demon type as well.”

“Please do.”

As expected, Roxanne is reliable.

There can be a maximum group of 5 demons on the 16th floor.

There are three kinds of demons, and the maximum group size is 5. With all three demons, there would only be one of the other demon type.

That's how things would turn out with this combination.

Some estimations can't be made in a two to one combination.

Like if there were two sarracenia and one other kind of demon.

“Um, I think I've found a group with 3 Clamshells, a Bitch Butterfly, and a Pig Hog. How is that?”

“Clamshell and Pig Hog together? We should try that out.”

“I understand, this way.”

A group with three kinds of demons on Haruba's 16th floor. Three Clammshells, a Bitch Butterfly, and Pig Hog.

I use six earth spells on the Clamshells, after that the Bitch Butterfly falls from another three wind spells, and then the Pig Hog falls last from an additional three [Water ball]'s.

It's a considerably long fight.

It's quite serious.

“Three [Water ball]'s... We should avoid this combination as much as possible.”

“Is that so?”

No matter if I use it or not, the amount of spells needed doesn't seem to change while using Monk.

I won't stop using Cook, because I want clams.

Next is a group of 3 different kinds of demons made up by 3 Clamshells, a Bitch Butterfly, and a Sarracenia.

I use six earth spells on the Clamshells, after that the Bitch Butterfly falls from another three wind spells, and finally the Sarracenia falls from one fire spell.

“Is this combination alright?”

“Yes, there’s no problem with this one.”

For Roxanne, nothing seems like a problem.

However, prolonged combat is a serious problem.

Roxanne isn’t the only one fighting, so there are other things to consider.

I used [Meteor Crash].

If they have fire resistance, it might not defeat them. My expectations are off though, because the Clamshells are defeated with a single [Meteor Crash].

Why is that?

Does [Meteor Crash] have the earth attribute?

Earth magic is a weakness of the Ma Bream on the 12th floor.

I haven’t tested if [Meteor Crash] can defeat them in a single blow.

I’ll have to test out [Meteor Crash] a bit more.

Miria seems worried, so we finish up on Haruba’s 16th floor for now and head to Bode’s 12th floor.

We hunted until we got two whole fish.

I got them as our celebration of our passing of the 15th floor.

“Is two whole fish enough?”

“Yes, desu.”

“It’s good.”

Miria seems to think two is enough.

It might be too much.

There’s the possibility of getting tired of it quickly.

Though it might be too delicious for that.

We returned to Haruba’s 16th floor.

I’m using [Fifth job] so I can use both Cook and Monk at the same time.

Since there are up to five enemies, we should have Monk.
Even Roxanne might get hit if there are five.
It would be troublesome to switch to Monk after someone is hit, so it should be ready in case of an emergency.

I've had to sacrifice a lot of my experience gain because I still want to keep [64x crystallization].
There's no other choice.
I have to keep doing it until I have a white crystal ready for the auction.
If I get clams in large quantities, I can make a profit selling them as well.

The soup I made for dinner was clam chowder, which I hadn't had in a long time.
It is still delicious.
Roxanne, Sherry and Miria also think it is delicious to eat.

"Yes, desu."

Miria doesn't seem to have remembered the brahim word for clam yet.
Even this morning, all she said was "here" when passing the clams she had picked up.

"It's a clam. Clam."

"Clam, desu."

Even if she says it, she'll probably forget it straight away.
Should I relate it to fish?
It's a good combination to have the taste of fish and clam together.
TN: Scene change, gooo!

"I made macaroni for breakfast this morning, and I'd like some soup later."

"Okay."

"I'll make the soup."

We make our plans after leaving the labyrinth.
Sherry will make the soup.

White meat, clams, pig ribs, lots of vegetables, and macaroni
The macaroni has seafood sauce as a topping.

I bought bread as well, so there might be too many ingredients.

“It’s delicious. The clam is very delicious.”

“Yes. Master’s cooking is the best.”

“Very tasty, desu.”

Clam soup goes well with the white meat.
Miria won’t have any complaints about this.

“White meat is delicious, desu.”

Ok, I was wrong.
If there is fish involved, Miria won’t notice anything else.

“What is this?”

I try asking near the end of the day.

“Shell powder, desu.”

Since shell powder was used in the tempura, she seems to have memorized it.

“And this?”

“Clam, desu.”

Oh!
You remembered it?

“I ate it with white meat this morning.”

“That’s right.”

It seems it wasn’t useless.
Is this the best way for Miria to learn brahim?

We leave the labyrinth and head back home.
There’s a message from Luke waiting when we get back.

It’s the thing I was afraid of.
It’s quicker than I thought.
Some time has passed, and the call from the Duke has come.

“Master, he seems to have made a successful bid for a butterfly monster card.”

Roxanne reads the memo.
It seems I'm alright, even after several days.
The message is just here because of my successful bid?
Butterfly monster card.

“What skill does butterfly monster card give?”
“It adds a wind attribute to attacks if put on a weapon, and resistance to wind if put on protective equipment.”
“Something like the mermaid monster card?”
“Yes.”

I confirmed it with Sherry.
Mermaid monster card is the one we used to make the waterproof leather mittens.
Mermaid monster card adds the water attribute, and this adds the wind attribute.

Cassia had resistance to the four elements on her equipment.
I should make something like that.
I have 4 empty skill slots on my damascus steel forehead protector.
I could add resistance to all four elements on one piece of equipment.

“I'll use it on my damascus steel forehead protector. Does it fuse with a kobold monster card?”
“It does. It will make the effect stronger, and make the equipment useful for a long time if it's damascus steel.”

Sherry is positive.
She hasn't failed in fusing anything so far.
She's finally got confidence.
It's a good trend.

“Are there only four attributes that can be added with monster cards.”
“Yes, as far as I know.”

The same as the wizards four attributes?

“Okay, we'll add all four to my damascus steel forehead protector.”
“What?”

Sherry stops.

I thought we were going smoothly.

“There wasn’t much progress in the research for multiple skills? It should be fine, we won’t overlap any effects.”

“Um...”

“Don’t worry about it. If it doesn’t work, it doesn’t work.”

“Ah...”

It’s hard to test if it has an effect.

I was able to test plating by applying it to a demon and watching the effect.

It would be difficult to make a demon equip my damascus steel forehead protector.

I’d have to capture it, immobilize it, and equip it.

The only thing I can do is test it on myself.

Become a human experiment.

Use [Fire wall] and put my hand in it.

I don’t want to do it.

“That’s right, it would be hard to test the effects. I can understand your anxiety.”

“That’s not it. Testing the effects would be difficult, but what if it fails from adding two or more skills?”

“I trust that you’ll be fine Sherry.”

“Ohhh...”

Sherry looks at me with cold eyes, like I’m some kind of mad scientist. Things are different for a party that doesn’t mind human experimentation for scientific progress.

A slave or thief could be bought and shot with magic to count how many until they died.

But it would be inhuman to go that far.

If we could conjure a demon, we might be able to test it.

There isn’t any other way to test it.

There probably isn’t any helping it.

I'll have to accept it as is.

Chapter 109 : Apron

*

I put on the apron, which I bought from a clothing store in Quratar, and fry the whole fish.

It's called 'apron' but not a shred of 'cute' can be found. It is focused on practicality.

As long as it's I who puts it on, it's alright.

After I carry the dish to the table, we start eating.

As always, the whole fish tatsuta-age is amazing.

"It's boring to eat the same thing every time we celebrate breaking through a floor."

"..."

When Roxanne translates it, Miria looks at me with sorrowful eyes.

No tears?

I opted to start this topic when there was enough whole fish tatsuta-age in the dish.

"I-I didn't mean it like that. It is certainly delicious but it won't remain delicious if we eat it all the time."

"...Bread crumbs, desu."

After pondering over it for a while, Miria speaks.

Fish fry?

If I remember correctly, I made it back when Miria joined us.

"That, huh? Then how about whole fish fry on next celebration?"

"It will be good, I think."

"Yes, I look forward to it."

I obtain Roxanne's and Sherry's agreement.

"Eat, desu!"

Miria's eyes brighten up.

Now livened up, she bites into the tatsuta-age.

She looks really happy.

Even though we have agreed upon what to make on next celebration, Miria still droops her shoulders after eating last piece. That's not enough to make up for this, I guess.

Next morning. After having breakfast, I head to the merchants guild alone.

I ask Roxanne to do the laundry and cleaning.

I don't want to go to Luke now but I have to.

Can't I just say that I'm far away and can't come back? No, this excuse is not valid for this world.

Because adventurers can use [Field Walk].

It's arguable whether it's a convenient ability or not.

And then there's the question of where is this place I currently am.

I jump to the waiting room of the merchants guild and call Luke. I was praying for him to suddenly fall ill but he appears right after. It didn't work.

"Here is the Butterfly Monster Card."

I was led to the meeting room and shown the monster card.

"Indeed. I want to fuse it simultaneously with Kobold Monster Card. Is Kobold Monster Card still not available?"

"There's nothing to buy at 4,000 Nars. If you want to buy it right now, the price can go as high as 5,000 Nars."

"Okay then, Kobold Monster Card for 5,000 Nars."

Someone appears and places a purchase order for Kobold Monster Card. Previous price was 5,200 Nars, so it seems to have gone down. Because there's no immediate need for [Wind Resistance], 5,000 Nars is too much.

"Understood. Lately, there are many people looking for Kobold Monster Card. Do you know why? Because of [MP Absorption]. We have received many orders for Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card. The price of Kobold Monster Card will most likely go up, so it may get difficult."

Which reminds me, Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card was quite expensive when I came here for the first time and placed the order. There has been no news ever since.

[MP Absorption] skill is acquired by simultaneously fusing Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card and Kobold Monster Card.

Did that person, who placed the order for Kobold Monster Card, intends to attach [MP Absorption] skill to their weapon?

“Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant, huh?”

“It was exhibited the other day and sold for quite high.”

“But the price of Kobold Monster Card fell. Is Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card a waste?”

“In the auction, many Kobold Monster Cards are exhibited but their use is restricted. Other monster cards can be used readily, so master smiths buy them immediately.”

I see.

Many Kobold Monster Cards appear but not all of them are bought. They should exhibit same number of Kobold Monster Cards as Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card.

Whether Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant Monster Cards are more or less, people will try to get their hands on them.

Therefore, if you exhibit limited cards, it will stimulate demand.

“I get it. It’s not wise to go for Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant at the moment. For now, I’ll just wait-and-see.”

I have yet to find a Damascus steel sword with empty skill slots. I’ll first test the effect with a steel sword.

“Very well. Also, there’s a summon for you from the order of Harz knights.”

Kuh...

There’s a summon after all.

“...Now that you mention it, have you heard any rumors about a certain family?”

I nod slightly and try to change the topic.
I believe that I didn't have an unpleasant expression about my face.
Because I had made up my mind beforehand.
So it's alright, hopefully.

"A certain family?"

It's not confirmed to be Baradam family yet.
So there's no need to mention the family's name.

"They seem to be in financial crisis, so a lot of equipment with skills are flowing into the market."

"Is there any particular equipment you're looking for?"

"I was just informing you. I have already purchased some equipment."

"Thank you and be careful."

After Luke sees me off, I leave the merchants guild.

Next morning. We return from the labyrinth as it's about time.
I always visit the Harz duchy at this time.
There's no choice but to go.

"I'll head to the Bode castle now. I ask of you three to prepare breakfast."

"Understood."

"Please be careful."

"Okay, desu."

Luke must have already told the Duke that he has conveyed the message.

Therefore, I can't afford to not go.

Also, even if I delay it, I won't be able to get away with it.

Actually, if I delay it, the Duke's memory may fade.
So then, should I go tomorrow?
Or the day after tomorrow?

"Are you not going?"

Sherry asks the indecisive me.

“I’m just preparing myself.”

“Is that so?”

Somehow, her voice felt cold.

No, her eyes. Her eyes felt cold.

Sherry understands my predicament.

Damn it!

Because I have to go, I said that I’m going.

Now that I have said I’m going, I can’t but go.

I [Warp] through the wall of the living room.

“Are the Duke and Gozer-dono there?”

“They’re inside, I think.”

I jump to the lobby of the Bode castle.

When I inquire a member of the order of knights, I receive a hopeless answer.

Well, I didn’t expect them to not be here in the first place.

The knight makes way for me to enter.

They don’t seem to be wary enough of a stranger.

It’s because of the Duke, I guess.

Since the Duke has permitted me to enter.

Well, it’s better than the tradition of not allowing an adventurer to enter the throne room.

I halt in front of the working room.

I take a deep breath in.

I make up my mind and knock.

“Enter.”

“Michio here.”

Comes Gozer’s voice upon which I enter.

The Duke is sitting on the chair while Gozer is standing in front of the desk, fiddling with some papers.

“Oh, Michio-dono? I heard from Gozer about the affair from the other day. Great victory it was.”

“Not at all.”

Right off the bat, eh?

“To win without even using a sword – incredible.”

“Wha-”

“As expected of the person I rate highly. Even gozer couldn’t see your movement.”

“Yes. Although I know you did something, I have no idea what you did.”

Because Gozer isn’t Lv99, I can’t show it to him.

But I can’t say that.

“Oh well, why don’t you show it to Gozer?”

“Wha-”

Such pressure.

“I have heard about your opponent, too. Sabo Baradam is quite an expert. Although people’s opinion of him as a person isn’t exactly good, he’s a force to be reckoned with when it comes to ability.”

“Wha-”

“But you took him out just like that. You should be proud.”

“Wha-”

I can’t but withstand this.

“But I want to hear as to exactly how you defeated him. Well, it shouldn’t be a secret, right?”

“I’m sorry.”

Because I was being patient, the Duke tries to take advantage. It’s time to put my foot down.

My assassination art is a secret, hereditary art.

No one but the chosen one can know about it.

“Like I thought. Oh well, it can’t be helped then. Only a fool would show his cards.”

“It’s a matter of course for top explorers and adventurers.”

Gozer joins in for some reason.

I'm glad.

In this world, revealing your techniques is considered foolish, it seems. If others copy it, you'll become weaker.

What your techniques are, only you should know. Even when you impart it, you impart it to your children or a selected few disciples. It's common sense in this world.

"I also heard that the woman who fought before Michio-dono was tremendously strong. Did you teach her your techniques?"
"Of course. That she was able to fight like that, it's only natural for her to have learned Michio-dono's arts."

So Roxanne is strong even in Gozer's eyes, huh?

"Not at all."
"Now that you mention it, her fighting style was to keep the opponent close."
"I see. So it was like that."

'You learn, without realizing it, from what is around you.'
However, it's different.

"She is special."
"Hou~"

The Duke becomes interested.
No!
Not Roxanne!

Absolutely not!
It's impossible!
Even if you offer Cassia in exchange... it's impossible!
Not Sherry, too. Miria, neither.

The Duke grins.
I glare at him.
I don't want this topic to go on any further.

"Err... Michio-dono, the Palmasque mirrors, which we purchased from

you, we have gifted to two influential figures of the territory. Their opinion of the mirrors was quite favorable.”

Reading the mood between the Duke and me, Gozer tries to change the topic.

As expected of Gozer.

The man of the world. (TN: Someone who is highly experienced/wise.)
He must be struggling under the Duke.

“That’s great.”

“And we have already decided to gift one more mirror to someone.”

“Someone?”

“That’s right.”

Gozer nods and the Duke confirms.

They don’t tell me who that someone is, though.

Well, it’s not like I particularly want to know.

“We would like to keep using Palmasque mirrors, decorated with frames made in Talem, as gifts. Therefore, we would like to replenish three mirrors which we have already dispensed. Can you please do it?”

So the reason I was called for was Palmasque mirrors?

“Thank you for your patronage.”

I accept the order.

I need money for the auction.

There’s no reason to decline.

“There’s no rush, though. You can bring one mirror at a time like you did previously. Also, we won’t mind two or three mirrors in excess.”

They didn’t pursue the matter of the duel any further and placed the order. That’s already good enough for me.

‘The fear of danger is more than the danger itself.’

This is such a world.

I return home in pleasant mood.

I didn’t go to the amber merchant, nor Palmasque. I went straight to the Imperial Capital.

It was the day agreed with the clothing store in the Imperial Capital.
I went there a little before the evening.
I received the aprons and returned.

“It looks great. Thank you very much.”

“It’s very well made.”

“Lovely, desu.”

When I arrive at home, the three of them receive their aprons.
They frolickly check their aprons out.
They seem to like the aprons.

The apron tailored by the clothing store of the Imperial Capital is generously frilled. It looks lovely.
The hem of the silk apron is delicately laced.
Also, although there’s no lace in the apron made of ordinary fabric, it looks pretty nonetheless.

“Wear this while cooking. The food will be even tastier.”

“But it will be bad if it gets stained. It’s silk after all.”

“Silk apron is not for use in the kitchen.”

I answer the rational Sherry’s concern.

“Then where do I use it?”

“Silk apron is for use in the bedroom. It’s a tradition there where I came from. You wear an apron when you cook. Therefore, in the bedroom, you will wear nothing but the apron and serve me the ‘food’. I want all three of you to do that.”

It’s not a wrong interpretation of the apron. I think so, at least.
It’s a tradition.

“Oh, is that so? Then I’ll try it tonight.”

“Nothing but the apron?”

“Do it, desu.”

Roxanne and Miria seem to be up for it.

After having dinner, I wash their bodies with warm water and head to the bedroom.

It feels like the wedding night.

While my heart was aflutter, the door opens.

Even though I washed their bodies just now.

Well, that is that, this is this.

There's always another stomach for dessert.

“Ooh!”

Dessert, indeed.

When they enter the room, I let out such a sound subconsciously.

“How does it look?”

Asks what appears to be Roxanne's figure. I can see her body yet I can't. 'Don't cover your head and leave your bottom exposed.' Her big breasts are concealed yet they're not. 'Genius displays even in childhood.' The volume of her mounds pushes the apron from underneath, and expands the gap between the apron and her skin even further. Although the top of her chest is covered with the white apron, the swelling which is pushing from the sides is emphasizing the size of her chest.

“Wonderful.”

One word is enough.

“Thank you very much.”

“Sherry looks great, too.”

The force of the apron covering Sherry's petite body is tremendous. She looks just like a child wife.

“I'm a little embarrassed.”

This shy expression of hers is the best!

“It looks great on Miria, too.”

“Yes, desu.”

I would like to see the place where this bluish tail is coming from. The apron's compatibility with cat ears is preeminent. The contrast between the frilled shoulder straps and the laced hem is

irresistible.

Wow!

Amazing!

I want to eat them!

“Umm... Master, please eat to your liking.”

Now that Roxanne has said so, how can I not eat?

This world is a paradise.

Eden.

The promised land flowing with milk and honey.

Chapter 110 : Cat's Eye

*

I wake up pleasantly fatigued.
I'm languid on this fine morning.
There's residual passion from last night.

I must make a correction.
It was main course, not dessert.
It has been a long time since I last activated Sex Maniac.
Because it was main course, I couldn't help it.

I doze off for a while to soak the sweet aftertaste in.
Eventually, the pink haze fades away.
At the same time, Roxanne kisses me.

N-Not good.
Even though it took so long for the lingering scent to go away.
Even though it's an every morning thing, it's not good this time.
Last night, I drifted off to sleep without cancelling Sex Maniac. I want to
push her down right now.

Roxanne's soft lips and smoothly moving tongue both are sweet.
It's stimulating my sensuality.
I desperately endure the desire for sex which is overcoming me.

But I hold out.
Followed by Roxanne's, I endure Sherry's and Miria's lips.
I'm a man of steel.

"Good morning, desu."
"Good morning, Miria."

I let go of Miria and get up.
Because I said that I would eat them, is that why it feels awkward?
Oh well, it's not like we don't do this every morning.

"Yes, desu."

“Not good.”

Miria brings my clothes over as usual.
I decide to cut off the temptation and get dressed up.
There are things to be done today.
I throw my feelings aside. It’s a new day.

After having dressed up, we move to the labyrinth.
We seem to have gotten accustomed to Haruba’s 16th floor.
The number of attacks received has decreased. Things have settled down.

Although I said ‘decreased’, it doesn’t mean ‘zero’.
Because the duration of battles is longer, it’s still difficult.
The three in the front take on a group of monsters.
Roxanne exchanges an attack with a monster. Sherry thrusts her spear.
Miria stabs with her rapier.

I cast spells from the back.
Three Clamshells drop down with sixth [Sand Storm].
When you take out first batch of monsters, it becomes easier afterward.
Everyone surrounds the remaining Bitch Butterfly and finishes it off.

Next group comprises three Bitch Butterflies and two Clamshells.
It is unusual to have more Bitch Butterflies.
I use wind spells to take out Bitch Butterflies whose weakness is wind magic.

“Here it comes.”

Roxanne’s voice resounds.
The Clamshell spits water.
Roxanne dodges it with ease.

To be honest, ranged attacks are not that big of a threat.
Roxanne dodges all of the attacks from the front.
Unfortunately, the long-ranged attack of Clamshell isn’t considered a magic skill, so the casting delay is non-existent.

Monsters approach from the front.
Three Bitch Butterflies and a Clamshell.

There's another Clamshell in the second row.

Orange magic formation appears under a Bitch Butterfly in the front.

“Sherry.”

“Yes.”

Sherry pokes her spear into the Bitch Butterfly immediately after I call out to her.

She cancels its skill with [Incantation Interruption] skill of her weapon.

“Here it comes.”

Roxanne tilts her neck immediately after announcing that.

While tilting her neck, she takes on the Bitch Butterfly's attack with her shield.

Water gushes in from there where Roxanne's head was supposed to be. When the water breaks off, Roxanne straightens her neck and moves to the right, and exchanges an attack with the Clamshell.

The attack seemed to be from the Clamshell in the second row.

While confronting two monsters in the front, she fended off the attack from the Clamshell in the second row.

Roxanne is terrifying as ever.

I take out the Bitch Butterflies in six [Breeze Storm]s.

It may have become easier but that doesn't mean we can drop our guard.

That said, it's rare for us to receive attacks in case of two monsters.

Without much trouble, I finish the two bivalves off with a [Sand Storm].

“I'll be using sword now.”

Because my MP has decreased, I pull out Durandal and instruct Roxanne.

Since I don't cast spells when I use Durandal, any combination of monsters is fine.

I haven't changed the style of my swordfight.

To take out a monster, I can simply use spells until the monster closes in and then finish it off with sword.

Inflicting some damage using spells is better than doing nothing.

Also, I'm prioritizing crystallization over experience at the moment. Therefore, I should complement Durandal with magic.

As to why I'm not doing so is because I have already issued instructions and it will get confusing if I modify the instructions.

When I use Durandal, the efficiency of acquiring experience drops. Considering the efficiency of acquiring experience, it's better to use Durandal only for the purpose of recovering MP.

[Rush] is quite useful nevertheless.

It's logical to recover MP using Durandal and use that MP to cast spells. When I use Durandal, the duration of battles lengthens. Consequently, the experience acquired in a given time decreases.

So far, I haven't been using magic along with sword but now, I have to obtain a white magic crystal before the auction.

Still, it's better not to change instructions every time.

If she asks for the reason, it'll be hard for me to explain.

Next is the matter concerning jobs.

Four jobs is the limit while using Durandal and [Crystallization 64x].

If possible, I want to use three jobs.

While using sword, I can cancel Wizard job and activate Warrior.

In short, I can't use magic while using Durandal.

Durandal is for the sole purpose of recovering MP.

"Understood. This way."

Roxanne guides us to next location.

We normally walk while traversing through the labyrinth but break into a run when we spot monsters.

If we wait for too long, we might receive a ranged attack.

Since I'm not using magic at the moment, the group of monsters comprises two Clamshells, a Bitch Butterfly and a Sarracenia.

Roxanne slants to her side and rushes diagonally, and slashes at a Clamshell.

Taking the enemies on from the centre is riskier.

Whittle them down from the wings.

I invoke [Rush].

I receive a body slam from a Clamshell and return the favor with a strike.
Roxanne and Miria take on a monster each, too.
Sherry is nudging with her spear from the back.

The Clamshell opens its shell.

Its mouth opens wide. There's no sign of water.
It bites me.
I barely evade it.

When it opens its shell, you have to first be careful of water and then evade its bite.
Even though its movement is excessive while biting, it's not easy to deal with.
It feels like a feint.

I invoke [Rush] again and take the Clamshell out.
Next is the Sarracenia.
This one is troublesome because it uses digestive fluid.
I use [Rush] in rapid succession and finish it off nonetheless.

Using [Rush], I take the Bitch Butterfly out.
I attack the last Clamshell, which Roxanne was confronting, from behind.
Roxanne is terrifying.

The Clamshell opens its shell.
Roxanne maneuvers the upper half of her body and dodges the water.
Brilliantly dodged.
All the party members surround the Clamshell and finish it off.

"I have fought a lot of Clamshells yet I'm unable to understand the pattern of its attack."

"I know, right?"

"When it opens its shell, I don't know if it's going to bite or spit water."

"Umm... when it spits water, it opens its shell like this; when it bites, it opens its shell like this."

Roxanne explains.
Therefore, it's impossible to understand.

I look at Sherry. She's puzzled just as well.

"Can you distinguish between different attacks of a Clamshell, Miria?"
"She can try next time to distinguish, she says."

In other words, she doesn't know.

"Try best, desu."

"I see. That's great."

Rather than giving up on her, I raise her spirit.
After returning from the labyrinth and having breakfast, I take out the amber necklace.

It has been a long time since I last took it out.

"Amber, desu."

"Do you know about it?"

"Miria rarely found it where she used to live but when she fished in the north sea, she often caught it instead of fish. Everyone except Miria used to get excited upon catching it instead of fish."

But Miria gets more excited upon catching fish.

"It's beautiful, isn't it?"

"Beautiful, desu."

"If there's one that suits Miria, I'll buy it."

"Buy, desu."

She seems to be pleased somewhat.
But not as pleased as she tends to be upon the mention of fish.
Choosing which fish to buy used to be cumbersome.

"Are we going to Palmasque?"

Sherry immediately realizes what I intend to do.

"That's right. I have received an order for three mirrors."

"Okay."

"Well then, Roxanne."

"Yes. Thank you very much."

I put the necklace around Roxanne's neck.

The amber necklace is shining on Roxanne's chest.
So much so that I want to grab it.

Just like you grab a white peach.
And rip your finger into its soft pulp.
Just like I did last night from the side of the apron.

N-No.

This sexual desire is due to Sex Maniac.
I wonder if it was a bad decision to keep it when I went to sleep.
Usually, I'm not this desirous of sex. Surely. Probably.

I put Sherry's necklace around her neck and head out.
First up is the amber merchant in Bode.
I jump to Bode's adventurers guild.

"Welcome."

When I enter the building next to the adventurers guild, there was an
old man with cat ears.
The same old merchant.

"Sorry for bothering you."

"Not at all, not at all. I have been waiting for you."

"Can I get some amber ores?"

"Of course, it's available now."

He seems to remember me.

And amber seems to be available, too.

"If there's an amber necklace that suits her, I'll be buying it."

I put my hand on Miria's shoulder.

It's not wise, however, to expend unnecessarily now that the auction is
close.

But I can't afford for only Miria to not have a necklace.

If I can sell amber ores and mirrors, the profit can offset the cost of the
necklace.

So it's fine.

And there's a possibility that the magic crystal will turn white.

I am hunting with [Crystallization 64x]. I'll manage it somehow.

“Certainly. Here, have a seat, please.”

“Thank you.”

The old man with cat ears urges the four of us to sit.

The old merchant brings the amber.

“I can provide you with twelve amber ores of the same quality as last time.”

“I'll buy all twelve.”

“Thank you very much. And here is the necklace.”

The old man brings amber necklaces.

Woah! So many.

Because I have already done business with him in the past, is that why he thinks I'm a valued customer?

He puts some in front of Roxanne and Sherry as well.

No, don't.

Roxanne and Sherry already have theirs.

Roxanne doesn't seem to be enchanted.

Sherry is just appraising the product. Is that it?

“Wow, desu.”

“There are too many necklaces, I think.”

“Beautiful, desu.”

It's good for Miria to be excited but...

The three of them are staring fixedly.

They are checking the necklaces out.

Will it be alright?

“Miria likes this one.”

Ah, Roxanne has come back to her senses.

She puts the amber necklace on Miria's chest.

It's fine as long as she doesn't put it on her chest.

It was a good idea to have had them put their necklaces on beforehand.

“What's best about this necklace?”

“She has a keen eye. This is one of our prided necklaces. It boasts the amber jewel of the highest grade.”

Asks Sherry. The old merchant answers.

“It’s clear and radiant.”

“It’s rare to obtain such an amber. It’s the best we have received in past couple of years.”

“There’s a tint of red as well.”

“People get their hands on such an amber once in a decade. Furthermore, there are multiple jewels of such an impeccable quality in this necklace.”

“Then it must be quite expensive.”

“Not at all. This one costs around 70,000 Nars but we can offer you a discounted price of 69,800 Nars.”

It’s expensive. Very.

“The one which is a bit mild will suit Miria more, I think.”

Sherry puts the necklace back.

She’s well aware of the objective.

She wasn’t having a friendly chat with the old merchant.

She seems to be in her senses, too.

“That’s right. Then how about this necklace?”

The old man takes out another necklace.

Rustling sound could be heard from behind the counter.

“There’s more?”

If it were there, he should have shown it when I asked for a necklace. I’m sure he lined up those necklaces on the table in front of Roxanne and Sherry to force a sale.

“Red, pink, yellow, white; this necklace comprises amber jewels of various colors. When it’s put on, it resembles a cat’s eye. Therefore, I would like you to buy this one for this catkin lady.”

Was that a pun?

The old man passes the necklace to Miria.

“Beautiful, desu.”

Well, the necklace is indeed an interesting one, with amber jewels of different colors.

Not bad.

Miria puts it around her neck.

“Doesn’t it look good?”

“I does look good.”

Roxanne and Sherry approve.

“Because it’ll be in care of someone from catkin tribe, I’ll give this to you for a discounted price of 45,000 Nars.”

Is this price reasonable?

“So, what do you say?”

“Err...”

When I ask Miria, hoping for her to decline, she was hesitating. Her expression tells me that she likes it.

I confirm Sherry’s expression as well.

The price of 45,000 Nars is same as the price of her necklace.

Is Sherry fine with it?

“Then I would like to buy it.”

“Thank you very much. Including the amber ores and considering the fact that there’s a lady from catkin tribe with you, the total amount to pay shall be 38,200 Nars.”

Isn’t that the same excuse from a while ago?

The reason he gave for 30% discount is same as the reason he gave for the original discount.

So, was 45,000 Nars really a reasonable price?

Or did he foresee 30% discount and quoted higher price from the onset?

It’s not inferior to Roxanne’s and Sherry’s necklaces in the slightest. Such a thing, huh?

“It’s good, isn’t it, Miria?”

“Yes, desu.”

“This small case for the amber ore, made in Talem, is a gift for our dear customer.”

I pay the amount and receive the goods.

Because I was the one who gave him the idea of using cases made in Talem, he gifts one to me.

“Miria, keep the necklace on.”

“Okay, desu. Thank you, desu.”

Miria bows.

She seems to be pleased with it, so it's money well spent.

Chapter 111 : Dissapointing Mermaid.

*

From Bode's adventurer's guild, we warped to Zabir's labyrinth. My emotions became depressed, but we hunted demons and recovered my MP.

The labyrinth of Zabir is just a relay point, we left it and went to Palmasque.

We appeared in the adventurers guild in Palmasque.

"It looks like this your first time in Palmasque, Miria."

Miria stands curiously looking out at Palmasque for the first time. Her cat ears are standing upright.

It's so cute.

"It is white, desu."

"The buildings are white and beautiful."

I put my hand on Miria's head.

While patting her head, I lightly touched her cat ears.

"Sea, desu."

"That's right, was Palmasque supposed to be an island?"

Can you hear the waves, do you smell the water?
Maybe it's something only a Diver can notice.
Or... can you smell the fish?

"xxxxxxxxxx"

"Yes, desu."

Roxanne tells Miria off.

We should tell her we came to buy mirror's, not fish.

"I'll leave it to you."

"I understand."

"We'll take care of it."

"Yes, desu."

I send off the three of them.

I return to Zabir's labyrinth to recover my MP.

The amount of MP consumed for [Warp] seems to have increased because the amount of party members increased.

I didn't notice any difference using [Warp] to nearby places, but the difference was made obvious when we came to Palmasque.

How will we get home?

Going straight from Palmasque to the house would probably be bad.

A relay point might be needed.

I need to avoid the mirrors getting broken in a fight, so should I use the recovery medicine?

I returned to Quratar to fill in time.

Quratar's 13th floor can be used to replenish my recovery medicine, but I don't go there, because it's scary.

Instead I fought the Spice Spider boss on the 3rd floor.

There's not much danger there if I use Durandal.

The pepper item that is dropped by the Spice Spider is indispensable in my rich eating habits.

There might be a better hunting ground for it, but I don't need it that much.

After filling in time for a while, I used [Warp] to Palmasque again.

When I arrive in the adventurers guild of Palmasque, the three of them were waiting.

"Sorry, Did you wait long?"

"Don't worry about it, we just got here."

They have a mirror each.

It seems they got them with no problems.

We went to Zabir's labyrinth.

"I'll use medicine to recover before we return to the house. We have mirrors, so we shouldn't look for any demons."

"I understand."

I stopped Roxanne, who was about to look for prey.

After leaving Zabir, we went to our home in Quratar.

My feelings aren't too depressed.

It was the right choice to make a stop at the relay point.

I can tolerate this much.

“The raw gemstones sold at the usual price. The mirrors were the usual price as well.”

After putting the mirrors in the store room, Sherry gives me the details as she passes me the money.

I thought that the uncut amber wouldn't sell, so I had given them money for the mirrors.

“Good. I wasn't worried, because Sherry is a good negotiator.”

“There are also two orders for amber necklaces.”

“For two?”

I'm happy to get orders.

The amber necklaces have a considerable profit margin.

And I can sell two of them.

I might not even need the white crystal anymore.

“When the boss's wife goes out for meetings, she puts on her amber necklace, and it seems to have attracted attention.”

A walking billboard.

I sold her a good quality necklace.

If you sell a good item cheaply, you will attract more orders.

“As planned.”

Sherry's eyes seem to be looking at me a little coldly, but things have gone as planned.

The plan has shown a good outcome.

“One order is from a lady who serves as a representative on the council committee. She isn't worried about the cost, and wants one of the highest quality. She seems to be quite an influential person and will pay a lot for something of high quality. The boss's wife says she'll pay 35 gold coins.”

To even find out the amount of money for the sale...
Sherry is truly excellent.

“I understand.”

“The second one is an order from the boss's wife's friend. She'd like a similar necklace to the boss's wife, with a price of around 25 gold coins. I think we should prepare a necklace slightly inferior to the one the boss's wife has.”

“We shouldn't prepare one the same price?”

“I told the boss's wife hers was at a special price when I sold it. It would be bad for her if we brought one the same quality. Just slightly inferior should be good and shouldn't cause any problems.”

I see.

That sort of thing.

As expected of Sherry.

“It might be difficult to find.”

We need to satisfy the pride of the boss's wife who gave us this business, as well as satisfying the customer.

It will be tough.

“It will be alright. All the amber necklaces are high quality unique items. The colour and sizes are all slightly different. Two that are the same don't exist. We can spin the description of the item however we want.”

“Ah, you think so?”

Dark Sherry.

She's very reliable.

Going to buy the amber necklaces after we sell a mirror will be good. They might not have anything else to sell me yet, but it's possible some goods have arrived.

It's worthwhile.

30% discount is only effective when I buy multiple items, so I'll buy both at the same time.

I can't expect him to have uncut amber every time I arrive.

We hunted until evening came, and then left the labyrinth.
I ask what everyone wants for dinner as we shop.

“For dinner, I’d like to make pot-au-feu with Miria.”
“Pot-au-feu? That sounds delicious.”
“We won’t need soup then, I’ll make a stir-fry.”
“Okay. I’ll also make a dish.”

The pot-au-feu that Roxanne makes is meat and vegetables slowly cooked, and is considerably delicious.

If there is pot-au-feu, I’ll be happy.

It gives me a chance to make a japanese-style soup.

It probably won’t go well the first time.
Even if I fail it will be alright if we have pot-au-feu.
If it goes well, we can include it with the pot-au-feu.

After returning to the house, I make the japanese-style soup.
I boil some water and stew clams in it with a pinch of salt.
It’s a seafood soup seasoned with salt.

I’m supposed to make it with seaweed.
I don’t know what to use instead.
I’m just making it from salt and clams.
I stew it carefully over a low heat.

“Well. This should be alright.”

It’s only salty, but it’s refreshing and a good result.
It’s not bad.
I’m using the dropped ingredients, so there wasn’t much preparation required.

We don’t have a wooden bowl, so I put it in a cup.
I place it on the dinning table.

“It’s very delicious. As expected of Master.”
“I haven’t tasted this before.”
“Tasty clam, desu.”

Even though the soup is only salty, the opinion of it is alright?

“Hey Miria, if we cook fish with this as well, do you think it will be delicious?”

As well as clam, it should be good to stew other seafood with it. It's like cooking in sea water.

Miria's cat ears react with a twitch.

They turned towards me to make certain she heard my comment.

“Yes, desu. Delicious, desu.”

Miria answered without needing Roxanne's interpreting.

Trying this with a whole fish might be nice.

I'll make that next time.

The next day I sell a mirror.

In the morning I go to the duke, and then reach the 16th floor boss room after that.

There's a room with only a door to the front and back.

It's the standby room.

“The Clamshell boss is the Oyster Shell. It has a rough shell and it's offensive power is greater than the Clamshell.”

Sherry gives a description.

Reliable.

I prepare Durandal as I listen to Sherry.

We head into the boss room.

Smoke gathers and two demons appear.

Clamshell and Oyster Shell.

The Oyster Shell is another bivalve demon.

It's one size larger than the Clamshell.

It's shell is quite rugged.

It would be painful to be hit by that.

Roxanne rushed up to the Oyster Shell right at the start.

Sherry and Miria also surrounded the Oyster Shell.

The Clamshell is my opponent.

I move past the Clamshell to take it on from the other side.

The Clamshell might shoot water.
I can't let it face in the direction towards the others.
I attacked it with Durandal, and it focused it's attention on me.

Since we are fighting a boss, I'm using [Fourth job] with Explorer, Hero, Monk, and Warrior.

Actually, I'd like to try without Wizard and [Plating] from Alchemist. I want to fight using Knights defense.

Can I get some breathing room like that?

Will it be alright even on upper floors if we get in a difficult fight?

No. Am I putting the cart before the horse?

Entering the labyrinth, getting experience and becoming stronger, the purpose is to earn money.

I want to get more bonus points so I can add them to [Increased Experience] and [Increased Crystallization].

I don't need to fight against anyone too tough.

I use [Rush] on the Clamshell.

The shell moves.

The Clamshell opens it's mouth and prepares to sandwich me.

I withdraw, and manage to avoid it this time.

According to Roxanne, the way the shell opens when it's going to shoot water, and when it's going to sandwich is different.

I can't tell the difference at all.

I finish it by using [Rush] in rapid succession.

I joined the seige on the Oyster Shell.

I attack it from the side because Roxanne is handling the front.

Miria is to one side, and Sherry is slightly back to the other side, each attacking.

The shell of the Oyster Shell moves.

It tries to sandwich Roxanne.

Roxanne dodges with a half step.

She blocks it's charge with her shield as well.

It feels peaceful when Roxanne is the opponent.

I attack from the back, and the shellfish stops it's movement.

I use [Rush] and drive in Durandal.

The Oyster Shell's body shakes.

It falls to the side.

Smoke spouts from the demon.

It seems that I gave the decisive blow this time.

When we surround a boss with everyone, it's not certain that I'll be the one to give the final blow.

When we surrounded the Clamshell before it was Sherry who gave the final blow.

It's the same thing.

The fact it has a large amount of HP doesn't really matter.

The ratio of HP that I do compared to the other three is what's important.

If I simplify it, if those three combined do half the damage of Durandal, then the probability of me delivering the final blow is $2/3$. If the other three can do the same damage as Durandal, then the probability of me giving the final blow becomes half.

Later on, it might not be worth using [Increased experience] and [Increased crystallization] against bosses.

If I think about it, is it a good thing?

The smoke disappears and an item is left behind.

The dropped item from the Oyster Shell is volley TN: ボレー

Is it bird food?

I thought it would be an oyster because it's from an oyster.

"I thought an oyster would be dropped."

"The oyster is a rarer item, there's no helping it if it doesn't drop."

Sherry teaches me.

So there is an oyster?

The volley is the usual drop, and oyster is the rare drop.

I should have used Cook.

I didn't use it, so there's no helping it.

If it's similar to the clam and I need 4, I'd have to do this fight dozens of

times.

That might be hard.

We obtained the volley, and continued to the 17th floor.

“Sherry, what demon is on Haruba’s 17th floor?”

“The Kettle Mermaid. It occasionally uses water magic, and has a resistance to water magic. It’s weakness is earth magic and there’s a chance of being poisoned when it attacks you.”

“It’s element is the same as the Clamshell? That’s good. Roxanne, please find one.”

“Um, I think there is a group with both Clamshell and Kettle Mermaid nearby. I don’t think there are many, is that alright?”

Roxanne asks.

As the floors go up, the maximum number of demons increases as well. Does the chance to find a single demon on a floor also become more difficult?

“I understand. Roxanne freely use your judgement in the future.”

“Thank you”

Roxanne guides us.

She guides us to a group of one Kettle Mermaid, and one Clamshell. I use [Sand Storm].

The Kettle Mermaid is a disappointing mermaid.

Even though it’s called a mermaid. The face and chest of a beautiful woman... is not there.

It has a long mouth and a distorted clown face.

So, it’s a kettle?

It becomes a fish straight away below the neck.

It’s more of a human faced fish than a mermaid.

With the face of a clown.

It doesn’t walk, but instead swims towards us.

It’s sickening.

Also, it has poison.

I use earth magic again.

The Kettle Mermaid and Clamshell are defeated with seven earth magics.

The combat time went smoothly.

Author's note:

The Light Novel for this will be released December 21 2012.

『Slave Harem in the Labyrinth of the Other World』 heroic home edition.

Some events have been changed to make the book.

Anyone interested in it can find it in a book store.

Also, there is no plan to delete this as I make the book.

Chapter 112 : 17th Floor

*

On Haruba's 17th floor, the next group we're up against is that of a Bitch Butterfly and Kettle Mermaids.

I take the Kettle Mermaids out, whose weakness is earth magic, in seven earth spells. After which, I finish the Bitch Butterfly off in three [Breeze Ball]s.

"Although the duration of battle was long, there doesn't seem to be any problem with this combination."

"Yes. Kettle Mermaids and Clamshells both are weak against same attribute of magic, therefore, it will be easier to shortlist the combinations of monsters. If you can take out Kettle Mermaids and Clamshells, there will only be one or two monsters remaining at the end."

Honestly, I think Roxanne becomes whatever you want her to be. I cast [Meteor Crash].

The Kettle Mermaids collapse in just one [Meteor Crash].

Like I conjectured, [Meteor Crash] seems to be effective against monsters whose weakness is earth magic.

[Meteor Crash] is a magic attack where you shoot a scorching meteorite.

If it possesses earth attribute, too, it won't be absurd.

It works against monsters whose weakness is fire magic, and equally against monsters whose weakness is earth magic.

If it weren't special, it wouldn't be a bonus spell.

"This much trial is enough."

We seem to be able to fight on Haruba's 17th floor without any trouble. It's time to kick the exploration off.

The next group we encounter comprises three Kettle Mermaids and two Clamshells.

Although there are many monsters, all of them are weak against earth

magic, so there's no problem.

I cast [Sandstorm].

In the middle of the attack, a Kettle Mermaid suddenly comes to a halt.

“Here it comes.”

Unfortunately, a blue magic formation appears under the feet of the mermaid.

Nope. Tail, not feet.

“Water magic, huh?”

The Kettle Mermaid spits water from its hyottoko-esque mouth. (TN: Hyottoko <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hyottoko>)

It's more of an archerfish than a mermaid.

Roxanne maneuvers the upper half of her body and dodges the water.

At the same time, a Clamshell in the front opens its shell.

“Here it comes.”

The Clamshell spits water, too.

When there are many monsters, such things happen. That's why it's difficult.

Although Roxanne was in a difficult position, having already dodged the water magic attack of the mermaid, she twists her body splendidly to evade the bivalve's water.

As expected of Roxanne.

If I were there, I would have surely received it.

Actually, forget the second attack, I'm not even sure if I would have dodged the first one.

While enduring the [Sandstorm], two Kettle Mermaids and a Clamshell line up in the front.

Roxanne, Sherry and Miria take on a monster each.

The Clamshell in the second row seems to be waiting for an opportunity to spit water.

The Kettle Mermaid, that used the water magic attack earlier, joins the Clamshell in the second row.

Is this so because it needs time to construct the magic formation? The Kettle Mermaid requires magic formation to use its water magic attack.

Therefore, it requires time.

It's likely that the water magic attack of the Kettle Mermaid is stronger than the Clamshell's.

It's not like I'm not gonna volunteer myself to test it.

There was no opportunity for the monsters in the second row to spit water. All the monsters drop down with next [Sandstorm].

We continue to hunt on Haruba's 17th floor and leave the labyrinth when it was time for breakfast.

I decided against moving to Bode's 12th floor.

Because tartar sauce is required for fish fry.

Even if I catch a whole fish, I won't be able to do anything with it.

Miria understands that, too.

Which reminds me, It's about time I visit Quratar's 16th floor.

"Let's go to Bode's 12th floor after breakfast."

"Okay, desu."

"I wanted to clear Quratar's 16th floor but I have decided to do it tomorrow, early morning."

I talk it over with Roxanne and company.

"I have no issue with early morning."

"The monster native to Quratar's 17th floor is Ma Bream."

"Go, desu."

Says Miria without needing Roxanne to translate.

She must have caught the word 'Ma Bream' from Sherry's conversation.

Well, if we can catch whole fish on Quratar's 17th floor, there's no need to go to Bode's 12th floor.

"Alright then, after breakfast, let's grab the map and head to Quratar's labyrinth. I'll ask of you three to prepare the meal while I'm out to sell the mirrors."

If I take the three of them with me, I can deliver the mirrors in one go but I won't do it.

It'll be bad for the Duke seems to have taken interest in Roxanne.

And there's a possibility that Roxanne will blurt out things that should otherwise be kept secret.

Therefore, I'll go by myself.

I jump to Bode with a mirror.

I deliver it to the working room.

"Michio-dono, did you come here alone?"

The Duke asks after I deliver the mirror.

I knew it. Not bringing Roxanne here with me was the right decision.

"Yes, I did come here alone."

"N-No, I just wanted to hear about that affair from her. There's no motive I should have guilty conscience for."

The Duke makes an excuse in a hurry.

This is bad.

I might have subconsciously glared at him with bloodlust.

"..."

"I'm already married to Cassia."

Obviously.

He has such an outstandingly beautiful wife.

If he ever tries to ogle Roxanne, I'll take the matter to cassia.

"Oh well, anyways."

"The price of this one is 10,000 Nars."

Gozer takes out a gold coin.

Gozer must really be having it tough under the Duke.

I receive the coin and return home.

After having breakfast, I make mayonnaise with the help of Miria.

Because we have already had the meal, I decide to use whole eggs this time.

“Miria, can you blend it?”

“Do, desu.”

Because blending it is difficult, I leave it to Miria.

Miria blends it hard.

Blending it really is difficult.

After a while, Miria’s hands slow down.

Still, her hands are not that slow. Because it’s for the fish, perhaps?

“If it’s not mixed well, it will not be as tasty as the whole fish tatsuta-age.”

“Do, desu.”

When her hands slow further down, I remind her.

Making fish fry won’t be as hard a work as this.

“The more you blend it, the tastier will the whole fish fry be.”

“Blend, desu.”

If it’s not blended, it’s not mayonnaise.

“Alright, it’s done.”

“...Okay, desu.”

All this blending seems to have drained all her energy.

I’m sure that she will demand fish fry soon after all this hard work.

Having made mayonnaise, we move to Quratar’s 16th floor.

“Let’s warm up a bit because it has been quite some time since we were last here.”

“Understood.”

I instruct Roxanne.

I has been a while since we last visited Quratar’s 16th floor.

Warm up is a must.

We hunt monsters under Roxanne’s guidance.

Ah, I remember.

You mostly need wind spells on Quratar’s 16th floor.

It was an easy floor. I remember.

Regrettably, it isn't as easy this time as it was last time.
Oh well, it can't be helped.
Our equipment have upgraded and I have alba this time. But that's about it.
Our levels are essentially the same as last time.

My emphasis is on crystallization for the time being, due to which, the speed of leveling up has dropped.
This is probably the reason.

“Is this much enough?”

It's time to finish warming up and start exploring.
Only, this time around, we will explore per the map of Quratar's labyrinth.

“This way. But there's a group of Bitch Butterflies and Fly Traps on the way.”

“Whatever, let's proceed.”

“Understood.”

I can't be picky about the combination of monsters now that I'm following the map.

I have to take care of whichever monster I encounter en route.

There's no bypass marked on the map.

However, it's unusual for Fly Traps to be on 16th floor.

Actually no, it's not unusual.

Fly trap is native to Quratar's 13th floor, so it's possible to encounter it on 16th floor.

Roxanne was avoiding it when we were here last time.

Quratar's 16th floor doesn't house only those monsters that are weak against wind magic.

In other words, it was all thanks to Roxanne.

“As expected of Roxanne. I knew Roxanne would be a big help.”

“Eh? Ah... yes, thank you very much.”

Even though the person doesn't understand, the feeling of gratitude has

been conveyed.

Now that there are monsters that are weak against different attributes of magic, I can use Durandal instead but my MP isn't particularly low. I'll be using it in the boss battle anyway.

We advance through the cave.

We come across a group of one Bitch Butterfly and one Fly Trap. I cast [Breezestorm].

Ideally, I should first take the Fly Trap out because of the poison but the Bitch Butterfly is resistant to fire magic.

So I can't use fire magic which is the weakness of Fly Trap.

Using wind magic, which is the weakness of Bitch Butterfly, I first try to take the butterfly out.

The monsters close in. Roxanne and Miria take them on.

Sherry positions herself behind the two, holding her spear with [Incantation Interruption] skill in her hands and keeping her eyes on the monsters.

I position myself to Sherry's side, casting spells. This is our formation.

The Fly Trap splits its head open to trap Roxanne in it, but she shifts to her left and dodges it.

Miria slashes at the Bitch Butterfly.

I take the Bitch Butterfly out with next [Breezestorm].

We surround the remaining monster, Fly Trap.

I cast fire spells from there where it can't attack me directly.

Sherry pokes her spear from a distance.

Roxanne dodges the attack of the Fly Trap with ease.

I shoot a [Fireball] at the Fly Trap.

Sherry and Miria stab their spear and rapier into it, respectively.

The Fly Trap collapses under the attacks of all the party members.

In the end, it was engulfed in the flames of my [Fireball].

The Fly Trap falls down to the side.

It finally turns into smoke and dissipates.

Ah!

When the smoke cleared away, what remained was a card.
A monster card.

When I used [Appraisal], it said Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant
Monster Card.

Is it, really?

Fly Trap surely has a split head.

Just like a pair of scissors.

“Yes, desu.”

Miria picks it up and passes it to me.

Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant, huh?

Although I instructed Luke the broker to not actively search for a Scissor-
esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card, I get one myself.

“[MP Absorption], right?”

“That’s right.”

“What if I don’t use it simultaneously with a Kobold Monster Card?”

“If you fuse it with a weapon, the weapon will acquire [MP Shave] skill.

When you attack with the weapon, you recover a bit of MP.”

Sherry explains.

Bit by bit, huh?

I wonder how big or small is that bit.

It can’t be big, surely.

“Is it good?”

“I’ve heard good things about it. Wizards carry it as a substitute for
amulet. It would look funny, though, if a wizard were to use their staff to
hit.”

So it works as a substitute for an amulet. It’s still better than consuming
pills.

I shouldn’t have high hopes, though.

So, should I try it?

“If I fuse it with shoes, can’t I recover a bit of MP with every step I take
in the labyrinth.”

“It’s impossible.”

“What if I stab the sole of my shoe into a half dead monster?”

Why is it not possible?

If I can't recover a bit of MP with every step while I walk, I should be able to recover MP if I pierce the monster with the sole of my shoe.

Or should I try attaching knives to the soles of my shoes? Just like skates. Even if it recovers MP just once, it's not a bad deal.

“...”

Sherry looks at me with cold eyes.

A pioneer is never understood at first.

She will understand with the passage of time.

“Since wizards and monks use it, it's probably better to fuse it with a wand. I can hit the monster with the tip of the wand or when I walk, I can hold it upside-down, so that its tip touches the ground. Ah! Whenever I use area of attack magic, I can keep hitting the monsters with the tip of the wand until the attack cools down.

“...”

Oh time, catch me if you can.

“L-Let's move on?”

“Yes.”

Roxanne urges me to proceed.

Mostly, we proceed per map but when we spot monsters in the vicinity, we take them out.

We can afford to wander around because on Quratar's 16th floor, the combinations of monsters that require only wind spells are many.

On the way, I pull out Durandal and recover MP.

We fight Madame Butterfly.

Because we have fought Madame Butterfly many times already, there's no problem.

We finish the seductive-eyed boss off.

I add fifth job and activate Cook before moving on to 17th floor.

It's funny that I had four jobs during the boss battle but five after the

battle.

Oh well, Cook is necessary, so it can't be helped.

Because I'm not familiar with 17th floor, Monk is needed, too.

On 17th floor, I cast [Meteor Crash] all of a sudden.

Ma Breams Lv17 drop down but Bitch Butterfly Lv17 doesn't.

So I can one-hit Ma Breams, huh?

[Meteor Crash] is undoubtedly effective against the monsters that are weak against earth magic.

Out of the three Ma Breams, one dropped a whole fish.

I finish the remaining Bitch Butterfly with a [Breezeball].

“Whole fish, desu.”

“To get one at the first attempt is definitely a good omen.”

I receive the whole fish from Miria.

Thereafter, we continued to hunt until we had two whole fish.

On Quratar's 17th floor, you mostly need earth and wind magic.

Due to Ma Breams, whose weakness is earth magic, 17th floor is more difficult compared to 16th, where only wind magic was required, but it still doesn't seem to be that difficult.

We seem to be able to fight on Quratar's 17th floor without much trouble.

Credits

Transation source can be found here: [Link](#)

~ epub version by bakanonymous ~