

# とんでも スキルで 異世界 放浪メシ

2 羽根つき餃子  
× 幻の竜

江口連

author • Ren Eguchi

イラスト • 雅

illustration • Masa

# **Tondemo Skill de Isekai Hourou Meshi**

– Gourmet Adventure of Legendary Tamer –

**- Volume 2 -**

**-Author-  
Eguchi Ren  
Yosei Ichigo**

**-Artist-  
Masa**

**[ Albedo404 ]**

「じゃあ私も異世界人に加護を与えて  
お供え物を受け取ることにするわ」

Kishar

Agni

「そんで美味しいものが食えるんなら  
俺もそうするぜ」

「……私も」

Rusalka

「ダメダメじゃ、ダメダメじゃ、  
ダメなのじゃ」

Ninril



# Chapter 51

## Silent Pressure

The carriage came to a halt at sunset. "This is far enough for today." Lambert-san ordered as they prepared to camp for the night.

"Hoi, don't forget your promise earlier." growled Fer.

Wait, did I promise him something?

"You said you'd make me a luxury dinner. Remember?"

Oh, so I did. I'd completely forgotten in all the excitement but Fer had remembered, of course.

"I get it I get it, so what do you want to eat?"

"Sui wants to eat fried food-" Sui interjected.

"Ooh, what you made last time sounds good. Fried food for me too." Fer added, going along with Sui.

I wasn't that hungry but something hot sounded good.

Since I promised Fer a luxury meal I decided to make two kinds of flavouring, one with a soy-sauce base and one with a salt base. For the meat, I chose some Black Serpent and what was left of the Cockatrice and Rock Bird and deep-fried them with soy-sauce and salt.

"Aruji, can I eat it-"

"Just wait a moment." I put the fried food on a dish and pushed it over to Fer and Sui.

"Oh, this tastes different. It's also delicious-" Sui said. Oh, Sui noticed. It's nice to be praised.

Fer was silent as usual, gobbling up the fried food. I expect it's delicious for you too the way you're devouring it. Well I can always fry up some more...

Lambert-san, a boy he had hired and members of 'Phoenix' were gathered around us. I was being silently stared at. Some of them were drooling. The pressure...

Oh, right. I got it.

"Here, if you'd like to help yourself..." I pushed a plate of fried food in their direction and jumped back as they dived towards it.

"Excuse us-"

"Really, I couldn't wait to try some..."

"Ummm!"

"Oh so tasty, it's wonderful..."

"I've never had anything so good..."

Fried food is popular after all. After that I was frying and frying continuously. Just cooking for Fer and Sui is hard work, cooking for this lot was much harder. Worse still, at the end there was none left for me.

I couldn't help myself, I bought a sweet bun from the Net Super when no-one was looking to console myself and I ate that instead.

Damn it.

On the other hand I didn't have to stand a night watch. Fer always set a Barrier so I never needed to carry out a watch although it's usually something you should do in camp.

"As a thank you saving us and for cooking such delicious items please have a good night's sleep instead." The members of 'Phoenix' told me so I happily went to bed instead.

"Here you lot, some travel rations for you. It's crappy muck but you can eat it or starve." Rashu-san who was taking the first watch finally gave the bandits a little food before

we turned in. "Try and escape though and I'll cut you down without mercy," he warned. Adventurers aren't totally heartless but the bandits had reaped what they had sown.

As it had been a while since the battle that day I thought that some of the bandits might be considering the idea of causing trouble later so I added some more threats.

"We'll be asleep but his hearing is very good, just so you know." I said, looking at Fer as I spoke.

"Even asleep I'm always ready for trouble." said Fer. "Rashu-san won't have to lift a finger, I'll shred anyone who tries to escape into little pieces." At his words the frightened bandits trembled. "That's right, if you don't want to end up like your boss just stay quiet tonight." Fer's threat seemed to be quite effective.

I couldn't use a futon for a bed so I went to sleep wrapped up in my cloak for the first time in a while. Sui prefers a futon too so she grumbled a bit. I explained it was only until we got to the city, telling her to be patient.

Ah, Sui-tan is so cute. I promised myself I'd make Sui something good to eat tomorrow.

# Chapter 52

## Arrival at Carerina

In the distance the road seemed to come to an end.

"That's the city of Carerina," the members of 'Phoenix' explained to me. The walls were imposing and it seemed like a fine city. It was good to have arrived anyway. I'm supposed to get a reward for capturing the bandits and I can't wait until we deliver them to the Knights in the city.

I didn't get any fried food yesterday evening, it was all eaten by the merchants and the members of 'Phoenix'. Everybody stared at me when I was cooking, and the members of 'Phoenix' have an incredible appetite, probably because they're all gigantic brutes. Cooking for them used up all my meat reserves, there's none left, not a scrap.

And, of course, there's a certain character called Fer who will complain if there's no meat to eat...

Once we get to Carerina I'll hurry to the Adventurer's Guild and get the monsters in my Item Box dismantled quickly.

Oh, Sui asked me for some sweet things, saying "I want to eat some cake-" so I secretly bought some cake from the Net Super just for her. Of course Fer found out and said "If Sui's getting some I want some too" so I had to buy some more cake for Fer. You can't deceive his sense of smell.



"Welcome to Carerina," said Lambert-san as he drove his carriage in through the gate.

The city was quite big as I had guessed from the outside. Lambert-san boasted it was the fifth-largest city in the Kingdom of Leonhart. Lambert-san's family had been merchants in Carerina for generations and he was proud of his home city where he had been born and raised.

It took me two hours to enter the city but I was assisted by Lambert-san who was well-known to the guards as an important merchant in Carerina. He explained to the soldiers at the gate that Fer was a contracted beast which helped a lot.

"Shall we go to the Knights guardroom?" asked Lambert-san. The testimony of Lambert-san and the members of 'Phoenix' about the bandit gang's attack would be needed when we handed our captives over so it was decided we'd go to the Knights guardroom near the gate first.

We handed over the bandit gang to the Knights and spent an hour or so telling them what had happened. A man in his early 40s wearing full plate armour, introduced to us as the head of the Knights, spoke to us afterwards.

"I've heard your stories and it's clear what happened. The bandit gang was called 'Black Dog' and they've been causing a lot of trouble recently around here. Their dead leader was named Zahar and he was a wanted man with a bounty of 30 gold coins on his head even before he became the gang's chief. Along with the reward for the rest of the gang, that makes 45 gold coins." He passed a hempen bag full of gold coins over to me.

This is a world where a man's life, even a bandit's, can be exchanged for money. The bandits were suffering the consequences of their own actions but it still felt a bit dirty to profit from their capture.

After this Lambert-san went off back to his shop. The members of 'Phoenix' headed off to the Adventurers Guild to report the conclusion of their commission and I decided to go with them. I needed to obtain some meat as soon as possible.

"Well then Lambert-san, I'll visit your shop later."

"Yes, I'll be waiting for you." he said politely.

Lambert-san's store sells leather goods such as bags, wallets, belts and knife sheaths, and I was interested in maybe buying something there. You see, the bag I carried Sui around in was getting shabbier and dirtier and falling apart at the seams. It was free to begin with, of course but it was second-hand goods so I was thinking of buying a strong new leather bag for her. I could have a look anyways but Sui would have to give her approval, of course.

## Chapter 53

# Having to re-register at the Adventurers Guild

So we went with the members of 'Phoenix' to the Adventurers Guild in the city of Carerina. The reception counters weren't busy since it was getting late in the day. I approached the counter next to where the members of 'Phoenix' were standing. The few people in front of me were dealt with quickly and it was my turn.

"Excuse me, I've got a purchase request." I offered my Adventurers Guild card.

"Yes, we're buying." the receptionist said as she took my Guild card. As she examined it her face tightened.

"This card, it has been deregistered. Mukouda-sama, you were rank G, weren't you, and you didn't complete a request within one month?"

...Ah, that's right, if you don't complete a request within a month you get deregistered from the Adventurers Guild. Well I was kind of busy so I forgot about that.

"To tell you the truth various things happened, you see..."

"Rank G disqualification is the shortest period so it does happen sometimes." As she explained, the idea is that G rank adventurers should level up to F rank as soon as possible by accepting suitable low-level requests and then they have three months to get more lucrative requests and start earning money properly.

Is that so? I hadn't been told that. I'd forgotten the G rank period was the shortest.

"Can't I just pay the registration fee again?" I have to be registered with the Adventurers Guild to get the best-quality monster disassembly service otherwise it would be done badly.

"Yes, paying five silver coins for the registration fee is fine. Since Mukouda-sama was the lowest G rank you can use your guild card as it is."

"Oh, and will there be a problem re-registering the beasts I already have contracts

with?" I asked the receptionist when she looked at Fer behind me. Although she looked surprised she said "There is no problem."

Okay then, I'll reregister. I handed over five silver coins to complete the deal.

"I've got another contracted beast to register too."

"A new contracted beast?"

"Yes, here it is." I took Sui from my bag and showed her to the receptionist.

"It's a S- Slime?" the receptionist looked confused. Hey, don't laugh at Sui. Unlike other slimes our Sui is insanely strong.

"It's a very special individual, very strong." I boasted but the receptionist looked disbelieving. Ha. She didn't know Sui.

Once Sui's registration as my contract beast was completed, I asked about purchases.

"If you're buying, I have some orcs and other monsters to sell, please."

"In that case please go to the purchasing window." So selling monsters gets done at that big counter like before?

"Makouda-san, are you finished?" It's Rashu-san, the leader of 'Phoenix'.

"Yes. I had forgotten the request deregistration period and I had to apply to re-register." I explained.

"That's a big problem, isn't it?" he said.

"To tell you the truth, I don't want to be a real adventurer, or rather I'm not that keen on it."

"Is that so?"

"Well, as you well know my contracted beast is a big eater. Fer can catch monsters so that's not the problem, it's the disassembly of the monsters afterwards..."

"I understand. The Adventurers Guild is the best place to request dismantling. Of

course you can get it done at a non-Guild dismantling store or even a butcher but you won't get as good a service from those sorts of places. Those sorts of dismantling stores will rip you off and they don't handle the more difficult jobs well. A butcher can do a good job with the meat but they can damage the other valuable items like the skin and such. For us the other parts are usually worth a lot more than the meat. You're best off getting it done by an experienced pro at the Adventurers Guild."

Ha, so that's how it is? There are less-skilled dismantling stores and even butchers in this world, it seems. Re-registering in the Adventurers Guild was the right move after all.

"So you're going to sell some monsters, Makouda-san?"

"Yes, we're running very low on meat."

"Oh no, was it because of what you cooked for us?" Well, that's one part of it but I won't say anything.

"No no, we've just used it up over the last few weeks."

"What sort of monsters do you have? Can we see what your contracted beast has caught?" Rashu-san said as he looked over at Fer. I supposed it would be fine to let the members of 'Phoenix' see.

"Yeah, it's OK." We moved over to the purchasing window close by.

# Chapter 54

## Super High Quality Red Serpent

"I've got a purchase request, please." I announced.

A completely bald ojisan who looked like an adventurer came out. It was just like the Adventurers Guild in Fariel.

"OK, lemme see what you got." He squinted at my companions. "Oh, you're with Rashu's party?" The ojisan and Rashu-san nodded to each other in greeting. The bald-headed guy seemed to know the members of 'Phoenix' and Rashu-san.

"Well, there's a lot of monsters..." When I said that we were led back into the warehouse area.

"Won't be a problem here. Get them out." he said brusquely.

First of all I pulled out five Orc Generals.

"H- hey, an Orc General... and there's five of them?" I started to pull out the Orc King but I stopped when he looked surprised. I'll hold on to the Orc King for a bit longer.

"These too, please." I took out three Rock Birds. I definitely need to get some Rock Bird meat, it's got a delicious chicken flavour.

"R- Rock Birds too...?" the bald-headed guy and the members of 'Phoenix' were shocked. I'm sorry for surprising them this way but I kept on going since there wasn't nearly enough meat. Fer and Sui eat a lot after all.

"I've got Giant Dodo and Giant Deer as well." Everyone was stunned but I kept going.

"Murder Grizzly, Black Serpent and... Red Serpent. That's all." I kept back the Orc King as I don't need it for eating yet. The Metal Lizard probably isn't edible the way it looks and what it's called. The Chimera and Orthros are sealed away permanently since they'd cause me serious problems if I brought them out.

"...R- Red Serpent?" The bald ojisan broke his stunned silence.

"Yeah, Red Serpent." Was it a problem?

"Where did you catch it?" he asked, his eyes sharp. I felt intimidated by his stare.

"Well, it wasn't me that caught it..." I looked down at Fer lying down behind me as I spoke.

"Oh, right. A Fenrir could do it..." The ojisan recognised that Fer is a Fenrir right away.

"For sure, ossan. A Fenrir could catch a Red Serpent or any other monsters of that rank easy." Rashu-san's words made me worry. After all there's the Chimera and the Orthros... I'm truly sorry.

"What Rashu said. I shouldn't be surprised." the ojisan said. The Chimera and the Orthros are permanently sealed. I'll never take them out. Please forgive me.

"I'd never see so many monsters like this, usually..."

"It's the first time seeing Red Serpent for me."

"It's the first time I've seen Black Serpent myself."

"Yeah it's pretty amazing, and Mukouda-san even has an astoundingly large Item Box."

The other members of 'Phoenix' chimed in.

"Sure thing, it's huge."

"Yeah, I've never seen anyone with an Item Box this big before."

"No no, it's not really that big." I protested.

"Mukouda-san, would you join our party?" one of the members of 'Phoenix' said as they were talking about my Item Box.

Uh, d- don't say that... Getting meat here is the main thing, stupid questions are an unwanted distraction.

"Groooowl..." Fer snarled at the members of 'Phoenix' and bared his fangs. The threat petrified them.

"Hey you idiots, shut up!" Rashu-san shouted at the other members, his face red with anger.

"Mukouda-san, we're sorry, please forgive us. Can you stop threatening us?" he pleaded.

"Yes... Hey Fer, it's okay, you can stop now." Fer settled down again.

"You lot talk too much. Got it?" said Rashu-san.

"Yes, yes, yes, yes..." the other members of 'Phoenix' nodded like bobble-headed dolls, their faces white with fear. I'm sorry everyone but Fer is right. Anyway there are things in the Item Box that are going to stay there. Fer knows about them too, of course.

"Hey, sorry to butt in but can we get on with business?" the ojisan interrupted, trying hard not to laugh. "It's gonna take me some time to get through all this. I dunno, maybe it'll be ready by day after tomorrow?"

The day after tomorrow...? We don't have any meat left. I need at least one monster's meat right now, just to cover today and tomorrow at least.

"Ummm, can you dismantle one monster for me right now?" I asked.

"Just one, huh?"

"Well, to put it simply we need the meat. I want the rest of the meat too and you can buy all the other materials but I gotta have the meat..." I glanced down at Fer.

"I gotcha. I'll dismantle one for you right now then. What do ya want?" the ojisan said. Great! But which one? Well it's nearly dinner-time so in that case, the Rock Bird will do.

"A Rock Bird, please."

"Right you are." the ojisan said and proceeded to swiftly and expertly disassemble one of the Rock Birds. The internal organs were dumped in a garbage bin. I got an odd look when I asked if they were edible. It seemed they don't eat viscera in this world. It's a

pity but it can't be helped.

"Oh, is it possible to eat Red Serpent too?" I asked. It's the first one we've caught and I wasn't sure about it. It's probably OK since we were able to eat the Black Serpent.

"Huh? Sure you can eat it. It's super high quality stuff you know. Us commoners can go our whole lives without ever eating any."

Eh, really? I wonder what it tastes like. The Black Serpent was delicious too so I've got high hopes for it.

"I'm curious, Mukouda-san, what was the meat we had last night?" Rashu-san asked with an embarrassed expression on his face.

"Well, there was Black Serpent, Cockatrice and Rock Bird... oh, and after that Giant Deer and Murder Grizzly." I replied. When I said that everyone's mouth fell open.

"When we asked for some of your cooking instead of travel rations, I didn't think that... I'm sorry!" said Rashu-san. "We're sorry!" echoed the other members of 'Phoenix'. They all bowed their heads deeply to me.

"Hey, hey! Raise your heads please. What's going on?"

"We didn't know the meats were of such high quality, we ate too much..." the members of 'Phoenix' nodded in agreement with Rashu-san's words.

"It was a once-in-a-lifetime chance for us to eat such fine food..."

"No wonder it was so delicious..."

"It was all sooo tasty..."

I remember now that they all seemed silently overcome by the taste of last night's dinner. I'm deeply moved at their enthusiasm but it's kinda funny since the meats were all from monsters that Fer caught. They say they're high-class ingredients but it's what I've been eating all along so I can't really understand their feelings. Besides my contribution was only the seasonings and cooking so it's not a problem for me.

"We're really sorry, Mukouda-san. If you ever need something just let us know. We'll help you out any way we can."

"No, no. Don't worry about it. Your boss brought me to this city..."

"No, no. we ate all your luxury meat..."

"No, no, you escorted the bandits to the city for me..."

"Hey, if I can interrupt you guys, I'm done with the dismantling." Thanks, ojisan, great timing. I took the Rock Bird meat from the old guy and packed it away.

"Right, I'll come back the day after tomorrow, so thanks."

"Yeah." The members of 'Phoenix' led the way out of the Adventurers Guild.

"This Adventurers Guild is a nice place, isn't it?" I commented as we left. "Usually if I go into an Adventurers Guild with Fer I get bothered or stared at but nothing happened here."

"It's because Leader was with you." one of the members of 'Phoenix' explained as we walked along. "Leaders of parties like ours are well-known adventurers in this city. Nobody messes with them or anyone they're with." Oh, so that's how it is. It's lucky I got acquainted with Rashu-san.

"Well, as those idiots say I'm well-known in this city. At the cost of repeating myself, if you run into any trouble just let us know." Rashu-san added.

"Thank you very much. That's very reassuring." I said.

"However we're headed off tomorrow on an escort request to a nearby town so we won't be around for about two weeks..." he added apologetically. Oh, right. I'm not expecting trouble in this city though.

"You guys were way too greedy." he told his followers.

"Yeah Leader." they agreed. There was an interruption.

"Sandra-chan!" One of the members called out.

"Shut up-" his fellows said. Ah, it looks like we had run into Sandra-chan, the gossipy Adventurers Guild staff member. Normies should explode.

"If you're still in the city in two weeks time, you can leave a message at the Adventurers Guild for me if you run into any problems. If I can help you I will." I told him I was thankful for his help so far. Rashu-san is someone with a very strong sense of duty.

Ah, I forgot something important. "Before you go, can you tell me if there's anywhere I can stay with a contracted beast?" I asked.

"There's the 'Gyphon's Nest' inn, straight along this street. I recommend it."

"Oh, then I'll try it." I parted with the members of 'Phoenix' at the door of the 'Gryphon's Nest' inn. I'm finally going to sleep in a bed again after a very long time.

# Chapter 55

## It's been a while since I tasted curry

I decided to stay at the "Gryphon's Nest" inn that I was referred to. Having travelled through the Gryphons territory to get here the name of the inn was a little disconcerting but it's a well-known inn hereabouts. It costs 8 silver coins a night with a contracted beast.

There was a beast stable at the back of the building, like the places we had stayed at before, so I asked Fer to go there. I went to my room and prepared to cook. I bought the items I needed for the meal I was planning from the Net Super.

The main item, the Rock Bird meat really needs to marinate for an hour or so but I poked it with a fork so the flavourings penetrate more easily and anyway a shorter time will be fine. In the meantime I laid my futon out on the inn's bed.

If I didn't take care Fer would force his way into this room. I took my satchel which Sui was sleeping in and went down to Fer's place.

"You'll have to wait, Fer."

"I've waited long enough." he growled. "I'm hungry right now."

"Ah, sorry, it's going to take a bit longer."

"WHAAAT--?!"

There's nothing that can compete with a hungry Fer when it comes to drama queens. How tragic! Taking pity on the poor wretch I bought ten fried mincemeat cakes from the Net Super for him.

"Dinner-?" Oh, Sui had woken up. I gave her five mincemeat cakes as well.

"Eat these for now, you two and just be patient."

Right then, it's going to be broccoli for a side dish. Chop the broccoli into the right

sized-pieces, wash it in cold water and then boil it with a little salt. After it's cooked drain it and let it cool. If you don't drain the broccoli straight away it will get soggy as the water cools. Why broccoli you may ask? Well, I like it obviously. I always make it as a side for this kind of main dish which tonight is going to be tandoori chicken.

I opened up the filled plastic bag which I had prepared up in my room. It had plain yoghurt, grated garlic and grated ginger (from tubes) and salt and pepper and curry powder, along with Rock Bird meat which I had poked with a fork to make holes in it before massaging it. I fried it in olive oil in a really hot frying pan so both sides were scorched and I served it with broccoli and plenty of mayonnaise.

"It's ready-"

Fer and Sui were right beside me in an instant and started eating.

"This has a curious flavour but it's really tasty." muttered Fer.

"Yes, Sui likes it too."

Spicy hot curry may be unknown in this world but it's delicious anyhow. I bit into the tandoori chicken.

"Ummm-!"

When you want to eat curry you REALLY want to eat curry. Since I'm not a true gourmet I cooked the sort of curry I eat at home. This meant using two different types of curry roux. One of them is my regular choice, the other is something different like a new product on the market. I feel that it makes the curry taste richer somehow, it's just the way I like it.

Thinking about how I made curry I wanted to eat more of it. Should I make more curry? Fer and Sui will eat as much as I can make so it'll be fine. I can always grill some Rock Bird steaks for them if they complain.

"Aruji, seconds please-"

"Me too."

Yeah yeah. I'll cook more tandoori chicken for you. I'll have seconds too, that curry taste is so comforting after so long. The broccoli and mayonnaise was delicious too.

Next time it will be curry rice.



After returning to my room and putting Sui on the futon to sleep I thought hard about my future.

First I want to establish my position in the Adventurers Guild. It's where I can get monsters dismantled properly and collect the meat and I can't keep on getting deregistered. However the G rank qualification period is only one month and if I feel like travelling anywhere that's likely to take longer than a month.

So should I try and level up to rank F in the Adventurers Guild here while I'm in this city? I'm finally in the Leonhart Kingdom which seems stable. I want to travel a lot but I'm in no rush. If I get to F rank I'll have three months before losing my registration, not one so even if I was travelling around I'd still stay registered.

OK, I'll hang around here for a bit and work hard to get to F rank. Luckily because I got to know Lambert-san and everyone in 'Phoenix' I've got good connections in this city which will come in handy.

Since I wasn't really planning to be a real adventurer I don't know exactly how to raise my rank though, so I think I'll go to the Adventurers Guild tomorrow and ask there. I expect I'll have to take a number of requests like searching for medicinal herbs and such over the next month.

Poor me, it's not like I want to become a real adventurer.

# Chapter 56

## Indulging in Traditional Japanese Sweets

Ah, I just remembered, before I go to bed I need to make an offering to the Goddess. I nearly forgot and she's bound to complain if I skip another offering again.

Right then, get it over and done with and then go to bed. Let's see, open the Net Super... what would be good? Since she's got a sweet tooth, how about traditional Japanese sweets this time around?

Hmmm, to start with some bean-jam-filled rice cakes, strawberry-filled rice cakes and some manjuu buns too, they've got a sweet chestnut filling. Dango dumplings on skewers for dipping into red-bean-jam sauce as well.

Ho hum, castella too, traditional wagashi confectionery and some more dorayaki. I've offered that up before but that Goddess won't complain if I repeat, I guess. To make sure I'll add a presentation box of sweet-bean jellies too. Yes, this should be enough. Now to offer them to the Goddess. I laid the Japanese sweets out on the cardboard altar.

"Wind Goddess Ninril-sama, please accept my offering as thanks for your continued protection now and in the future."

The voice of the Goddess echoed in my mind as soon as I finished praying.

[Oh, I've been waiting! I'd have sent you an oracle if you'd been any later.]

Tch, so you've polished off the last offerings I sent you already? You're wanting more sweet things to eat? If you only eat sweets you'll get fat you know. Do Gods and Goddesses get fat, I wonder?

[I- I, I, I won't get fat, truly. G- Goddesses like me are always beautiful you know.]

If you're so sure why are you stuttering?

[B- B- Be quiet, you! Those cakes and puddings were very tasty but we've not eaten

any for the last three days, I'll have you know.]

Goddess, you're a truly disappointing deity, you know. You're so gluttonous, aren't you? Totally useless too. Don't get fat, you'll not be able to call yourself beautiful with a straight face. A Goddess that stutters and eats too much is bound to get fat after all.

[Gumumumu, let's move on to more important things. What sort of sweet things are you offering me this time?]

Yep, she heard me just fine. A bit more?

They're only sweets after all, I wonder just how excited you are by them. If this Goddess were to appear in front of me I wonder how aroused she'd look?

[What?] she said. [They're only sweets, you know! You fool! Sweets aren't that great, huh?]

Oh, don't get mad. But as I thought, she can read my mind like an open book. Stop doing that, it's totally a violation of my right to privacy.

[Hah, what 'right to privacy'? I'm a Goddess, you know. There's nothing you can keep secret from a deity like me. I can see what you do, hear what you think in your whole life from beginning to end. You might want to remember that clearly, you know. Anyway, I'm a Goddess, don't forget it. I'm all-powerful and that's why you should show me some respect, you know.]

...she said. If you're really amazing you shouldn't need to tell people 'I'm amazing'. She really is a disappointing Goddess.

I'd like you to stop reading my thoughts as much as possible, huh? And don't bother watching me all the time. My life isn't that interesting after all. Show me some respect and save yourself some unnecessary effort. Give it some thought, please while you reflect on your own behaviour.

Deplorable sweet-loving Goddess.

[Nuuu, I am so totally not deplorable, you know!]

Ah, yeah yeah, of course you're not. Really. We're not getting anywhere with this so let's move on.

"Well, this time I chose some Japanese sweets, that is sweets from the country I came from. Ninril-sama requested anpan and dorayaki and there's a sweet that's got a lot of 'anko', the same filling inside them."

[What'd you say? That 'anko' pastry? That subtle sweetness is so delicate, you know.]

A truly deplorable Goddess. So lazy.

"And as you can see, I've also prepared an offering of dorayaki."

[Ohh, dorayaki. Great job, you.] It looks like the dorayaki is very much her favourite.

"In that case, please accept my offering."

[I understand. Transferring it to the realm of the Gods now.]

The Japanese sweets that were on the cardboard altar were enveloped in a pale light and then they disappeared. It never seemed very flashy but it got the job done.

[Muho-, there's a lot this time. You've done well my disciple.]

What's with the 'Muho-' noise? She is a truly truly disappointing Goddess after all.

[I'll eat a dorayaki straight away. Mm-mm-mm- muhaha, delicious as ever, hah!]

'Muhaha-' this time? Time to stop provoking her, maybe. A deplorable Goddess anyhow. Now that the deplorable Goddess was no longer talking to me I went to bed, sliding quickly under the futon with Sui.

Haaa- my only comfort is Sui.

# Chapter 57

## Aiming for F Rank

The next day I went to the Adventurers Guild with Fer and Sui. I figured it would be crowded later in the morning so I arrived early at the reception desk and got attended to promptly.

"Ummm, I'd like to enquire about something?"

"Yes, how can I help you?"

"I'm rank G right now, how do I get up to rank F?"

The receptionist was momentarily surprised but she gave me a complete explanation. It took a while but I couldn't complain since I had asked for it.

"You need to complete a series of requests to gain points to go up a rank and if you want to rise above rank C there's also an examination." I don't plan to rise above C rank so that's not a problem for me.

"I understand I need points to rise in rank but how many do I need to go from rank G to rank F?"

"You need a hundred points to rise from rank G to rank F." A hundred, is that really a lot or not?

"Rank G adventurers are limited to simple requests. Most of these are worth one or two points and a few are worth three points so it's very difficult to go up from rank G to rank F." the receptionist explained.

It seemed that rank G was sort of a training period for beginning adventurers, learning about adventuring while they find out whether they're up to it. Those who can't cope with the job will quit or quickly fail which is why the number of points to rise to F rank is set so high. So that's how it works, hey? I wasn't told this when I first registered to become an adventurer.

I've re-registered now and I'm not planning to make a living by adventuring so how hard do I have to work to make it up to F rank?

"Oh, it takes someone who's keen to be an adventurer about three months or so to rise from rank G to rank F but average beginners will take about six months. Please do your best, Mukouda-san."

Eh, that long?

Being an adventurer isn't really my thing so I didn't properly investigate what was required for the job to start with, and maybe the receptionist at the Adventurers Guild in Fariel didn't like adventurers to begin with...

Well, if it takes a keen beginner three months it's likely I'll take a bit longer so I'll be staying in this city for a while it seems. Going up to rank F from rank G takes a lot of effort but I don't want to fall back again. I told the receptionist that I understood.

This time would let me find out if I actually want to be an adventurer for real, I suppose, but putting my life on the line continuously isn't really my thing. No, I'll give it a miss. Once I'm up to F rank I'll stay there. Obviously.

However de-registration from G rank is only a month and it takes some effort to get up to F rank so a G-ranked adventurer can't accept requests that take him a long way from home. The receptionist laughed when I asked her about this. Basically there are no G-ranked requests that involve travelling any distance.

Right, in that case unless something untoward happens I'll stay here and rise up to F rank from my current G rank. It seems taking requests from the Adventurers Guild in the city you first registered until you achieve F rank is the normal thing to do. When I first registered at the Adventurers Guild back in Fariel I collected medicinal herbs and then immediately set off on a long trip. That wasn't a good idea.

The receptionist yesterday had also said something about the G rank de-registration period being the shortest but I hadn't really grasped the reasoning behind it. Having listened more closely this time I figure I'm not going to be a real adventurer but unless something goes wrong I'll just earn the points needed and move up to F rank. Well, I learned something new today.

I'll work hard with the help of the Adventurers Guild here and aim for the F rank.

# Chapter 58

## Goblin Subjugation Request

I went to the bulletin board to get a request immediately. As the receptionist had explained, rank G requests were quite limited. There were many menial jobs around town listed as requests but there was a note at the bottom of the list... oh, these jobs only earned one point. Another G rank request on the board was gathering medicinal herbs, worth two points. There were virtually no requests to subdue monsters suitable for G rank adventurers, only goblins but they were worth three points.

Uh, that's problematic. Right then, gathering medicinal herbs it is. I can do that. When I put my hand out to take the request for gathering medicinal herbs a thought came from Fer.

"Goblins, it says there."

"What? You can read those letters, Fer?"

"Who do you think I am?" Fer's thought was tinged with annoyance. "I've lived a long time, remember, so learning to read human writing was nothing for me."

Yeah yeah, OK. But anyway goblins are out of the question. I put my hand out again to take the medicinal herbs request and Fer interjected with a thought. "Hey, I said 'Goblins' didn't I?"

"Tough. I'm going to take a request to collect herbs."

"You need points, you said. If you want to do that you should choose goblin subjugation since it's got the highest points." Fer said.

"No, I'll earn points by working hard (safety first is my motto)."

"What're you talking about? We've not reached the ocean yet." Haah? Since when are you wanting to go to the ocean?

"I didn't say anything about it before, that's all." Fer shrugged. "I just decided. I want

to eat Kraken and Sea Serpent." What the-? "So you'll have to get up to rank F as quickly as possible."

You might recall me mentioning my horrible experiences with goblins previously, no? Due to a certain someone's actions...

"Hey, Sui? What d'you think we should do? You wanna go fire off some Acid Bullets again?" Fer said telepathically to Sui who stuck her lead out of the bag.

"A fight? Sui wants to go 'pew pew' shooting." Bah, Fer's enlisted Sui on his side.

"No, Sui, we don't want to go 'pew pew' shooting, medicinal herbs, we want to go gather some don't we? They'll be made into all sorts of nice medicines." I argued desperately.

"Ehhh." Sui sounded disappointed. "Sui can make medicines to cure painful wounds. Better Sui goes to shoot 'pew pew', fight." Unfortunately that was true, Sui had a restorative medicine creation skill.

"Sui agrees with me, take the goblin subjugation request."

"Goblins? Green goblins? Sui go 'pew pew' at the goblins, finish them off good." S- Sui-chan?

"You're outnumbered." said Fer contentedly. Gaaaah. I give up. I can't say no to cute Sui when she says she wants to go 'pew pew' and finish them off good. I plucked the goblin subjugation request off the board and took it to the receptionist.



The request entailed subjugating goblins which lived in the forest east of the city. The receptionist explained that was the most common place for them to appear. The request was for killing five goblins and the reward was three silver coins and three points. Right, let's go hunt goblins and then return to the city. That's best.

We ran into a group of three goblins as soon as we entered the forest.

"Aruji-, can I go 'pew pew pew'?" Sui asked excitedly.

"All yours." I said.

Pew pew pew. The goblins were hit in the belly by Sui's Acid Bullets and fell to the ground with a thump. The dead goblins had large holes burned in their middles. Awesomely lethal, our Sui is.

"Skillful as ever, Sui. We'll cut off the ears as evidence that we got the goblins, Sui, so remember to hit them in the belly like just now and don't aim for the head."

"I got it-"

I've got to cut off the right ears of the goblins to prove we killed them to claim the reward. Actually I don't really want to do it but I had to, I suppose... I took my knife and started cutting the ears off, dropping them into a sack I had bought on the way out of the city. I felt sick, uuuurp...

I pulled myself together and we moved off again, looking for more goblins in the forest.

"Hey, there's another five goblins over there." Fer said. I followed his gaze.

"Can Sui do it-?"

"Wait, Sui. This guy here will do it this time." Fer ordered. Me? Well, OK. We're in the forest so I'll use Stone Bullet rather than Fireball. Right, concentrate and-

"Stone Bullet!-" Pebbles smacked into the goblins. Two fell down with a thump but the other three weren't hurt too much. They screamed as they ran towards us waving their clubs.

"Stone Bullet! Stone Bullet! Stone Bullet!-" The goblins running towards me fell down. Fuuh, I managed to stop them. I need to fire off three Stone Bullets to do the job it seems or some of them could get away. I should remember that. Safety first.

I bent down and cut off the ears of the dead goblins. With eight ears that's us done.

"We've completed the request, let's go back to the city... Fer?" Fer was sniffing the ground then he looked up, gazing deep into the forest.

"What's up?"

"There's a goblin village up ahead."

"What, a village?"

"Let's go."

"Whaddya mean, 'let's go'. We're not going anywhere except back to the city."

"If you hunt more goblins, you'll get more points won't you? So if we go to the goblin village and kill them all then you'll get lots of points."

Well, I suppose so but goblins and especially goblin villages hold bad memories for me.

"Sui, do you still wanna fight?"

"Uh-huh, Sui wants to fight more, shoot lots more 'pew pew pew'!"

Damn it, this bastard's got Sui on his side again.

"Eh? Sui, we've done enough, we could be back in the city in ten minutes."

"Eh-, don't. Sui wants to shoot more 'pew pew pew', Aruji-"

Sui, when did you become such a battle maniac? You bounce around and jump up and down and are so healing and comfortable and that's enough.

"That's how it is. Give up and get on me." Fer ordered. Geh, I lost again.

"Can I go 'pew pew pew' some more? Yahoo!" Sui bounced around and jumped up and down. Somehow that made me feel happier. Then she jumped up to my chest and trembled. "Thanks so much, Aruji- I love you-"

Ah, Sui-tan is sooo cute. She loves to fight but her true strength is in her cuteness.

"Hoi, hurry up." Yeah yeah. I'm just enjoying being cuddled by Sui. I put her in her bag and then I straddled Fer's back.

# Chapter 59

## Dead Bodies Everywhere

When we snuck up on the village, making sure not to be detected, we saw swarms of goblins there.

"So what should we do?"

"What do you mean, 'what should we do?'" grumbled Fer.

"Well, I don't want to really, but how should we attack the village?"

"Just like before, of course." No no, how about employing strategy or something?

"No use hanging around, let's go." Saying that Fer raised his muzzle and let out a loud howl. Was that the right move? The goblins turned to look at us as Fer's cry reverberated around the village. A mob of goblins brandishing clubs, swords and axes headed towards us.

"I've put up a Barrier for you guys as usual. I'll go hunt the top-ranking goblins, you and Sui can deal with the small-fry." Saying that Fer ran towards the village. Oh no, not this again-

"Uwaa-, there's lots of green guys-! Aruji-, Can I 'pew pew pew' shoot them good-?" Battle maniac Sui had crawled out of her bag, ready to fight.

"Attagirl. 'Pew pew pew' them good, we'll finish off all the green guys here."

"Sui and Aruji gonna finish them all off-?"

"Yeah, me and Sui are gonna finish them all off. Ready?"

"Uhn, ready-. Sui, do my best-"

"Okay, let's go."

"Unh-."

After that it was desperate times. I shot off magic Fireballs and Stone Bullets continuously and Sui fired off Acid Bullets freely left and right too. My accuracy was terrible but there were lots of enemies in front of us so it didn't matter too much. To tell the truth I was so frantic I was just shooting off Fireballs and Stone Bullets at random and when I did hit something it was a miracle.

Compared to me Sui was like a sniper, her Acid Bullets hit enemies every time and she never missed. She's so skilful. She steadily destroyed the goblins rushing towards us while I shot off Fireballs and Stone Bullets like crazy.

The battle seemed endless but it actually finished in less than an hour.

"Fuu-, I'm worn out. We're finally finished, thank goodness."

"Yay-! We beat them all, Aruji-!" Sui bounced up and down, obviously very pleased. I wasn't angry though, she's tired but still bouncing. Sui's so strong, I reckoned she killed 80% of the goblins here. She's definitely strong.

I looked around. Dead bodies everywhere. That describes the scene perfectly. Dead goblins as far as the eye could see.

"You finally finished?" Fer suddenly re-appeared.

"Have you finished your part, Fer?"

"I finished a while ago. Goblin King, Goblin Generals, Goblin Soldiers and Goblin Mages, piece of cake." Oh, I see, there was a Goblin King. Well, it was a goblin village after all. Hah, there are more than two hundred goblin bodies out there.

"It's time to cut the ears off, I suppose."

"Yeah. You'll have to do it since you're the only one of us with hands. Get to work." Fer explained.

Yeah yeah, I get it. I started cutting the right ears off the goblin corpses without arguing. The goblins Sui had killed with Acid Bullet resembled cast members from a zombie movie, bright blue and pale white so I just concentrated on cutting off the ears without looking at them too closely. It's best to switch off your thinking while you do

such things, just get on with it.

It took me about three hours to cut off all the right ears. When I counted them there were two hundred and twenty-seven of them. That's a dreadful number.

While I remember..."Hey Fer, didn't you say something about a Goblin King and some other higher-ranking monsters?" I had recalled something about the last goblin village whose Goblin King had a magic stone inside his body.

"This Goblin King? He's kinda small." So he wouldn't have a magic stone then. Okay then, since the Goblin King is worthless let's just go back to the city. However for some reason Fer got me to take the higher-ranked goblins with us. I put the Goblin King Fer had defeated, three Goblin Generals, two Goblin Mages and seven Goblin Soldiers in my Item Box.

Turning to leave I looked around and I had a sudden thought. "Hey Fer, is it OK to just leave these bodies lying around here?"

"What's the problem with that?"

"it just seems unhygienic and besides won't the bodies attract other monsters?"

"Yeah, other monsters will come along and eat the dead goblins. That's the Circle of Life around here."

"Yeah well that's maybe how things work but I'm thinking a feast like this is likely to attract some big dangerous monsters and this is a bit too close to the city for comfort."

"It's as you say, so you could maybe burn the bodies if you want."

Even if I wanted to burn the corpses, all I've got to do it with is my puny Fireball spell... Besides we're in the forest and starting a forest fire would be a problem. Ah, we've got Sui to help. I think she can manage it with her acid.

"Sui, can you 'pew pew' all these green guys until they're totally melted?"

"Unh-. Can do it OK-. Totally all the green guys?-"

"Yeah, all of them. Do it for me please?"

"Sure. But, wait a bit-" Saying that Sui shook and burbled, trembling oddly.

S- Sui?

# Chapter 60

## Getting Bigger and Smaller

After shivering and shaking for a few seconds Sui suddenly became huge. She was two and a half metres across and maybe a metre and a half high. She was even slightly bigger than Fer.

"Sui has evolved." Fer said. I used Appraisal on her.

[Name] Sui

[Age] 1 month

[Types] Big Slime

[Level] 2

[Fitness] 684

[Magical Power] 679

[Attack power] 668

[Defense force] 674

[Agility] 682

[Skill] acid bullet, restorative medicine creation, growth

Sui's become a Big Slime and she's already level 2? All her other stats are higher and she's got a new skill too. 'Growth', what does that mean? Is it why she's suddenly so big?

"Fer, you know anything about this 'Growth' skill?"

"Nope. Usually when a Slime gets to be a certain level it splits in two but that's all."

I'm at a loss. "Sui, you've evolved and you've got a new skill, are you bigger because you used it?" I asked.

"Sui is not sure how but Sui can be bigger or smaller."

"Bigger OR smaller?" I asked.

"Try-, watch what happens." As she said that several smaller Slimes split away from

Sui and she returned to her original size.

"Everybody- go melt the green guys-" she commanded. The small Slimes climbed on top of the goblin corpses and then they burst, splashing something like acid and dissolving the bodies to the point where even the bones vanished. Both Fer and I were astounded at what we had just witnessed.

"Have you ever seen anything like this, Fer?"

"Never in my very long life."

"Hey Sui, what were those small Slimes that split off you?"

"Unn-, that was Sui too-"

"They were Sui as well?"

"You see, if Sui thinks she wants to get big then her body gets big. When Sui wants to get smaller then Sui's big body splits up into little Suis. Sui can talk to the little Suis for a bit of time after Sui divides but not long."

Uhhh, she can grow big using her 'Growth' skill then she can split up into smaller Slimes afterwards and even talk to them for a short time. Hmmm...

"What happens to the divided parts, the little Suis?" I'm worried about that.

"You see, the smaller Suis disappear after a time and Sui stays." So the split-off bodies only last for a finite time? Wow, that's a really amazing skill. She can stay safe and launch long-range attacks and let the enemy "kill" the split-off bodies without harm to her. A surprise attack would be particularly effective. They might even be able to make lots of Sui's Deluxe High-grade Potion as well.

"Wow, Sui keeps getting stronger..." I exclaimed.

"That's right." said Fer. "But it's a good thing, not a problem right?" He had a point.

"Aruji-, my tummy's empty-"

"Muu, definitely."

I was wondering when these two gluttonous characters would get around to mentioning food.

"Well, I don't fancy eating around here so let's move away a bit." Being surrounded by goblin corpses wasn't good for my appetite. Sui climbed back into her bag and I got on Fer's back again.

After going for a while I said "Here's fine" to Fer and we stopped.

"I'm a bit tired so d'you mind if I just get out some sweet buns for now?"

"Anything's good as long as you're quick." Fer growled.

Yeah yeah. I bought some buns from the Net Super. As well as the usual anpan and cream buns this time I got melon bread and choco cornets and of course, canned coffee which is the essential accompaniment to sweet buns.

"First time I've seen these." Fer's sharp eye spotted the melon bread and choco cornets and he zeroed in on them.

"Yeah yeah, hang on and let me get them out for you."

I opened the bags, lined the contents up on a dish and let Fer and Sui help themselves.

"Unh, tasty-"

"Mu, delicious. First time we've had these..."

Sui really liked the sweet buns and Fer liked the melon bread and the choco cornets. I sat back with some canned coffee in my hand and sank my teeth into an anpan. Oh, deee-licious! A tired body craves sweet things.

Thinking back, I wondered how a simple goblin subjugation request had escalated into the destruction of an entire goblin village. Huh-. Well it ended up with me getting the hundred points I needed so it worked out, I suppose.

I had been planning on a long stay in this city but it looks like it's already over. Somehow.

# Idle Talk 4

## Eeny Meeny Miny Mo

The Wind Goddess Ninril was, as usual, staring at the visions of the world below appearing on the surface of a pool of water.

[He's late, he's late, he's late you know-]

Man from another world, pray to me and make your offerings. I'm getting tired of waiting. Fenrir, tell that other-world man off!

Good boy, Fenrir. I didn't give that other-world man my Divine Protection free of charge, after all. He's got to pray to me and make offerings in return. Only an fool would forget something so important. He's really stupid.

Finally the other-world guy offered up a prayer to me.

[Ooh, finally. Really, how long were you going to keep me waiting?]

He said he got distracted and he was busy and... He was lying of course. I can read his mind after all, you know. He apologised and I forgave him. I'm not a monster after all.

[Hmmm, I'll forgive you this time but don't make such a mistake again. I considered sending you an oracle to remind you many times but there are reasons why I couldn't do it.]

How many times I considered sending him an oracle... But there are all sorts of Goddesses here as well as Gods of War, Blacksmith Gods and other Gods too, you know. The oracles I send might be noticed by my fellow Goddesses and if they got a sniff of the offerings I receive then they'd want a share. The longer I can receive offerings without them finding out the better, you know.

The other-world guy laid out an array of assorted items as an offering and I looked them over.

[Woohoo! This, this is-!!]

So many multi-coloured sweets? Really? Everything's different too as well? Really truly?

The other-world guy is asking me if it's maybe too much...

[Wh-what are you saying? Too much? No, this is perfect. Next time you should offer the same amount. That's an order.] Totally. There's no way this is 'too much', you know.

The other-world guy told me that I should keep the rest refrigerated to eat later. Hah! Goddesses like myself have no need of simple refrigeration.

[I got it. However we Gods don't need to refrigerate things, we can just stop time passing for them. I can enjoy one piece each day. Mmphph...]

Mmphph- Mmphph- Mmphph- It's so nice to indulge myself every now and then.

[Anyway, offer up this amount next time, please. Be sure not to forget again.] I order the other-world guy.

Fuahahaha, these sweets look superb! Right, let's get started.

Enny, meeny, miny, mo! Yes, this one here. Some kind of red berry on a white triangle, a sweet called "strawberry shortcake" apparently. Well then, I'll just take a bite.

Muhaha-, it's so incredibly tasty! The soft and fluffy insides and the white surroundings come together so well. The red berry is sweet and sour at the same time. Munch munch munch. Hah, it's all gone.

Just one doesn't feel like enough though, I'll have just another one you know? Next iiiiiiis- this one.

Soft and round, it's called a "cream choux" apparently. Right then, munch! Muha-!, soft delicate pastry surrounding yellowish sweetness inside, oh I can't bear it! This is great, it's so delicious! Munch munch, oh it's vanished you know.

I'm not quite satisfied so I'll have just one more, I promise.

This weird-looking pastry is called a "Mont Blanc". It's made from lots of long twisted brown-coloured threads, oddly firm... is that some kind of nut on top of it? Well, let's go for it. Munch.

Muha-!, the full-bodied sensual brown threads complement the sweet richness of the filling. The nuts on the top are also crisp and sweet. Munch munch munch. Oh, it's vanished, how did that happen? It was soooo good, you know.

I meant to enjoy them one at a time but somehow I ended up eating three of them at once. Oops.

Gah, have patience. I'll enjoy some more tomorrow, you know. See you tomorrow.

Hurry up tomorrow.

# Idle Talk 5

## I can SEE you, I can SEE you...

Ah, I ate too much because it was so delicious, you know. I finished off the other-world guy's offerings in just three days but I couldn't help myself, I'm like that.

Come on other-world guy, hurry up and pray to me and make your offerings again. If he's late again I'll have to consider sending him an oracle this time regardless.

It's all I can think of as I watch the world below in the scrying pool.

Mumu-, at last! The other-world guy is finally praying and making offerings.

"Wind Goddess Ninril-sama, please accept my offering as thanks for your continued protection now and in the future."

[Oh, I've been waiting! I'd have sent you an oracle if you'd been any later.]

What are you saying, other-world guy? Eating sweets will make me fat?

[I- I, I, I won't get fat, truly. G- Goddesses like me are always beautiful you know.]

Deities like me can't get fat and I'm always beautiful, that's just how I am. Naturally.

What do you mean, "I stutter"?

[B- B- Be quiet, you! Those cakes and puddings were very tasty but we've not eaten any for the last three days, I'll have you know.]

It's totally not my fault they're all gone. It's just the cakes and puddings were so delicious. The other-world guy is thinking "Eating all that in just three days you're bound to get fat, aren't you?" He's being snarky even though I've told him I'm eternally beautiful and not scared of getting fat which totally won't happen anyway.

[Gumumumu, let's move on to more important things. What sort of sweet things are you offering me this time?]

That's right, stop distracting me. Sweets, that's what I want you to talk about.

Uh, that's not a nice thing to think about me, other-world guy.

"[What? They're only sweets, you know! You fool! Sweets aren't that great, huh?]

It seems the other-world guy has figured out I can know what he's thinking and he's calling it a violation of his 'right to privacy'.

[Hah, what 'right to privacy'? I'm a Goddess, you know. There's nothing you can keep secret from a deity like me. I can see what you do, hear what you think in your whole life from beginning to end. You might want to remember that clearly, you know. Anyway, I'm a Goddess, don't forget it. I'm all-powerful and that's why you should show me some respect, you know.]

Huh, I'm a Goddess after all, you know. I'm all-powerful.

Nu-? A- A deplorable Goddess, am I? M- Me?

[Nuuu, I am so totally not deplorable, you know!] This other-world guy is mega-!

"Well, this time I chose some Japanese sweets, that is sweets from the country I came from." he said. "Ninril-sama requested anpan and dorayaki and there's a sweet that's got a lot of 'anko', the same filling inside them."

[What'd you say? That 'anko' pastry? That subtle sweetness is so delicate, you know.] I started drooling as I remembered the taste of 'anko'.

A certain person is thinking unkind thoughts about a certain Goddess. Again.

"And as you can see, I've also prepared an offering of dorayaki." he prayed. There's dorayaki too?

[Ohh, dorayaki. Great job, you.] Time to transfer his offering to the world of the Gods... aaaand done.

[Muho-, there's a lot this time. You've done well my disciple.]

Lots and lots, oh there's so much this time... isn't it great?

[I'll eat a dorayaki straight away. Mm-mm-mm- muhaha, delicious as ever, hah!]

It's been so long since I tasted such sweetness. It's delicious, it's delicious.

This time I'll be careful and not eat too much. I swear.

But, just a single piece more... yeah, that's fine.

'Castella', it's a square cake, the top and bottom are dark and the thick middle is a yellowish sweet filling.

Just a mouthful then, munch. Mmmm-, it's fluffy and sweet and soft and its taste is unbearable, you know- Sooo good, munch munch munch. Oh, it's all gone.

I should really stop eating now, shouldn't I? Yes, I should stop now, don't do what I did last time.

Uuuuh, but can I resist, can I...?

The figure of a woman watches from the shadows as Wind Goddess Ninril-sama wrestles with her conscience and loses to the sweetness arrayed before her.

I wondered why she was being so secretive, the hidden woman thought to herself. She shouldn't be selfish, such delicious food is meant to be shared. She hurried off to immediately inform the other Goddesses.

# Idle Talk 6

## Three Heroes

"Hero Summoning"

Recently my younger sister has gotten into reading light novels and that phrase appears in a lot of them. I read them as well to kill some time but they're pretty crappy stories. Ordinary school students and 'salaryman' office workers are summoned into a parallel world and given magical cheat powers and are acclaimed as Heroes and they go out to defeat the Demon King while building a harem in the process. The contents of these novels were so bad they were laughable.

However I or rather we have actually been brought to a parallel world by a "Hero Summoning".

I'm Saitou Kaito and I attend the same high school as Oono Kanon and Yoshida Rio, that makes us three "ordinary school students". I've got no idea who the salaryman is though.

Kanon and Rio and me were in the same class two years ago and we became good friends. We live close by each other and we usually went home together and today was no exception. We were waiting at a crossing for the light to go green and chatting and there may have been a salaryman in a suit behind us, I'm not sure. Then suddenly our surroundings started to glow... And before we realised it here we were.

"Brave Heroes-" A beautiful girl with blond hair and blue eyes and dressed like a fairytale princess smiled at us.

At our feet was a magic pattern in a circle with a man and a woman wearing robes to either side of us. Knights in armour lined the sides of the room. It was just like an illustration from those crappy light novels my sister loved to read.

"What's this, is it a Hero Summoning? What the-" I was stunned, was this really happening? But it truly was a Hero Summoning ceremony. However the ceremony should have Summoned three people and there were four of us.

It was deemed necessary to conduct something called a "Status Appraisal" so I was examined by some kind of magical spell.

[Name] Kaito. Saitou

[Age] 17

[Type] A Hero from another world

[Level] 1

[Fitness] 800

[Magical Power] 769

[Attack power] 772

[Defense force] 759

[Agility] 746

[Skill] Appraisal, Item Box, Holy Swordsman, Fire Magic, Water Magic, Earth Magic, Wind Magic, Light Magic, Lightning Magic, Ice magic

So according to this Status Appraisal I'm a Hero. It turned out Kanon and Rio were also Heroes with similar stats. After seeing our stats it was clear we really were Heroes. I used to laugh at those light novels I borrowed from my little sister but somehow it might not be bad to be called a Hero, no to actually be a Hero and we're all Heroes together which makes me feel a bit better.

Oh, and there's the salaryman guy whose Status Appraisal was just "A person from a different world who got dragged in by mistake". His status levels were considerably less than ours and the only skills we had in common were Appraisal and Item Box. He's definitely not a Hero but apparently everyone Summoned from another world will get Item Box and Appraisal. He got only one extra Unique Skill which is "Net Super." What the heck is that? We were Summoned to be Heroes so they needed people with strong skills, and "Net Super" is really funny.

After all the status Appraisals were completed we had an audience with the King. It turned out they summoned us as Heroes since the Demon King had been attacking this country. They had managed to drive him off but they didn't think they would continue to succeed so they conducted a Hero Summoning with great difficulty. They begged us to help them.

It felt good to be asked this by the King and I figured I would do as he requested but I didn't know about the others.

"What will you do?" I asked Kanon and Rio.

"Well, we can't go anywhere else and only the Demon King knows how to return us to Japan so I'll go along with you." said Kanon.

"I agree with Kanon. We're powerful, we can help those who are suffering at the hands of the Demon King can't we?" said Rio.

When we announced our decision the King, the Queen, the princess and all the courtiers were delighted. It made me feel even better about accepting the role of Hero.

The salaryman, however refused. "I'm not a Hero and I'd only get in your way if I stay here. I can find something else to do though. If I can get some money to live on for two or three months then I can find a job somewhere, I think." he explained.

That made sense, his status was terrible and he couldn't fight so he wouldn't be any help.

After the salaryman left, Kanon and Rio and I had a discussion with the others in the room.

"The first thing you need to do is gain more power." said the head of the Knights. "You should all register as adventurers and devote your efforts to levelling up as soon as possible." We were introduced to three Knights who would assist us.

I was surprised, I'm 180cm tall and they tell me my face is good enough to get me into a talent agency or even a boy band. Kanon has beautiful eyes and long black hair and she is tall and slender too. Rio's a bit small but she's pretty enough that people think she's a pop idol. I thought we stood out but these three Knights were something else.

"My name's Leonard Hume. Pleased to make your acquaintance." Leonard was taller than I am, handsome with a princely air, an urbane blonde ikemen type with green eyes. Rio stared at Leonard-san, her face red, obviously having fallen in love at first sight.

"Aaron Barrera is my name. I'm looking forward to working with you Heroes." Aaron was also taller than me, with brown eyes and bright red hair, a fierce-looking guy. Oh, he winked at Kanon... but that didn't seem to bother her for some reason.

"My name's Louise Winkler. Let's get on well, Hero." Louise was the only woman in the group of Knights. Louise, how to describe her... I was fascinated by her on first sight. She resembled a Hollywood actress I had a crush on. She was maybe 165 cm tall with

honey-blonde hair and blue-green eyes and a slender figure. Her hair was trimmed neatly to shoulder-length, her features sharp and with a pleasing expression. Just thinking of her being near me made me excited.

Although it seems we'll have to register as adventurers first, this looks like it's going to be quite enjoyable.

# Chapter 61

## It Seems We Won't Be Hassled

I got off Fer's back outside the Adventurers Guild in Carerina and entered with him. We had hit the busy time when adventurers congregated and the place was crowded so we joined the line at reception.

"This'll get you up to rank F, so can we head for the ocean tomorrow?" Fer said telepathically.

"Even if I do end up F-ranked I want to stay in this city a bit more."

"Why?"

"Lambert-san, the merchant we rescued from the bandits, I want to go to his shop."

"Day after tomorrow then?" Fer persisted.

"Don't be in such a hurry. The ocean won't run away, you know."

"Yeah well... the folks around here are kinda boring and besides my sleeping space at the inn's a bit cramped."

Ah, that beast. The stable stalls for contracted beasts at the inn are smaller than he really likes. There's only enough room in his stall for Fer to go in and lie down after all. In our travels recently we were sleeping under the sky without a care so the inn's stable is bound to seem somewhat claustrophobic. I feel for him a bit...

"I can put down a futon in your stall if you'd like? That'll make it a bit more comfortable won't it?"

"Yah, do that. It'll help."

"OK, I don't think we'll be that long so just hang on. I'll make something tasty later."

"Gotcha. Don't forget the delicious food. We can stay here as long as there's delicious

food for me."

"Yeah yeah." Just as I answered him my turn came up. I handed my Guild card to the receptionist.

"Ah, this is the goblin subjugation request? Have you got the right ears as proof of completing the request?"

"Yes. And... here they are." I dropped a heavy hemp sack full of goblins ears on the counter with a bang in front of the receptionist.

"Ah? Is this, what is-?" she exclaimed. Oh, sorry to confuse you but that's not all. I dropped another three sacks on the counter with a thump-thump-thump. Four bags full of goblin's ears, two hundred and twenty-seven of them in total. I knew it was a good idea to buy an extra sack.

The receptionist seemed stunned. What's the problem Receptionist-san? She stared into the four bags without saying a word.

"Ah, are you all right?" At my words the receptionist started then with a "Please wait a moment" she hurried off into the rear of the Guild offices. She came back a short time later.

"The Guild Master would like to meet with you so follow me if you would. Bring your contract beast with you please."

I nodded and asked Fer telepathically to follow us as we went up to the Guild Master's room on the second floor. It was bigger than normal since it was the boss's room but it still seemed cramped when Fer entered.

"I'm Willem, the Guild Master of the Adventurers Guild here in Carerina." Willem-san, the Guild Master had grey hair and lots of wrinkles on his face. He seemed to be in his 60s by his appearance but he looked fit and strong despite his age.

"My name is Mudouka. Nice to meet you." The Guild Master had called us up from downstairs, was he having presented so many goblin ears at one time as proof of the request causing a problem?

"Your companion is a Fenrir, no doubt about it." Saying it like that the Guild Master was clearly very sure of his identification. I guessed that sort of Appraisal ability was

part of being a Guild Master.

"Yes. Fer is a Fenrir." I confirmed.

"To actually see such a legendary monster with my own eyes..." the Guild Master murmured, his gaze fixed on Fer. Knowing Fer was a Fenrir I wasn't too surprised at his reaction. Ah, talking about monsters I should maybe introduce him to Sui too?

"As well as Fer I've got another contracted beast..." I pulled Sui from her bag.

"It's Sui, she's a Slime. She's a Unique Slime and unlike ordinary Slimes she's very strong."

"A S- Slime, you say?" he asked. "Yeah." I nodded in reply.

The Guild Master might wrongly think Sui was a regular Slime but I knew Sui was strong.

"Hmph, well you contracted with a Fenrir... I won't pry since I assume there's something you're wanting to keep hidden about the circumstances."

Yup, you bet there is. If I told you that a Fenrir contracted with me because he was obsessed with my cooking you wouldn't believe me anyway.

"Anyway let me explain why I asked you to come to my office. We received an urgent message from the Royal Palace to pass on to you. Ahem, to put it simply it reads,"-- 'Please enjoy your stay freely in our peaceful nation. We will never attempt to force you to leave and we have instructed our vassal nobles that you are welcome here and under our protection. If you should suffer any problems then please do not hesitate to request our assistance.'

Eh? So I'm free to come and go as I please? The King and the nobles won't bother me?

"I'm surprised, this country's King seems to be a quite direct type, isn't he? Royalty usually likes to meddle with the lives of the little people under them but in my case he's being quite practical."

"Well, that is..." the Guild Master looked flustered.

"I'm sure he's thinking that it's better for me to not be hassled while I'm here because

he doesn't want to make an enemy of someone who has a Fenrir as a contracted beast, since he knows very well that a Fenrir can easily destroy an entire country. He wants to stay on my right side because of the contract and he's even issued orders to make sure no-one else bothers me too."

It seemed like a good arrangement to me but I thought I should check with Fer although as long as I make dinner for him he's usually willing to go along with anything I decide.

"It sounds good to me... what do you think, Fer?"

"No problem. This place is as good as any to stay for a while, unless someone starts something." Fer bared his teeth and the Guild Master winced.

"If you say so." I nodded reassuringly to Willem.

"Good, that's excellent." The Guild Master said. "Even though the Adventurers Guild is not controlled by any one nation and maintains its independence, the Adventurers here are mainly from this kingdom and they have families and connections in this country. The Adventurers Guild is reassured that your stay here will be peaceful."

Saying that so formally was quite intimidating in its own way...

# Chapter 62

## C rank Adventurer

"To move on, sir," the Guild Master continued, "I presume that presenting all those goblins ears as proof of subjugation means that you want to improve your rank?"

Oh, I nearly forgot about that. Well, it's because of a certain someone who took me to a goblin village that I collected that many goblin ears in one request.

"If that's so then I can raise you to C rank using my authority as Guild Master." he went on.

"Eh? I'm ranked G at the moment and I only really wanted to go up to F rank so I could move around without getting demoted out of the Guild altogether after a month. Jumping straight up to C rank, is that really OK?"

"It's not a problem, any Guild Master such as myself can do so in exceptional circumstances. The bigger problem for us is that someone who has contracted with a Fenrir is only rank G."

I'd planned to rise from rank G to rank F but I'm suddenly going to become C-ranked. If I'm rank C then I'm safe from demotion for six months even if I don't complete any requests.

"Even if you decide not to rise to rank C there are some requests we would like you to consider."

Ah, it's like that is it? I wouldn't need to be rank C to do these 'requests'?

"Ummm, I'd be inclined to turn the requests down, I must admit." However there was another party involved. "Fer?"

"You're wanting to go up in rank, right? So what's the problem?"

"Well, it's a pain..."

"The requests, there's no problem taking them as I'd help you get them done quick."

"Pardon me for interrupting but since the requests would actually be of rank A or even rank S difficulty, in reality we would be asking Fenrir-sama to carry them out for us." the Guild Master said to Fer.

Ah, that's where he was going with this. I understand now. "Fer, you OK with this?"

"Huh, I don't understand this A or S stuff but there ain't anything that can beat me after all." he said matter-of-factly. Of course he'd say something like that...

"Oh, that's very good. You see, high-ranking requests don't appear often. If you became an A rank or even S-ranked Adventurer then the number of requests that are worthy of your attention is very limited. Usually such high-ranking Adventurers are only called upon specially when an emergency arises. Other than that then they are free to do as they please."

So there are only a few really high-ranked Adventurers and they don't have to grind the levels like other people to maintain their rankings? Of course if the Guild needs an A or S-ranked Adventurer in a hurry they can't always guarantee having any of them around. The Guild Master went on to explain.

"So that's why, if you're travelling around, we'd appreciate it if you could let the Guild offices in any city you're in know that you're available if a high-ranked request turns up."

Well, we'd be visiting the Adventurers Guild anywhere we went just to get meat so it seems OK for me to go up to rank C thanks to the Guild Master using his authority. One moment though, is it fine for me to accept rank A requests as a rank C adventurer?

"Is rank C really sufficient?" I inquired.

"Ah, that's not a problem. Each Guild office in this country will be contacted and the situation explained to them. Any such requests they might want you to take would come directly from the Guild Master so your rank would not be relevant."

I see. "Fer, you good with this? If we're travelling around then we're gonna have to ask the Adventurers Guild to do the dismantling if you want meat."

"Yeah, of course. I'm fine with it. Besides I enjoy a good fight every now and then. I get

kinda flabby if I don't exert myself properly once in a while."

"Sui will fight as well-" Sui piped up telepathically, having been following the discussion quietly until then.

Ah, right right. I patted a trembling Sui to calm her down.

"That seems OK then." I agreed.

"Oh, we're extremely grateful. I'll get in touch with the other Guild offices at once to inform them. The Adventurers of this country know each other quite well and the news will spread quickly, I believe. I will also order them to not bother you or get in your way."

Thanks. This Guild Master really knows his business. That should solve a lot of problems.

"So if I go through the high-ranking requests we have and narrow them down, can I give you a request tomorrow perhaps?"

Tomorrow I had planned to go to Lambert-san's shop and visit the Merchants Guild too but I'd be coming to the Adventurers Guild as well to collect the meat and sell the other items. Since the Guild Master helped us out then I'll visit the Adventurers Guild first thing tomorrow.

"Okay, I'm planning on coming back into the Guild tomorrow anyway in connection with some purchases." As I spoke I had a sudden thought. If everybody's going to know about Fer being a Fenris then I don't have to be quite as secretive as I've needed to be until now, and my Item Box is full of monsters like Orc King and Blue Ogre which I thought I'd have to hide forever.

"Ummm, would it be OK if you bought some other monsters from me?"

"Eh, more monsters? There shouldn't be a problem." The Guild Master still looked puzzled so I explained further.

"You see, I thought they would cause us trouble if I tried to sell them and we wanted to avoid notice so I've kept them tucked away instead. Since the Guild Master has come to an arrangement with Fer and the fact he's a Fenris will be widely known soon then I figure it should be OK to sell them now..."

"I see. So what sort of monsters do you have?" He leaned forward, obviously interested.

"Eh, well there's a Chimaera and an Orthros. In addition there's an Orc King and a Blue Ogre and-"

The Guild Master's face froze as I spoke. "W- w- wait, did you just say 'Chimaera'. A- a- and 'Orthros'?" He put his head in his hands as if he was close to fainting. Ah, maybe I had said the wrong thing but after a second or two the Guild Master stood up shakily.

"Please follow me, I wish to confirm this." I picked up Sui's bag and then Fer and I followed him out of his office and down to the Guild's warehouse where I had been the day before.

# Chapter 63

## Refusing To Accept What I Show Them

Hey, Johan, are you around?" Apparently the tough old ojisan with the bald head from yesterday is named Johan.

"What brings you here, Guild Master? Yesterday you said..."

"Johan, I'm sorry to ask you to do this but could you close the door and make sure no one else comes in? I don't want anyone else finding out about this."

Responding to the serious tone of the Guild Master's words Johan didn't hesitate and immediately closed the warehouse door.

"Right, this is fine." I said. "I'll get everything out now." The Guild Master had said he wanted to see everything I wanted to sell so I started pulling stored monsters out of my Item Box. First out were the Orthros and Chimaera which I had planned to keep there forever. Next was the Blue Ogre and four regular Ogres, the Orc King, the Metal Lizard and the Lake Shark. Today's haul from the goblin village massacre followed, a Goblin King, three Goblin Generals, two Goblin Mages and seven Goblin Soldiers aaaand... I felt around in the Box. No more monsters.

"That's the lot." I finished. The Guild Master and old man Johan were stunned.

The Guild Master finally unfroze. "...Ah, forgive me but... it's just amazing to see..." Pardon me, but you did want me to get everything out so I did.

Johan came back to life, his eyes remaining fixed on the monsters on display before him. "Guild Master... for me, this is the first time in my life I have ever seen Chimaera and Orthros..."

It's too late now but perhaps I shouldn't have brought them out...?

"Myself," the Guild Master replied, "I once saw an Orthros subjugated nearly forty years ago. Back then I remember it took three Adventurer parties, all of whom were rank A and rank S."

Three parties of entirely rank A and rank S Adventurers... that just shows how strong Fer is now, I suppose although right now that supposedly invincible Fenris was lying on the floor and yawning.

The Guild Master got down to business. "We can't purchase the Chimaera or the Orthros from you, the Guild simply doesn't have that much money. Even the Blue Ogre, Orc King, Metal Lizard and Lake Shark will be a big problem for us to pay for but the Chimaera and the Orthrus, I'm afraid..." he shook his head.

So they can't take them off my hands? Oh well, I had originally planned to just keep them tucked away forever anyway so it can't be helped.

"Well, please purchase the rest then." The rejected Chimaera and Orthros went back in my Item Box. Sleep well.

"To think I'll get to disassemble a Blue Ogre with my own hands..." Johan's eyes sparkled with the lust of a true craftsman. I listened closely as he eagerly explained that a Blue Ogre was a special variant of Ogre, several times stronger and usually rated as an S-ranked monster. I looked down at the animated rug sprawled at my feet. Fer, you hunted something like this for the fun of it? That's terrifying, kiddo.

I asked him about the other monsters the Guild Master had made a fuss about earlier.

Johan-ojisan went on to explain that the Orc King rates about rank A by itself but since it's a King monster it's usually surrounded by hundreds of regular Orc followers so that makes it a class S opponent in reality.

A Metal Lizard is a monster of rank A but physically attacking it directly is pretty much useless since its skin is as hard as steel. Normally to subdue such a monster Adventurers would trap it in a pit and cast fire spells or drown it in water. However to succeed in doing something like that a considerable number of wizards would be needed as support so a Metal Lizard rarely appears on the market unless it is the result of an emergency subjugation request.

The Lake Shark is even rarer, ranked S but incredibly difficult to subdue since it can swim around freely in its lake to avoid attacks. Mostly it seems Lake Sharks are only seen when a drought dries up the waters they live in.

Fer, you really defeated all these monsters like it was nothing? Truly terrifying... The animated rug was snoring now.

"You caught the Goblin King, Mages, Generals and Soldiers today?" the Guild Master inquired.

"Yes, we, ah, ran into a goblin village earlier."

"Ah, so there was a village?" He explained the Guild had noted an increase in the number of goblins in the eastern forest and they had planned to investigate whether there was perhaps a goblin village there.

"There's a reward due to you for subjugating the goblin village, you know." Eh, a reward? That's good to hear. Fer forced me to into attacking the village but if we get paid for destroying it then that makes up for it, a bit anyway. Lucky!

"Dealing with the goblin village single-handed truly demonstrates Fenrir-sama's incredible fighting power. Of course he has already proven his capabilities by subduing the Chimaera and Orthros so it's not too surprising."

Hearing the Guild Master's words Sui suddenly trembled in her bag and protested to me telepathically.

"It wasn't just Fer-ojichan, Sui pew-pewed a lot of the green guys dead-!" she complained.

I comforted Sui and reassured her with a "Of course Sui killed a lot of goblins. Sui's amazing!" before I explained what had happened to the Guild Master.

"Fer dealt with the top goblin monsters but Sui and I killed all the ordinary goblins." I ducked my head a bit. "Although to be truthful I only managed to kill a few of them."

"Ah, I hadn't realised that. So your Slime is really that strong, is it?" Absolutely, Sui is really strong and she can make recovery medicines too. She can do so much.

"Guild Master?" Johan interrupted. "This young feller here already gave me a bunch of disassembling to get through to deliver to him tomorrow. If I push on and work really hard I think I can get the rest of these done too by then." He grinned. "Say the word and I'll show you what a craftsman with this sort of a challenge facing him can achieve." Johan's impatience to start disassembling the monsters piled up in front of him was clear.

Please work hard disassembling, Johan-ojisan. Oh, and remember to save the edible

meat for me.

"Well now that's agreed will you come back tomorrow? We'll have your C-ranked Guild card ready by then and of course I can explain the high-ranking requests to you then."

"That sounds okay. I'll return tomorrow." It looked like our worries about the King and the nobles in this country were at an end, but now we have a high-ranking request to deal with. Well, it's actually Fer who'll be handling the request of course but I'm sure he'll do his best.

"Hoi, I'm hungry." The animated rug had woken up. Yeah yeah. "Remember our agreement?" What agreement was that?

"We'll only stay here in this city if you supply me with delicious meals." Fer reminded me. Oh, that agreement.

"You remember now. Good. Hurry up and make me a delicious meal." Yeah yeah. Let's go back to the inn then.

# Chapter 64

## My Personal Cooking Style, Quick and Dirty

So, time to make dinner. The problem is, what? I've only got Rock Bird meat right now so it will have to be something in the chicken line.

Recipes, hmmm I'll go with an old favourite of mine, Szechuan chicken in spicy sauce. Fer will complain if that's all there is so I'll do some stir-fry as well, fried chicken and green peppers. I don't hate peppers like some people do, I like the sharp taste they have. I'll tweak the amounts so there's more meat than normal to keep Fer happy.

First up, shopping at the Net Super. Let's see, tomatoes, cucumber, green peppers and some red and yellow peppers too. They add colour to the dish. I put in my order, not forgetting to buy the most important side-dish, premium beer. I deserved some beer to toast the successful solving of my Guild ranking problem.

Excellent, now to get started with the Szechuan chicken. First I boiled Rock Bird breast in wine and salted water. While the meat was cooling down I sliced the tomatoes and cut the cucumbers into thin strips. I shredded the meat with my fingers then laid lots of it down on a bed of tomato slices and cucumber strips topped off with sesame seed dressing. I cut back on the spiciness since I expected a certain someone to complain otherwise but a simple sesame seed dressing should be fine. I like it anyway... If you want it hotter you can add chili oil with the sesame seed dressing.

On to the stir-fry, chicken with green peppers. I prodded some Rock Bird meat with a fork to open it up a bit then cut it into bite-sized pieces before marinating it in a ziploc bag with soy sauce and sake. I chopped up the peppers to size while the meat absorbed the flavourings.

Once the meat was properly scorched both sides in a hot oiled pan I took it off the heat and added the peppers. Once they softened I added the seasoning, some oyster sauce from a tube then fired it up again and started tossing the contents in the pan until it was ready.

I use a lot of oyster sauce for soups as well as stir-fry and I always keep some on hand. The tubes of ready-made sauce are really convenient and I've been buying them ever

since they started appearing on the shop shelves.

I turned out the chicken and green peppers stir-fry onto a dish.

"It's ready," I announced to the waiting audience behind me.

"It's not just meat, is it?" Fer sniffed suspiciously.

"Let's eat it, it's delicious-"

"What's th-... \*chomp\*... \*chomp\*\*chomp\*\*chomp\*..." Fer settled down to some serious eating.

Sui's telepathic declaration that "It's delicious, Aruji-" was enough proof for me that the dish was a success. Sui's so cute...

I started on my own helping of Szechaun chicken and green pepper chicken stir-fry accompanied by a beer. The beer was first, of course.

"Psssh," the can foamed a little as I opened it. "Glug glug glug..." as it went down my throat.

"Fuuu, a beer is just the right thing right now." I filled my mouth with Szechaun chicken. Munch munch, yep it's delicious as Sui said. The sesame seed topping has a refreshing taste. I followed it with another mouthful of beer. Nice. Next, some stir-fried chicken, well stir-fried Rock Bird and green peppers which have a nice crisp texture as I expected. The seasonings worked really well and they're so simple, I just add them to the cooking. All praise to the Japanese food industry! I toasted them with another mouthful of beer. It's delicious.

Oh, I forgot to cook rice but I suppose bread will do in a pinch. Lessee, can I put the Szechuan chicken between two slices of bread? Hmmm, munch. "Oh, that works fine." I worried that the bread would get soggy from the tomatoes but if I eat it quick there's no problem. Hurry hurry... and some more premium beer. My enjoyment of my Szechaun chicken and stir-fry and green peppers and premium beer combo was interrupted by a loud voice.

"Hey, seconds here."

"Sui too-"

Yeah yeah. I've gotten used to their gluttonous demands but I wasn't going to be rushed so I continued enjoying my dinner and my beer while I made seconds for Fer and Sui.

"So? Was it good?" I enquired afterwards.

"It was so-so." grumped Fer. It couldn't have been that bad really, he finished off everything I put in front of him.

"Sui thinks it was delicious-" Ahhh, Sui's so honest. And cute.

"Well, I should get a lot more meat tomorrow so I'll grill some Orc King steak next time."

"If you're grilling steak do it like you usually do." Yeah yeah. Fer really likes steak, especially with soy sauce. Me I'd prefer to cook some curry instead but doing it in an inn, the smell is a bit strong... I guess it'll be a while before I can eat curry again. While I was daydreaming about curry I noticed Fer was stretching and yawning. Eating so much had made him sleepy.

"Move over and I'll put down a futon for you." I ordered, poking him in the side.

"Yeah, do that." Fer settled down as soon as I had laid down a futon in his stall.

"Right, we're going back to our room." Fer wagged his tail in reply, his eyes already closed. He was totally out of it. Shall we go back to our room then, Sui-chan?

# Chapter 65

## Over Two Thousand Gold Coins In My Pocket

The next day when we entered the Adventurers Guild, we were immediately guided to the Guild Master's office by a receptionist. Of course Fer and Sui (inside her bag as usual) were with me.

"First of all, let me give you the C-ranked Guild card I mentioned yesterday." The Guild Master handed me a silver-coloured card which looked different to the G-ranked Guild card I had previously. I thought they'd look the same.

"Well," the Guild Master explained, "the colour changes when there's a big step in rankings, from probationary rank G to rank F for example." The card is this silver colour for all ranks from F to B, but for A and S rank Adventurers the card is a golden colour. A gold card is proof the Adventurer who carries it is an elite. I didn't even know that the color of the card changed at all before it was explained to me.

"Next is the accounting for the items we're purchasing from your good self." the Guild Master went on. "These are high-grade monsters in excellent condition. The Guild will easily find buyers and make a good profit for their parts after dismantling, so we won't charge you for that service." Ah, that's a nice bonus for us.

"I'll start with what you brought to us the day before yesterday." Oh, that would be the Red Serpent and other monsters.

"There are 5 Orc Generals worth 12 gold coins." Other than the meat which we were keeping the Orc General's testicles were the big earners, being one of the ingredients for a strong aphrodisiac.

"Next is three Rock Birds for 24 gold coins." The Rock Bird's materials were the beak and the feathers.

"Next is the Giant Dodo. It had a mana stone, so including that it's worth 33 gold coins." It seems there was a mana stone though it was a B rank monster. Lucky.

"Then there's the Giant Deer. It didn't have a mana stone so it's worth 16 gold coins."

No mana stone this time. Ah well, you win some and lose some. The horns and leather skin are the valuable materials this time.

"The A rank Murder Grizzly is worth 87 gold coins." he continued. The fur was in excellent condition as were the liver and the claws. As an A-ranked monster it definitely had a magic stone, larger than usual in fact which boosted the price.

"The A-ranked Black Serpent is worth 88 gold coins." It had been a while since the Guild had a chance to buy Black Serpent so the price was a bit higher than usual. The main materials were the poison sacs, liver, fangs and eyeballs. As an A-rank monster again there was obviously a mana stone and again it was quite big and good quality.

"Lastly the Red Serpent." the Guild Master said. "This is worth 201 gold coins." The Red Serpent is a special variety of Black Serpent. Although it's considered an rank A monster like its counterpart it's stronger than the Black Serpent and it's noticeably more aggressive so it is very difficult to subjugate. It's a monster that only turns up for sale once every few years at the Adventurers Guild.

Like the Black Serpent, the main materials it provided were the poison sacs, liver, fangs and eyeballs plus the skin and its magic stone. The reason it was worth more than than the Black Serpent is that leather goods made with Red Serpent skin are regarded as high-class merchandise and very much in demand. The mana stone was also very large which again raised its value considerably.

"So, the sum of the purchases you brought in earlier is 461 gold coins." The Guild Master looked up from the accounting sheet. "All the meat is in the warehouse, you can collect it when you're ready to leave."

..... Ah, did you say 461 gold coins? That's a lot more than the last time we sold monsters to the Guild back in Fariel. Fer is the real breadwinner in our little family. Oh well, I'm glad he's working hard because I get to eat well too. The meat he catches is top-quality. Fer can't resist delicious meat after all.

Sui's getting to eat good food too, not just the other-world garbage from my Net Super purchases. I can't say 'no' to cute little Sui after all. I'm helpless. I made a mental note to myself to remember to collect the meat for Fer and Sui from the Guild's warehouse. That's important. I turned my attention back to the Guild Master.

"The rest of the account is payment for the monsters that you brought us yesterday.

Happily we found buyers quickly for nearly everything you're selling." The Guild Master had a broad smile on his face. It seemed it was working out to be a very lucrative deal for the Guild.

As Johan-ojisan had said yesterday, nearly every monster in the second batch was A rank or S rank. It seems that few high-ranked monsters are available on the markets so there is a pent-up demand for them when they do turn up.

"Let's go over the explanation of the breakdown of what we brought in addition. First of all, 4 Ogres worth 160 gold coins." Ogre meat is inedible (or so Fer says) but the valuable materials are the horns and skin. The horns are used for various medicines and they sell for a high price. Ogre skin is popular as a basis for leather armor because of its high defensive properties. Unfortunately there were not any mana stones in these four monsters since they were all B ranked.

"The S-ranked Blue Ogre is worth 432 gold coins." A Blue Ogre is a special variant of Ogre as Johan explained yesterday. Again the horns are prized as ingredients for a secret medicine but I don't know the details. The skin will become super-high-class leather armor with both physical and magical defensive power. There was also a mana stone and as expected of an S-rank monster it was very large and of high quality. I was kinda surprised that an ugly brute like this was worth so much even if it was S-ranked.

"Continuing, the Orc King is worth 168 gold coins." Orc King is an A-ranked monster. The meat is apparently super high-class. The Guild Master tried to persuade me to sell them the whole carcass for a good price but I refused politely. Sorry, I can't sell the meat. The important materials other than meat seems to be the testicles, the skin and a magic stone.

It seems that a pregnancy is guaranteed by aphrodisiacs which use an Orc King's testicle as an ingredient. For royalty and aristocrats troubled because of a lack of offspring to succeed them they will pay anything for such items. The skin makes leather armor providing strong physical defense and also sells well. The mana stone was also very big and high quality.

"Next is the Metal Lizard, worth 169 gold coins." the meat of an A-ranked Metal Lizard is poisonous and can't be eaten. The material it provided was its skin, its teeth and a mana stone since it's A-ranked. Its mana stone was again large and high-quality. Although the skin looks like steel, it is actually light and flexible and reputedly it's the best material available for protection against physical attacks. It's especially popular

with elite Adventurers, those of A rank and S rank. Metal Lizard teeth will be used to make arrowheads for archers. It seems that such arrowheads have increased penetrating power.

"Next is the S-ranked Lake Shark. This is worth 468 gold coins." The meat smells terrible and can't be eaten, like the Metal Lizard's. The materials it provides are skin, teeth and a mana stone. In this case Johan had only retrieved the mana stone without further disassembling it. The Guild Master smiled. He explained there has already been a lot of offers by various nobles who wanted to buy the complete Lake Shark carcass to preserve it as a trophy.

I suppose if most times a Lake Shark is available to buy it's because of a drought and its lake has dried up, it's got to be quite rare hasn't it? The mana stone is again very large, typical of an S-ranked monster.

"The rest are goblins and since there was a small mana stone in the Goblin King that's 18 gold coins. There's no other materials to be purchased from them though. We will add a separate subjugation fee though." Even the higher-ranked goblins aren't worth much -- a Goblin King is B-rank, a Goblin General is C-rank, a Goblin Mage is D-rank, a Goblin Soldier is F-rank and lesser goblins are, as I was told earlier when I took the original subjugation request ranked G. It seems there are some other higher-ranked goblins like Goblin Knights and Goblin Assassins, both ranked E.

"So," the Guild Master shuffled the papers on his desk, "this second group of monsters is worth a total of 1415 gold coins. Add to that a subjugation fee of 70 gold coins for dealing with the goblin village and the 461 gold coins for the first group of monsters, that makes a total of 1946 gold coins." He bent down and lifted seven heavy sacks from the floor beside his chair and deposited them on his desk with seven heavy thuds.

"Since large gold coins and platinum coins aren't convenient for everyday use, we issue gold coins to Adventurers when we make payments. Is that all right in your case?"

I was stunned. Those bags I was staring at couldn't all be full of gold coins, could they?

"Are you all right?" The Guild Master asked concernedly.

"Is that-- is that really 1946 g-gold coins?"

"Yes. There are 300 gold coins in each sack except for the last one, that's half full with

146 gold coins. Do you want to count them?"

I shook my head violently. "I don't need to, I trust you, Guild Master. I'm just surprised at the amount..." I never thought there would be so much.

"You should know," the Guild master continued, "that amount, 1946 gold coins, is the most we've ever paid out for purchases since the founding of this Guild."

Oh, is that so? Then again, how many guys like me turn up on your doorstep with such a big lot of monsters to sell? I felt sorry for having done so somehow but they had just accumulated in my Item Box almost by accident. I wasn't really hard up for money either, I just needed the meat. I already had a lot of gold coins from my first sale of monsters back in Fariel and I got a good reward for capturing the bandits. Adding it all up I've got well over 2000 gold coins now. Over 2000 gold coins in my pocket. That's like carrying 200 million yen around in cash. I've never had that sort of money before.

And it's not even my money, not really. I didn't do anything to earn most of it, Fer did nearly all of the monster-hunting while I sat back. Well OK, a lot of the monsters were the result of me feeding Fer food from the Net Super and revving him up so he rushed off to hunt and burn off some excess energy. The Lake Shark was beaten by Fer's magic too. Heck, most of the lower-ranked goblins at the village were killed by Sui, not me while we were totally safe behind a Barrier Fer had created for us.

Ah well, it only goes to show that Fer is really amazing. It seems that I'm stuck with a certain gluttonous character for a long time to come.

# Chapter 66

## The Guild Master's Requests

After I put the sacks full of gold coins into my Item Box we discussed the requests the Guild Master was wanting to offer to us.

"Well, we've got two outstanding high-ranked subjugation requests we'd like to offer you. The first is to subjugate a Metal Lizard and the other is the subjugation of a herd of Bloody Horn Bulls."

OK, I understand what he means by Metal Lizard since we just sold one to the Adventurers Guild but what sort of monster is a Bloody Horn Bull? 'Horns dripping with blood' doesn't sound particularly gentle or meek to me. It's called a 'Bull', does that mean it's something like a cow? 'Blood dripping cow'...that's an ominous name to give to a monster.

"The first request is a Metal Lizard. Its territory is at the foot of Pasquale Mountain, about two days carriage ride from here. It was probably attracted by the minerals located there but we've not been able to survey the area properly so we're not sure." The Guild Master explained. "There are mines near this location but since the Lizard moved in they've been temporarily abandoned as the danger it poses is too great. The mine owners have requested the Metal Lizard subjugation. It is worth 238 gold coins." He shrugged. "I have been asking for this request to be dealt with for some time now. No Adventurers of suitable rank were available or they've been busy with other things. I even tried getting the reward increased but there still have been no takers."

A Metal Lizard shouldn't be a problem for us. Fer didn't have any difficulty dealing with the previous one after all. Fer is Da Man.

"The second request concerns a herd of Bloody Horn Bulls which have moved into the grasslands to the west of the city and settled down there. That area was a common monster hunting ground for lower-ranking Adventurers and losing access to it means a lot of them can't easily fulfil their own requests. They've been pushing for the Guild to do something about the herd but our subjugation request still hasn't been accepted by anyone. The reward for hunting them is 324 gold coins."

According to the Guild master a Bloody Horn Bull is about the size of a wild cow with a temperament to match. As their name suggests they gore anyone who approaches the herd with their horns resulting in a bloodbath. A single Bloody Horn Bull is only a B-rank monster but it usually takes four parties of A and B rank Adventurers to subjugate a herd of them since they are very aggressive and act in unison. Truly, herds of other-world cows that stab people with their horns are scary!

"So can you accept these two requests?" the Guild Master finished. Well, he asked me but it wasn't really for me to decide.

"Hey Fer, you heard all that? What do you think, should we accept both of the requests?"

"Of course. I can do both of them easy." Yeah, I guessed you'd say that. I told the Guild Master we'd accept both requests.

"Wonderful. I'm so pleased." he said.

"Bloody Horn Bull? That meat is delicious. I'll go do that request right away." Fer interjected, drooling. It seemed Fer was keen to get started. So he reckons Bloody Horn Bull meat is delicious, is it? I guess if it looks like a cow then it's probably something like beef. I hope so, Orc meat is really tasty and so is the Rock Bird but it's been a while since I ate any beef.

"Ah, can I ask that you deal with the Metal Lizard first, please?" the Guild Master said.

"Huh..." Fer grumped. Hey, the Guild Master asked nicely.

"Let's do the Metal Lizard request first like the Guild Master wants, hey?" I said. "The Bloody Horn Bull herd is living on the grasslands, they're not going anywhere in a hurry. Better to have some fun later." I teased.

"What sort of fun?" Fer asked, intrigued in spite of himself.

"Grilling Bloody Horn Bull steaks, that sort of fun. Interested?" Fer's head came up.

"Oh, that... ohhh..." Fer's drool was now puddling on the floor of the Guild Master's office.

"That's right, you know I can grill meat just the way you like." I'd have to restock on

sauces and seasonings from the Net Super beforehand, of course.

"Fuuu, it sounds delicious..." Heh, Fer's love of steak made him easy to manipulate.

"Ah, the Guild will purchase Bloody Horn Bulls, won't you?" I asked.

"Of course we would." the Guild Master confirmed. "As we agreed the meat from any subjugation requests belongs to Fenrir-sama but Bloody Horn Bull meat is premium grade, very tasty and in great demand. The Guild would be happy to buy half of the meat from you at a good price if that's agreeable."

Half of the herd for the Guild, half for us, that sounds reasonable. I don't know how big the herd is but it's got to be more than just a few individuals. Each one's pretty big too so keeping just half of them, that's a lot of meat.

"Right then." said Fer. "Let's go and deal with that Metal Lizard."

"Hang on," I interrupted as Fer rose to his feet and turned towards the office door. "I know you're in a hurry but if we head out now we won't be back before midnight. The city gates will be closed and we won't be able to get back in." Fer stopped and looked over his shoulder. "Let's wait until tomorrow morning then we're sure to be back before nightfall." I explained.

"Nuu, you think so?"

"Yeah I think so. Guild Master, is it OK if we delay subjugating the Metal Lizard until tomorrow?"

The Guild Master looked surprised. "I suppose it's OK but will it only take you a day to do the job?"

"If it's two days carriage ride to Pasquale Mountain then it'll only take Fer and me a few hours to get there. Subjugating the Metal Lizard shouldn't take very long... Hey Fer, how long does it take you to defeat a Metal Lizard?"

"Hmmp, I can deal with mere reptiles like that no problem."

"So- so that's how it is... Fenrir-sama treats an A-ranked monster like it was a common lizard." The Guild master was amazed. "That confidence simply demonstrates his overwhelming and unfathomable power yet again. Our King was wise to extend a hand

of friendship to such a being."

Hey Guild Master you wouldn't say things like that so easily if you had to live with him all the time like I do.

"Right then, we'll head off and subjugate the Metal Lizard first thing in the morning."

"Thanks. Please return to the Guild as soon as you've finished the request." the Guild Master said.

"If you'll excuse us..." We left his office and headed downstairs to the Guild's warehouse. Fer would never forgive me if I forgot to collect the meat waiting for us there. Johan had it all ready and I packed an incredible amount of meat into my Item Box before we left the Guild.

"Hey Fer, we've still got time, do you want to stop by Lambert-san's store?"

"Is it that merchant's place?"

"We've got money now and I'd like to replace Sui's bag." I patted the cloth bag Sui was in.

"It's really dirty-looking." Fer acknowledged.

"Well the bag was second-hand to start with and Sui's been living in it for weeks now. It's worn out and dirty so I've decided she deserves a new bag. Lambert-san told us his shop sells leather goods so we'll take Sui along to check out what he's got and we'll buy her the one she finds most comfortable. Even if it's expensive that won't be a problem." Anything for Sui-chan, I won't compromise. "Oh, Fer, if there's anything you want there just say the word."

"The only thing I want is delicious meals, nothing else matters to me." Fer is remarkably easy to please in some ways.

"So you wouldn't like a nice collar then?"

"Grrrr, I'll bite you if you try and put a collar on me..."

"Don't worry, no way I'd even consider doing something like that. Just kidding." Stop growling at me. Can't you take a joke?

# Chapter 67

## Lambert-san's shop

When we finally got to Lambert-san's shop it was a bigger and more up-market store than I had expected. When I plucked up my courage and entered Lambert-san was the only one there.

"Ah, Mukouda-san, welcome. I've been looking forward to you coming here."

"Ah, thanks. Uh, Fer's with me, is that okay? "

"Oh, definitely. Please come in." Lambert's shop was big and there was plenty of room to accommodate Fer who immediately curled up in a corner out of the way.

"Well, actually I was thinking of replacing my bag..."

"Well, what kind of bag are you looking for?" Lambert-san inquired.

"Well, I'm looking for something like this shoulder bag and about this size." I showed him the bag Sui was currently sleeping in.

"How about these?" He showed me some shoulder bags. They all looked like messenger bags. The mouth could be opened pretty wide with large flaps so they looked like it wouldn't be a problem for Sui to get in and out. The belt slung on the shoulder was also nice and wide so it wouldn't dig in. I asked Lambert-san what kind of leather they were made from.

"That one is Red Boar leather." he answered. It's a soft leather unlike cowhide, quite dark-coloured. It feels quite comfortable to me but would Sui like it?

Lambert-san showed me another bag. "This is Bloody Horn Bull's leather." Oh, that's a coincidence, they're one of the subjugation requests we just accepted. It felt just as soft as the Red Boar bag but it's made from thicker material. It was a deep black colour.

"And here's one made of Giant Deer leather -" This is a light brown leather, almost beige. It was hard and firm, a bit like tanned cowhide. It looked quite stylish.

Lamber-san went on to show me some other bags, telling me about the materials used for each one. "This bag is made from Sand Snake leather." Sand Snake-skin has beautiful scales peculiar to snakes. I'd like something small like a wallet or something made from this sort of skin, I thought to myself.

He showed me one final bag. "And here's my personal favourite, Black Serpent skin. Black Serpent is a high-ranking demon so it takes a lot of time and effort to tan the skin and finish it properly. Even though the price is high it's very popular. See how it shines. Splendid, isn't it?" Oh, so that's Black Serpent? A scale pattern unique to snakes shimmered over the black leather. Unlike Sand Snake's leather, it was glossy. It was very much luxury goods. I wanted something made of it but maybe not a shoulder bag.

"Lambert-san, everything you've shown me is wonderful. "

"Thank you. I'm proud of the products our craftsmen make. We like to think we're the best. "

"So, what about the price for the bags?"

"The Red Boar bag is 2 gold coins, the Bloody Horn Bull bag is 5 gold coins, the Giant Deer bag - 4 gold coins and 5 silver coins, the bag made from Sand Snake skin would be 8 gold coins and the Black Serpent bag I showed you is 17 gold coins."

I told Lambert that the prices seemed reasonable, well with the exception of the Black Serpent bag. The Sand Snake-skin bag is also expensive, but it seems it costs more here since transportation to this city from the south of the country where Sand Snakes can be found increases the price substantially. Still, it's clearly popular since the scales of this snake are beautiful. The Black Serpent and Sand Snake leather have a sense of luxury, and I feel that it seemed a bit too fancy for a bag I'm going to use all the time to carry Sui around in. Still, for an accessory like a wallet or a purse, maybe...

"Red Boar's leather is low in price and recommended for everyday use. Bloody Horn Bull's leather has a fine black finish and the leather is soft and comfortable to the touch. I'd recommend this if it's a gift for someone special." Lambert-san pointed to the bag made from Giant Deer skin. "I should add, although Giant Deer leather is stiff to begin with, it will become more flexible as it ages and the color will darken naturally so if you're going to own it for a long time it would be my choice."

Indeed, I personally think the Giant Deer leather is a superb material but it's maybe

too hard for Sui. I'd buy it for my own use otherwise. Given that it's for Sui though, it's going to be either Red Boar or Bloody Horn Bull.

"Lambert-san, I-" Sui interrupted me, wriggling in her bag.

"Ah, hold on Sui," I turned back to Lambert-san. "Can I take my Slime out? It's my contracted monster."

"A- a Slime?" What have you got against Slimes, Lambert-san? You've got a strange expression on your face.

"Well, have a look..." I showed Mr. Lambert-san the contents of my cloth shoulder bag.

"Oh, I see," Lambert-san nodded. "The bag you're buying is for your contracted monster so a soft leather such as Red Boar or Bloody Horn Bull may be better for it, yes?"

"Well, that's what I'm thinking too, so I figure the one to choose which is more comfortable for them should be Sui herself."

I pulled Sui out of her cloth bag and held her up. "Which bag should I buy for Sui?" I asked her. Sui jumped out of my hands and quickly slid into the bag made from Red Boar leather.

"Sui thinks this one is good-"

"Oh, Lambert-san, sorry."

"No, it's okay, is it the Red Boar bag you want then?"

"Yes, please... Oh, and I'm looking for a sheath for a knife..." I explained to Lambert-san that I wanted a knife sheath that could be hung on a belt.

"Oh, something like this?" Mr. Lambert showed me a sheath on a belt made of Giant Deer leather. "How about it?" I thought it would suit me nicely.

"How much is it?"

"The buckle is very finely made so it will be six gold coins."

On close inspection the buckle was very well crafted as Lambert-san said. It was kinda pricey but I had money to burn right now so what the hell...

"I'll take it too."

"Thank you for your custom."

I was invited by Lambert-san to look around the rest of the store.

"Ah..." My eye fell on a Sand Snake-skin wallet. Oh, that looks nice. Because this world only uses coins and not paper money, it was a simple palm-sized purse to keep coins in. The scale patterns were even nicer than the ones on the bag. I wanted it...

"Do you like it?" Lambert-san was in salesman mode. "Sand Snake-skin obviously. Since it's smaller than the bag it only costs one gold coin and five silver coins." He held it up to the light, showing it off. "The scales are particularly beautiful."

1 gold coin and 5 silver coins? I'll buy it, I'll buy it. "This too, please."

Looking around the inside of the shop, I saw rows of shoes lined up on the shelves.

"You also sell shoes here?" I didn't think they'd sell shoes.

"Yes, because they're leather goods." Lambert-san seemed puzzled that I thought only shoe shops sold shoes.

I've been wearing a pair of cheap leather shoes I bought at a chain store since I came to this world. They were getting worn out from walking on this world's unpaved roads and mountain trails. I could buy sneakers at the Net Super but anyone looking at them would think they're weird. It would be better for me to have footwear from this world. I decided to purchase ankle boots made from Red Boar leather costing 1 gold coin and 5 silver coins.

Lambert-san added up my purchases on a scrap of paper. "A shoulder bag and a belt with a knife sheath, a wallet, boots... that's 11 gold coins..." he smiled and tore up the tally sheet. "For you it's no charge."

"Huh?" Wait, what?

Lambert-san's face grew serious. "Mudouka-sama saved my life. Besides I heard from

Rashu-san, I thought that the meal you made for us was premium meat but I didn't know it was Black Serpent and Rock Bird."

"No, that was just what we always eat." I explained. "Really I'm uncomfortable not paying for such fine items."

"I cannot offer you enough for saving my life so accept these gifts please." Lambert-san's eyes gleamed. "Next time you come to buy from my shop you'll pay dearly, I assure you." he laughed.

I gave in. "Thank you, Lambert-san, in that case I will accept your kind gifts." I'd just saved myself 11 gold coins. Lucky. I should save people's lives more often.

"To change the subject, I'd like to discuss some business propositions with you Mukouda-san..." Lambert-san was suddenly in Merchant mode.

"I understand you only hunted a Black Serpent for its meat?" he asked.

"Well yes but it was Fer who hunted it, not me." I pointed at Fer who was sleeping in the corner.

"Would you be willing to sell that Black Serpent to me directly? "

"Well, the Adventurers Guild..." I explained I had already sold it to them.

"Ah, that's unfortunate." Lambert-san sighed. "For monster materials, basically Merchants buy them mostly through the Adventurers Guild but right now there is a shortage of Black Serpent skin. Buying directly from Adventurers without going through the Guild is something the Adventurers Guild and my fellows in the Merchant Guild frown upon officially but in practice they turn a blind eye to small amounts of trading of that sort. If Mudouka-sama gets anything I particularly desired such as Black Serpent I'd like to buy it from you directly..."

You're asking me to do something that shady, does that mean that Black Serpent skin is in really short supply?

"Are you really so desperate to get hold of Black Serpent skin?"

"Yes. Goods made from Black Serpent skins are popular despite being expensive, but the amount of skins on the market right now is quite limited." Lambert-san's face

clouded over.

This pressure is getting really bothersome.

"Saying that it seems that the Adventurers Guild here recently purchased a Red Serpent, an upper-class variant of the high-ranked Black Serpent." Lambert-san went on. "I've worked with Red Serpent skin several times in the past, that stunning leather, it makes me sigh..." The expression on Lambert-san's face is so revealing.

I'm sorry but I feel a little uncomfortable at seeing the obvious lust on his features.

"However," he went on, "There's no way I can afford that Red Serpent skin even when it did come on the market. I heard that the entire skin was bought by the Marquis of Brauer at a considerably inflated price." He sighed. "You know, I'm somewhat envious of him."

Sorry, Lambert-san but I sold that Red Serpent to the Adventurers Guild too.

"Mukouda-san, if you hunt more Black Serpents please consider selling them to me directly. I'll pay more than the regular price you'd get from the Adventurers Guild." Lambert-san reached out to grasp my hand.

"I understand. If you're okay with it, if we get any Black Serpent I'll bring it here first." I said desperately.

After that was agreed I got the items I had purchased (well, they were actually gifts) and we finally made it out of Lambert-san's shop before he could get me to agree to any more under-the-counter deals.

## Chapter 68

# Deep Fried Red Serpent, Tastier Than Expected

"Hey Sui, is the bag good?" I asked Sui who was in her new Red Boar leather bag.

"This bag, it's more comfortable than the other one-" Sui told me.

"Yeah? That's great." It's good to have a new bag for her.

"Oh Fer, did you hear what Lambert-san said?" I asked.

"Uh-huh. About a black snake? " Fer answered.

"Yup. If you come across a Black Serpent, can you hunt it if possible. Is that OK?"

"For sure. That kind of meat is delicious." Fer's bottomless stomach agreed.

"Oh Aruji-, that's a great idea. It will be really delicious if you deep fried it." Sui chimed in.

"Hmmm, fried? Yeah, that was delicious. Oh, and remember we've got some Red Serpent meat. Let's try that today. After that I want you to grill some steaks."

From what everyone's told me Red Serpent meat is super high class food.

"Are you gonna fry some Red Serpent meat? I'm going to carry out the Metal Lizard suppression tomorrow and eating something extravagant like that will really get me going."

"Are you frying tonight? Sui loves fried foods! Yay!"

When I hear Sui say she loves fried food then there's no choice for me, it's going to be fried food tonight.

"Wait a bit, I want to buy some clothes before going back to the inn. I'll stop by a clothes store." I want to buy some new clothes while I've got money in my pocket. I'm OK with

buying socks and underwear at the Net Super but proper clothing isn't listed in the online menu. I can buy sweatshirts and casual pants and such but wearing something like that here I'd stand out so I went to a clothes store on the way back to the inn.

I looked for something a bit colourful but it seems that dyeing is not a well-developed process here and all the clothing was a similar dull hue. In the end I bought three sets of shirts and trousers and changed in the shop. In total it was two gold coins and four silver coins.

Time to go back to the inn.



I started preparing the evening meal as soon as I got back to the inn. Since Fell and Sui asked it'll be fried food tonight. I now had plenty of meat, so I tried cooking not just the Red Serpent meat but a lot more different kinds as well. I planned to put the surplus cooked foods in the Item Box so they can be eaten anytime.

I made two kinds of flavouring, soy sauce based and salt based this time. The main meats were Red Serpent followed by Black Serpent, Rock Bird and Giant Dodo.

Firstly I rubbed the soy sauce and salt-based flavouring into each cut of meat, then gave it a little time to soak in then then deep fried the meat in cooking oil. I decided to cook each piece twice this time to make it tastier.

I started with the main course, Red Serpent. The first time through I fried it in low temperature oil to let the flavourings soak in and seal the meat, the second pass I heated the oil way up. Yeah, the light brown colour gave me a good feeling about the results.

First bite... \*crunch\*.

..... Oh wow-----!

What is this? Crisp outside, juicy inside. Furthermore, it tastes better and better as I slowly chew it.

The meat's pale white and delicious in its own right with soy sauce and salt flavouring adding to its taste with the firmness of the meat complementing the sensation in my

mouth. It might just be the most delicious fried food I ever ate.

"Aruji-, Sui too! Sui wants to eat too."

"That's right. Let me at it."

Oh- I nearly forgot about them, it was so delicious... I put down two dishes of freshly cooked deep-fried Red Serpent in front of Fer and Sui.

"This is delicious! Sooo delicious!-" Sui was deeply impressed by the Red Serpent meat.

"Wow! !!" Even Fer was entranced by the taste of what he was eating.

"Seconds-" they both demanded in unison a few moments later. Me too, I'll indulge myself tonight and have seconds too. I can see why everyone agrees Red Serpent is especially delicious. It is truly super high class meat.

Right then, get cooking again. If I put deep-fried Red Serpent down in front of those two it will disappear quick so I'll cook some other meat as well. I'll fry up some Black Serpent, Rock Bird and Giant Dodo.

I kept frying and frying for those two gluttons. I could maybe take it easy later but right now it was deep-fry for them, put it out on a plate, deep-fry again, put it out again, time after time.

"Fuu-, Sui's tummy is full."

"Gefu, I'm stuffed too."

Ha ha ha ha ha, victory is mine! I didn't repeat my previous mistake of underestimating how much those two gluttons could eat so there was plenty left for me this time. Since we've got so much meat on hand I'll cook lots more while I've got the opportunity.

"Hey? I'm no longer hungry." said Fer quizzically, watching me cooking more deep-fried meat.

"This is food I'm going to save for later. If I fry it and put it in my Item Box then you can eat it any time without waiting for me to cook it."

"Oh, that's a good idea. Make a lot of it."

Yeah yeah, like I'm gonna wait for permission from you. Heh. I won't just make deep-fried food though. For example I've got meat from the Orc Generals to work with so I started cutting up some of that meat into pieces. I thought the smell might revive Fer's appetite but he was already lying on a futon in his stall, half-asleep.

Right then, I heated up just the right amount of oil while I cut up Orc General's meat and marinated it. I did the same with Rock Bird meat, for chicken-style dishes. OK, let's make fried pork cutlets and chicken cutlets, lots of them.

I cooked and cooked and cooked, then..."Fuuu- finally finished." I put a lot of deep-fried foods, pork cutlets and chicken cutlets in the Item Box. Fer was sleeping soundly in his futon just like Sui in her new leather bag.

Huhu, it's time for grown-ups. A big plate of hot deep-fried meat and crisp-coated cutlets and a premium beer to accompany it. The beer's nice and cold if I buy it direct from the Net Super.

Cold beer and hot fried food, it's the best.

Well..... \*crunch\*. The juices flooded my mouth. Deep fried Red Serpent meat is super delicious.

Pssh-, glug glug glug.

"Fuuu-, it's delicious. Fried food and beer, what a combination!"

Next, how about an Orc General pork cutlet? Add some tonkatsu sauce. \*crunch\*

"Oh, this tastes better than regular Orc meat." Orc General meat is definitely better than ordinary Orc, the meat is firm and the fatty aftertaste doesn't linger. I drank more beer.

"Fu-, Orc General pork cutlet and beer are good together too."

When I looked up, a big round moon hung high in the night sky. It was a much bigger moon than I ever saw in Japan.

"Eating fried food and drinking cold beer in the moonlight, how poetical..." That night,

I ate delicious food and drank delicious beer while watching the moon.

# Chapter 69

## Mithril Lizard

We left the city early the next morning, running toward Pasquale Mountain. Of course Fer is doing all the running, I'm simply riding on his back and Sui is sleeping comfortably in her new bag.

Fer gobbled up some Orc General steaks for breakfast before we set off. We had a long day ahead of us and I didn't want him getting hungry and crabby half-way though. Sui seemed to be quite happy in her bag.

"Is that where that reptile's supposed to be?" Fer's tone of voice was dismissive of his intended prey. Hey, it's supposed to be a Class A monster! A tall peak that I took to be Pasquale Mountain appeared on the horizon.

"If the Guild Master's directions were correct, that's Pasquale Mountain. Do you know where the Metal Lizard is likely to be, Fer?"

"Wait a moment..." Fer said and after a second or two he accelerated towards where he thought the Metal Lizard would be. When I asked him he told me he seems to know the approximate location of any monster nearby. It's something like a feeling of recognition rather than a specific location skill, apparently.

"We're just about there." Saying that Fer slowed down to a halt.

"It's over there." I followed Fer's gaze. There was a cave under the shade of a tree.

"Is that where the Metal Lizard is living?" I asked. I don't like caves for good reason. I blame Fer's magic training regime.

"Probably." Fer answered.

"So how are we going to do this?" I asked apprehensively.

"I'll think about it later." Fer answered. That wasn't the answer I wanted to hear... Fer charged into the cave with me still on his back.

"W- W- W- W- wait a minute, ahhh-" At least let me off first, you big idiot.

As we ran into the pitch-dark cavern we immediately encountered the Metal Lizard. There was a wide opening just past the cave entrance. Over by the far wall the Metal Lizard was eating something with a loud crunching sound. It looked... huh?

"Hey, what's up with that Lizard? Somehow its body is glowing..."

"So what. I'll defeat that reptile with one hit and turn it into money." Fer was indifferent to the unusual sight.

Don't just say "So what", you... To be on the safe side I used Appraisal on the glowing monster and it registered as "Mithril Lizard"...Mithril? That's the precious metal that appears in fantasy novels?

"Fer, I just used Appraisal on that Metal Lizard and it's actually a Mithril Lizard." I warned him.

"If that's the case there's a vein of mithril ore in here somewhere. That reptile has been eating mithril ore and it's mutated." Fer explained.

So there's a vein of mithril ore here... that's an important discovery, isn't it? Well, it's not something that involves me really, but if there's some mithril ore lying about I'll pick some up. I like the idea of having a mithril sword, or if that's not possible maybe a knife. Mithril sword, mithril knife, both? hmmm... Having a knife and a sword made of such a rare metal is the stuff of fantasy stories. Mithril is especially romantic. I decided that I really wanted them.

"Mithril means that magic is not very effective." Fer explained.

Anything made from mithril is light and hard and it protects well against magical attacks by diffusing the energy. From Fer's experience he told me that magic was reduced to less than half of its usual effectiveness. Did that mean Fer's magic wasn't going to be strong enough to defeat the Mithril Lizard?

Fer shook his head. "All that means is that I'll have to use twice as much magic as normal to deal with that reptile properly." Saying that, the cavern resounded with a loud crash as Fer unleashed his magic attack. Kaboom! Rumble rumble rumble... A single flash of lightning hit the Mithril Lizard. I stared open-mouthed at the sight. Sui, surprised by the loud sound poked her head out of her bag.

"Hey Fer, what did you just do?"

"I fired strong lightning magic at that reptile." Strong? Isn't that a bit excessive? No, thinking about it using that much magic on a Mithril Lizard was probably the right thing to do. The lightning magic was incredibly loud though.

"OK, that's done. Collect it quickly and you can turn it in at the Guild for cash."

"Are you sure it's totally dead?" It was only one hit after all...

"Oh, that reptile was killed by my magic sure enough."

So the Mithril Lizard is standing there eating mithril ore, it doesn't even notice we're here and then, kaboom! and it's dead in an instant... It seems kinda pathetic, a real let-down. I am sorry, Mithril Lizard. That's what I was thinking as I put the Mithril Lizard in my Item Box.

Around where the Mithril Lizard was feeding there were lumps of ore glowing with a pale light. That would be mithril ore, I guessed.

"Fer, hang on a minute, I want to get some of this mithril ore."

"Nuuu, hurry up." Fer was impatient to get going now the job was finished.

"Aruji-, do you want this glowing stone? Sui will help too."

"Thanks, Sui. Bring the glowing stones over to me then."

"I understand-" Sui jumped out of the bag and started gathering mithril ore. I put some nearby mithril ore in my Item Box. Hmmm, I wonder if this is enough.

"I gathered some for you-" Sui chimed in.

"Wow, you sure collected a lot." I praised Sui. She had gathered enough mithril ore to fill the back of a small truck. I felt that maybe that was too much but Sui had worked hard so I couldn't refuse it. I put it in my Item Box and decided to worry about it later. I had easily enough ore now to make a mithril sword and a mithril knife now, maybe I could get a suit of mithril armour made? But if it's armour made from solid metal wouldn't it hinder my movement? Thinking about it though maybe the Mithril Lizard's skin would be just as strong as mithril metal?

"Hey, Fer, would a Mithril Lizard's skin be as strong as mithril metal?" I asked.

Fer thought for a moment."Because that reptile's skin would take on the same characteristics as the ore it ate, yeah it probably will be as strong."

"Oh? Rather than making mithril armour maybe I should get armour made with Mithril Lizard skin instead since it'll be a lot more flexible."

"Hmm? Are you planning to get some armour?"

"Well, I thought that it would be better to have some kind of armour."

"You don't need armour, you've got my magic Barrier." Fer grumped. "Whether it's mithril metal armour or reptile-skin armour, they're nothing compared to my Barrier. It's pointless for you to have something like that."

Well, he's got a point. Fer's magical Barrier has totally prevented me from being injured any time I've been attacked. So what should I do with all this mithril ore? Even if I just hang on to it for the time being, would I be able to sell it if I wanted to?

"Hey, have you finished collecting that mithril ore? Let's get out of here and eat." Fer was getting really impatient now.

Yeah yeah Mister Glutton. We left the cave and I started preparing dinner.

# Chapter 70

## We Try Katsudon

I decided to prepare a meal when we got out of the cave. Because I fried some pork cutlets yesterday, I wanted to eat 'that'. Since it would take some time to cook I decided to offer deep fried pork cutlets to Fer and Sui first.

"There is something I want to make but it'll take a while to cook so please eat this while I get it ready."

"What are you going to make? Is it delicious?" Fer inquired.

"It will be super delicious. I guarantee you'll enjoy the taste." I replied, somewhat offended at his lack of faith in my cooking skills.

"Well, you do not have to say that much." It was sort of an apology, quite something from Fer. "I'm looking forward to it." he finished.

"Are we going eat delicious food-?" Sui interjected.

"That's what we're going to do, but it will take some time to cook so eat this right now."

"Well, Sui will wait for you-"

Right, let's get cooking. The other two spent their time eating fried pork cutlets.

So the meal plan today is katsudon. I wanted to eat lots of katsudon with runny eggs and sweet-sour soup stock. First I needed the ingredients. I bought onions and seasonings to use for soup stock as well as rice and eggs on the Net Super.

I started by cooking rice. I washed the rice and started it cooking it in the pot. After slicing the onions thinly, I made soup stock. The package soup stock is almost as good as when I make it from scratch. I've tried using different soups like soba noodle stock and the like but this is the best one in my opinion.

I broke the eggs and mixed them lightly, being careful not to make them too consistent.

I like it when the yolk and white are a bit separate.

While the rice was cooking and steaming, I added dashi soy sauce, sweet sake, sugar and onions to the frying pan and put it on the stove.

The onions were boiled in the soup stock until they became translucent and then I added the pork cutlets. I boiled them for a while to let the soup penetrate into the cutlets and then I added half the eggs. I continued to cook the dish until the eggs start to solidify and then I turned the heat off and added the rest of the eggs, letting them cook from the residual heat. After that the katsudon was completed by putting it on a layer of cooked rice topped with runny eggs and sweet soup.

"The katsudon's ready." I announce.

"What's this... Mmmm, this is delicious. The egg is mixed with the Orc General meat and it tastes really good." Fer gobbled the katsudon in his usual rush. Yeah yeah, of course it's delicious.

"It's delicious, the meat and runny eggs are delicious-" Sui agreed. So Sui also thinks it's delicious? Excellent. This rice bowl dish was not a failure.

Well, it's time for me to eat too. With a rice bowl dish and especially something like katsudon, you want tea to refresh your mouth so I purchased a PET bottle of tea from the Net Super.

So what's katsudon like after such a long time without? Well, the mixture of eggs and sweet juice soup is the best and having rice underneath to soak up the juices just adds to the flavour. It's delicious, just as I anticipated.

Glug- I take a big drink of tea. The inside of my mouth is refreshed, then more katsudon, working my way down through the bowl's contents.

"Seconds here." demanded Fer.

"Sui too-"

That was quick. "Here you go." I piled more katsudon in front of the two gluttons. Both of them started eating again.

I didn't eat fried cutlets earlier like the other two so having some more katsudon

myself will be OK. I started to eat, finishing off the remaining katsudon before it got cold even though I think it's still quite tasty even when it cools down.

\*munch\*\*munch\*\*munch\*... Fuuu- I ate it all. I gulped more tea to rinse the fat from my mouth.

"Aruji-" Sui interjected.

"What is it, Sui, are you wanting more?"

"No, I'm full. Hey, is that green drink delicious?-"

"Oh? It's tea, would you like to have a drink?"

"Yeah, I'll drink some-"

I put a little tea in an empty dish and offered it to Sui.

"Oh, this, bitter. Not delicious. Sui doesn't like this, peh peh-"

Odd, Sui will eat pretty much anything (even other-world garbage) but somehow she doesn't like the bitter taste of tea. Well if you can't cope with bitterness... How about this then? I bought some cola at the Net Super.

"Sui, how about this?" I poured some cola into the dish.

"This isn't bitter?- " Oh my dear Sui, how can you be so suspicious of me?

"No it's not bitter, it's sweet, honest!" I was hurt. Sui put a little tentacle into the cola hesitantly.

"Wow! !!" Apparently she thought it was delicious as the cola in the dish disappeared instantly.

"Wow, this is-, please give me more!-" I poured more cola into the dish for her.  
\*glug\*\*glug\*\*glug\*

"This is sweet and sweet and delicious -" I added yet more cola to her dish.  
\*glug\*\*glug\*\*glug\*

"Is that stuff delicious? Let me drink it too." Fer said so I poured some cola on a dish for him.

"Gulp... Nuku, what is it, this is strange, it prickles on my tongue." Fer was surprised by the carbonation bubbles.

"Gulp, gulp. Well, my first time drinking this is not unpleasant. To think there are such mysterious drinks in the other world."

Fer and Sui both seemed to like cola, they drank a 1.5 litre bottle each.

"Well, we should be heading back to the city soon."

"Right, let's go." Fer agreed.

"Let's go back, Sui." I said. Sui got into her bag, I climbed on Fer's back and we started on our way back to the city.

# Chapter 71

## Oh Lord How The Money Rolls In

We went straight to the Adventurers Guild as soon as we returned to the city. When I handed over my Guild card at the reception I was immediately shown to the Guild Master's room.

"Congratulations." he said, welcoming us back. "I'm really sorry I asked you to subjugate the Metal Lizard so quickly."

Well, it wasn't me that carried out the subjugation, it was Fer of course. And it only took a single magic strike. Oh, and it wasn't a Metal Lizard after all. I should really tell the Guild Master about this...

"Well, we subjugated it OK, but it turns out wasn't a Metal Lizard after all."

"It wasn't a Metal Lizard?" The Guild Master looked perplexed.

"That's right, it was a Mithril Lizard instead."

"..... What did you say just now?"

"Eh? I said it was a Mithril Lizard there."

"A Mi-, Mi-, Mithril Lizard!?" The Guild Master stood up and yelled at the top of his lungs.

Please, Guild Master-sama, calm down. He sat back down after a moment, obviously thinking hard about what I had said.

"If what you say is true," he waved his hand, "I believe you of course but-" he furrowed his brows. "It means that there is mithril ore in that area. That's supremely important. Anyway, I need to see that Mithril Lizard first."

Because the Mithril Lizard is a large monster we went down into the warehouse for the Guild Master to inspect it properly.

"Oh, Johan, sorry to bother you."

"Ah, Guild Master." The bald ojisan squinted at Fer and me. "And its you guys again?"

"Johan, please close the door." the Guild Master ordered. Johan quickly closed the warehouse door.

"So have you brought me something interesting this time too?" Johan was obviously intrigued. Well, it wasn't supposed to be special but it's what we were asked to subjugate.

"So, can I get it out now?" The Guild Master nodded so I took the Mithril Lizard out of the Item Box.

"" ....."" The Guild Master and Johan-ojisan were struck dumb for a long moment.

"Ah, that....."

"No doubt about it, right..."

"Oh yeah, it's got to be a Mithril Lizard, look at the way the skin gleams." Johan said in a reverent whisper.

Huh? Is a Mithril Lizard really that rare?

"I thought that it was a Metal Lizard at first, but this is definitely a Mithril Lizard..." the Guild Master went on to explain.

"When it was first observed near Pasquale Mountain it maybe was still a Metal Lizard. The citizens who saw it and reported it as such didn't get close enough to it to see it clearly since they were too busy running away, and there weren't any Adventurers willing to even go and check it out for us." He waved his hand at Fer. "We definitely didn't have Adventurers of high enough rank who could actually hope to subjugate a Metal Lizard so it was left alone for the time being. Since then it might have found a vein of mithril ore, ate it and mutated into Mithril Lizard form."

"That's probably what happened." Johan agreed. They both sighed, then turned to stare at me.

Eh, what?

"The monsters your contracted beast brings in never fails to surprise us." The Guild Master shook his head.

"It's true, only the finest top-ranked monsters from fairy tales." Johan-ojisan chimed in. I still looked puzzled so he continued.

"Look sonny, a Mithril Lizard is a legendary monster." Johan explained. "The Adventurers Guild records speak of only one other sighting ever of a Mithril Lizard and that was over 400 years ago."

Okay, 400 years... w- wait, Johan-ojisan. 400 years ago?

"A Metal Lizard has to eat mithril ore to evolve into a Mithril Lizard but mithril ore can only be found in a few locations. Currently there's one mithril mine in this country, one in the Kingdom of Malbert and one in the Geisler Empire. Because you can only find mithril ore in those three places and nowhere else it means mithril products are very rare and sell for a correspondingly high price. Saying that it is rumoured that the mithril mine in the Geisler Empire has run out of ore which increases its scarcity even more." The Guild Master fixed his gaze on the Mithril Lizard again.

"Given that scarcity, if an A-ranked Metal Lizard finds a source of mithril and evolves into a Mithril Lizard, well you can guess how how valuable it is. Moreover, a Mithril Lizard means there's mithril nearby. It means that you have discovered a previously unknown mithril mine."

You're making this out to be a really big deal all of a sudden. It's kinda worrying.

"Count Langridge-dono will have to be informed since Pasquale Mountain is part of his holdings. No one thought that that mountain had any mithril ore to be mined. I'm going to be busy for now dealing with this situation but..." the Guild Master looked at me with a frown. "I am sorry but the Guild will have to purchase this Mithril Lizard wholesale."

When it's something this rare, apparently the Mithril Lizard's skin will be sent to the King along with a report about the discovery of the mithril mine. Ah well. I was thinking about making armour for myself from the skin but really Fer's Barrier magic means it's not really needed and there isn't anything else I could do with it so it's OK to wholesale it.

"Instead, I will talk with Count Langridge-dono about increasing your reward. Given

the future profits of the mithril mine present on his land I would presume that the Count is likely to be very generous. So," the Guild Master ticked off on his fingers, "Mithril Lizard subjugation, discovery of a mithril mine, purchase of the Mithril Lizard, my estimate is that you'll get no less than 5000 gold coins and probably more."

Gold coins, 5000 gold coins..... 5000 gold coins... It feels like money is just appearing from nowhere and jumping into my pocket. It's almost scary.

"You're doing real good for yourself, sonny." Johan-ojisan confided. "You could live in luxury for the rest of your life with the cash from this deal. I kinda envy you, kiddo."

What Johan-ojisan said didn't sink in right away. I'm a low-paid salaryman and I'm not used to having a lot of money. I'm not even doing anything to earn it really so it's even more confusing to me. 5000 gold coins...

"Well, whatever it is, I have to inform Count Langridge-sama about all of this." the Guild Master went on. "You're due a lot of money but the Guild can't pay you immediately. It will probably take about a week for me to sort things out. Bring the Mithril Lizard back to us when I let you know the payment is ready for you."

The Guild Master indicated I should hold on to the Mithril Lizard for the time being. I supposed the Guild couldn't keep it without paying for it up front. I just put it back in my Item Box, not a hardship after I heard what it was worth. 5000 gold coins...

"Oh, all this information is confidential of course." I nodded. "Johan, you understand too?" The bald ojisan nodded as well.

"Oh, before I forget," the Guild Master said. "How are you going to proceed with subjugating the herd of Bloody Horn Bulls?" Oh, the other request.

"It's fine if you take your time, there's no real hurry. You've just finished dealing with a Mithril Lizard, I can quite understand that you'll need a rest before proceeding."

"Hunting a mere reptile like that wasn't tiring at all." Fer said telepathically. "We'll head off early tomorrow and deal with those cows." As usual Fer was fit and raring to go, especially if there were steaks involved. I passed on his comments to the Guild Master.

"My contracted monster says he's ready to carry out the subjugation of the Bloody Horn Bull herd tomorrow."

"Well, are you okay?" The Guild Master seemed concerned. "After all you just completed the subjugation of a Mithril Lizard." I understood the Guild Master's worry, but Fer used magic to blast the Mithril Lizard.

"Ah, I think it's okay. You see, Fer killed the Mithril Lizard easily with one shot of lightning magic." Both the Guild Master and Johan-ojisan were stunned at my words.

"Lightning magic against a Mithril Lizard, a single shot....."

"Truly he is a legendary monster..."

Sorry, sorry. Fer is too strong.

# Chapter 72

## Bloody Horn Bulls

We arrived at a wide area of open grassland on the west side of the city, ready to subjugate the Bloody Horn Bull herd which was grazing there.

The Guild Master had told us all about the monster known as the Bloody Horn Bull. Each Bull was about the size of a rhinoceros with a temper to match. On top of that their cattle-herd instincts of clustering together and facing threats like a well-drilled military formation increased their danger level compared with attempting to subjugate an individual Bloody Horn Bull.

Fer wasn't bothered by that kind of threat of course. For me, I just decided to stay out of his way while he dealt with them. But where were they?

"Fer, do you know where the Bloody Horn Bull herd is?"

"Yeah, I can see them, they're not far off. Let's get closer and then I'll deal with them." Following Fer's gaze I made out some small black dots off in the distance.

"If that's the Bloody Horn Bulls over there then Sui and me will wait here." Safety first, after all.

"Do that. I'll head over there right now and I'll contact you by telepathy when I've killed them all."

"Gotcha."

Fer slunk off towards the Bloody Horn Bulls, staying low to hide himself from their sight in the long grass.

I lay down and hid in the long grass too. After all I wouldn't want to spook the Bloody Horn Bulls and make Fer's job harder, would I? It's not like I was scared of them or anything. Just playing my part.

Sui crawled out of the bag that I had placed next to my head.

"Where did Fer-objichan go?-"

"He went off to defeat the big cow-sans." I explained.

"No fair-. Sui wants to defeat the cow-sans too-"

"Eh? There's a lot of big really scary big cow-sans out there so just wait here with me, Sui."

"No way no way. Sui is going to help defeat the cow-sans." Saying that Sui crawled away quickly.

"Hey, come back!" Wow, she's so fast. "Oh shit!" I chased after Sui through the meadow as fast as I could (crawling). Hurrying frantically (crawling), I finally came to an opening where I could catch sight of Fer. Sui was also there, jumping up and down.

"Huff, huff, finally....." I tried to catch my breath while not attracting the attention of any stray Bloody Horn Bulls. Fer leisurely approached me where I lay concealed in the grass.

"Hey you, what are you doing?" he called in a loud voice.

What am I doing? Well, I crawled all the way here to make sure I wasn't spotted by the Bloody Horn Bulls but your shouting will bring them here...

"All the Bloody Horn Bulls have been wiped out." Fer said...? What, have you finished already? It's only been a few minutes...

I got up on my feet again and stretched and twisted my body. My back hurt from all that hurried crawling. As I looked out over the blood-drenched meadow before me I felt my breath catch in my throat.

..... What's this.

A huge black cow lay in a pool of blood. There was another one over there, and another... how many more are there like this? The scenic grasslands have been turned into an abattoir. A soft breeze blew sweetly across the meadow but it couldn't distract from the horrific vision before me.

"Aruji, you're here-. Sui knocked down a big cow-san-" Sui bounced towards me

excitedly, poing poing. "Aruji, aruji, Sui and Fer-ojichan defeated all the big cow-sans. Fer-ojichan used his magic first and the wind blew and lots of big cow-sans fell down. But some big cow-sans didn't fall down so Sui pew-pewed them and beat them good. Amazing, isn't it?-" Sui told me in a rush while jumping around Fer and me.

So Fer probably used wind magic to deal with most of the herd and Sui killed the remaining Bloody Horn Bulls by shooting them with acid bullets.

"Umuu, Sui really helped out this time." Fer confirmed. Heh, of course she did. I looked over the field of slaughtered Bloody Horn Bulls again. The threat they posed to the strong tag-team of Fer and Sui was negligible, it turned out. I guess they all went to heaven without being able to defend themselves in any way.

So, you guys are going to be our food. Is it time to tuck all the Bloody Horn Bulls in my Item Box? I took a really close look. Wow, a Bloody Horn Bull is a really big cow. I counted them - there are one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, more and more and some Bloody Horn Bulls were still hidden by the long grass. I gave up and started collecting them instead, counting them as I deposited them in my Item Box. One, two, three...

I had agreed with the Guild Master that we'd wholesale half of the herd to the Guild but it might be an idea to sell them a few more than that. Each Bloody Horn Bull really was about the size of a rhinoceros, it turned out. Thinking about how much Fer and Sui ate at a sitting it would take even them several days to eat just one Bloody Horn Bull. Besides, eating beef all the time would get tedious so I'd be serving up other kinds of meat for variety. If we held on to the meat from even half the herd then Fer wouldn't have to hunt any beef for a loooong time.

I hoped Fer and Sui don't get tired of beef quickly. I'll have to work hard there, too, serving up different recipes involving beef so they don't get bored with the same dishes too often. While thinking about this I was busy packing away the Bloody Horn Bull carcasses in my Item Box. I finally got all of them stored. There were 58 Bloody Horn Bulls in all. Half of that would be... 29 Bloody Horn Bulls we'd keep for the meat? That's a huge amount of beef.

# Chapter 73

## Don't Raise Weird Flags

"We're finished here, do you want something to eat?" I asked.

"Umuu, sounds good. I was just getting hungry." Fer agreed.

"Food-" Sui chimed in. Right then, time to cook but... the pools of blood on the grass remained even after the Bloody Horn Bulls had all been packed away. The iron smell of spilt blood filled the air.

"Ah, I don't feel like eating here right now." I groused.

"Is the smell of blood too strong?" Fer inquired. "So much blood might attract more monsters."

"Eh? That's bad. Let's get out of here quick." Safety first, as I might have mentioned before.

"Ehh, hang on. Sui, Can you clean up the blood here?" Fer asked.

"Oh, can Sui eat all the red stuff here?"

"That's right. Help yourself." Fer ordered.

"Sui can do it. Wait a moment." Sui trembled and used her Growth skill. After Sui became a Big Slime she quickly divided into smaller Slimes.

"Everyone, suck up all that red stuff--" Following Sui's order the small Slimes headed towards the pools and began to consume the Bloody Horn Bull blood. The pools disappeared in the blink of an eye leaving only trampled grassland and a lot of small red-coloured Slimes visible.

"Well done Sui." Fer said.

"Ufu, Sui was praised by Fer-ojichan-" Sui bounced happily.

"Slimes can eat pretty much anything so I figured the little Suis could mop up the blood easily." Fer explained.

.....Sui has so many things she can do.

"Hey Sui, are you okay with leaving those small Slimes behind?" I asked.

"Yeah, they'll probably disappear when it gets dark." she said.

It seems the Slimes split off from her large body have a limited lifespan but do they actually disappear at night too?

"Aruji-, Sui's hungry-" Ah, right. I should get some food out.

"Yeah, hang on. Here's some sandwiches that should do you." I put out a dish with pork and chicken cutlet sandwiches in front of Fer and Sui. I made them yesterday evening with the leftover fried pork cutlets and chicken cutlets I cooked for their dinner.

Spread butter on the bread, add some shredded cabbage and sprinkle a little mayonnaise then put a pork cutlet on top and finish it off with another slice of buttered bread. Cut it in half and it's done. I did the same with some fried chicken cutlets and put them away in my Item Box for just such an occasion.

I figured Sui wouldn't like really spicy food so these would do nicely for the time being.

""Seconds"" they chorussed.

"Okay." I put more pork and chicken cutlet sandwiches in the dish in front of Fer and Sui. Huhuu, I can just keep pulling them out of my Item Box rather than making them one at a time. Until now I have not had time to build a big reserve of cooked food because I've been travelling but I plan to cook a lot of food to put in my Item Box while I stay in this town, especially since I've got plenty of meat available and I should have lots of free time.

I sank my teeth into a pork cutlet sandwich. Ah, that hits the spot. I settled back, making myself comfortable. I was enjoying the picnic after we had dealt with the Bloody Horn Bulls. The scenery looked wonderful as long as I suppressed my memory of the pools of blood and dead monsters that had been scattered around the grasslands just a few minutes ago. I bit into another sandwich. Delicious. Cabbage and mayo and tonkatsu sauce came together in my mouth, oh so tasty.

To tell the truth I added some mustard to my own sandwiches, a spicy sharp mustard. MMMmmm!

Eating under the blue sky is great. I started on a chicken cutlet sandwich. Ah, I want to drink beer.

"Aruji, Sui wants to drink bubbly-bubbly-" Sui said.

"Hey you, I want some too." Fer added.

"Oh, cola? If you want to drink soda... just wait a minute."

I bought some cider for Fer and Sui and canned coffee for myself from the Net Super. I wanted to drink beer with my sandwiches but I held back because it was daytime. Drinking beer during the day is a Bad Thing to do, okay?

I poured the cider into a pair of dishes for the two of them.

"Here you are."

"What's that? It's different from the earlier stuff." Fer said suspiciously.

"This is called 'cider', it's not the same as last night's drink but it's also bubbly-bubbly and it's delicious too." I waved my hand. "Try drinking it."

Sui started first. "Oooh, this is also delicious." See, I told you it was good.

"Yes. You can feel the bubbles on the tongue just the same. Buuurp....."

"MMMphhh- " I smothered my laugh at Fer's great eructation.

"Ahaha, I'm burping because I drank the bubbles." Fer is shameless.

The three of us enjoyed our meal in the cool breeze under the blue sky.

"Well then, shall we go back to the city soon?" I said to Fer, after the long relaxing break. Sui was already napping in her bag.

"Well, yes." Fer looked around his most recent battlefield with a dissatisfied expression. "Yesterday's Mithril Lizard subjugation and today's fight with the Bloody

Horn Bulls was something to do but they weren't really any sort of a challenge." I think Fer is the only one that would say such things about Mithril Lizards and Bloody Horn Bulls.

"Is there anyone around that could make me exert myself?" he asked rhetorically.

"What kind of challenge are you thinking about?" I asked foolishly.

"Well, I'd have a real fight on my hands if I was facing a dragon. Since there's none of them around here then a pack of wyverns might be worth making an effort to destroy."

...I should never have asked. Don't raise weird flags. Don't mention dragons, stop talking about packs of wyverns.

"D-, dragons and wyverns, d- don't say strange things like that." I cautioned.

"They're not strange things." Fer explained. "Dragons and wyverns attack human cities sometimes."

"Stop it." I commanded him. "If you talk about them they're sure to appear."

"Hhhmph." Fer stretched his long body, his eyes scanning the empty sky. "If they come here they'll find me waiting for them." He grinned, baring his teeth in anticipation.

I wish now I'd never asked. Dragons are nothing to laugh about.

"You probably don't know this," Fer continued, "but wyverns and dragons are delicious. Dragon meat is especially flavourful." I didn't know that. Frankly the longer I go without getting the opportunity to eat delicious dragon or wyvern meat the happier I'll be.

"After we visit the ocean for some Kraken and Sea Serpents then we'll maybe go hunt some dragons." Fer turned to face the city walls and nodded. "Yeah, let's do that."

Nope nope nopetty nope, let's not do that please? How about you consider my input when you're deciding our future travel plans?

"Right, get on. Let's go back."

Haa, Fer is 'going my way' for now. It might be nice to visit the beach but I'll never go

on a dragon hunt.

# Chapter 74

## Lean Steak

When we got back to the Adventurers Guild I went straight to find Johan-ojisan. The Guild Master was out having discussions with Count Langridge about the Mithril Lizard subjugation and its consequences so he wasn't in his office, however the Guild Master had told us we could deal directly with Johan-ojisan who of course knew all about the Bloody Horn Bull herd subjugation request.

"Excuse me." I caught Johan-ojisan's attention.

"Oh, it's you guys. The Guild Master told me what's going on. You were subjugating the Bloody Horn Bulls today?" When I nodded, he gestured for us to follow him. "Let's go to the warehouse."

"The herd was kinda big..." After warning him I started pulling Bloody Horn Bulls out of my Item Box.

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven..... 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30...

"Hold on," Johan-ojisan abruptly stopped me. "Tell me, are there a lot more?"

"Yes, I still have quite a few more. There were 58 Bloody Horn Bulls in all."

"58 Bloody Horn Bulls? That's a big herd, they're usually around 40 individuals, you know..." Johan-ojisan mused. Huh? Is that so? I thought that it was quite a lot but I didn't think it might be an unusually large herd. "Well, if it's you guys it's not that surprising." Johan-ojisan added with a laugh. Is he insinuating we're at fault somehow for bringing in too many monsters? Well, it's Fer who did the subjugation, not me. Blame him...

"Disassembling 58 monsters is gonna be a big job you see." He shook his head.

I'm sorry, really. "I'll wholesale half of the meat to the Guild. Thank you for working so hard on this for us."

"That's okay, the Guild Master told me that you guys are my top priority."

Oh, yes, I think I should keep a skin as well. "Would you please give us a Bloody Horn Bull skin?" I asked.

"Okay," said John-ojisan, squinting appraisingly at the mountain of Bloody Horn Bull monsters before him. "You're wholesaling half the herd to us, you want to keep the meat of the other half and you're wanting a single skin too. Is that about right?"

"Yes, that's it." I agreed.

"That's still gonna be a bunch of work for me. Can you come back tomorrow? I'll have the meat and that skin ready for you then."

"I understand, I'll come back tomorrow." As I said that, I headed for the warehouse door but Fer who had been lying down and not taking part in the discussion lifted his head and said "Hold on".

"What's up, Fer?" I asked.

"Where's the meat for tonight?" Fer said.

"Because there are a lot of monsters for Johan-san here to deal with, it won't be ready until tomorrow." I explained.

"Huh, that means we can't eat any Bloody Horn Bull meat today?" Fer grumbled. We've got plenty of other kinds of meat in my Item Box but Fer wants to eat Bloody Horn Bull right away. What a surprise.

I turned back to Johan-ojisan. "I'm sorry, can I get the meat from one of the Bloody Horn Bulls straight away?" I pointed at Fer.

"Haha, not a problem, sonny." Johan-ojisan quickly disassembled one of the monsters with his practised skill.

"What about this Bloody Horn Bull's skin? Wanna take it with you?" he offered. That sounded like a good idea so we collected the skin and meat from the Bloody Horn Bull and left the Adventurers Guild.



When we returned to the inn, it was clear that Fer and Sui were hungry and I was starting to feel hungry myself. I could guess what Fer was going to say so I pre-empted him.

"You want to eat Bloody Horn Bull meat, right Fer?"

"Well..." Fer answered, not hiding the lustful look in his eyes. Okay then, steak it is. It had been a while since we had beef after all. Bloody Horn Bull is a beautiful red meat that looks delicious. So how do you like your steak cooked? This is how I do it.

Oil the frying pan and get it really hot. It's important to get the temperature high. I think that steak is tastiest when cooked medium rare personally so that's how I do it. Shake salt and pepper onto the meat just before frying it. The meat juices will escape if you don't add the salt and pepper before cooking it.

First fry one side for about a minute on a high heat then turn the heat down slightly and give it another minute or so. After that flip the steak and repeat for the other side. While it's still hot wrap it in aluminum foil for about five minutes to let it cook all the way through from the residual heat.

The hot scorch on both sides coupled with with baking it in the foil produces a delicious smell and the meat becomes soft and tender. That's my favourite way of cooking thick red meat steaks.

"It's ready... First up is just salt and pepper." As soon as his steak hit the dish Fer began to devour it.

"Umuu-. It's delicious. "

"Yeah, this meat is tasty, is not it?" Sui said that she liked it too.

Hey, that makes three of us. Every time I bit into my steak, the juices oozed out and the taste of red meat spread throughout my mouth. I have to say this is delicious. It makes me want to chew each bite slowly and thoroughly to extract the most from the juicy meat. Beef is truly appetising.

Next, I coated the steak with soy sauce and cooked it similarly. Salt and pepper alone on a steak is delicious, but for Japanese people it has to be soy sauce. That turned out really delicious too.

"Seconds!" the gluttons chorused, unsurprisingly. It seems the steak was a hit.

I cooked more delicious steak. This time I used the Net Super's steak sauce that Fer loves. That day we ate Bloody Horn Bull steaks to our heart's content.

"Fuu-, that meat was very delicious. Sui's tummy is full-"

"I'm satisfied too, but this confirms something for me. I'm not going to eat raw meat again while you're around. Your cooking is delicious after all. "

"Sui loves Aruji's cooking too-"

I appreciate the compliments, but it's thanks to Fer and Sui that I can remain safe in this world. I will make delicious food for them to eat as much as possible.

# Chapter 75

## The Companion Goddesses (1)

Before Sui and I returned to our room Fer reminded me, "Shouldn't you be making an offering to Ninril-sama sometime soon?"

His reminder was a surprise. It's not been a week since the previous offering but I had completely forgotten about it. Again. It might help, shameless goddess if you sent me an oracle from time to time to remind me... Saying that though she can get a bit shrill when she starts complaining to me telepathically about me being late with the offerings.

I opened up the Net Super and started rummaging through the menus to choose what I'd offer up this time.

"Western confectionery and Japanese sweets seem to be to her taste, so what would be good this time around...?"

This world doesn't have chocolate or other such sweets from my world. I also need to think about choosing snacks that will keep for a while. That disappointing goddess will have to wait a week after this offering before I make the next one after all.

I decided to put American chocolate-chip cookies in the Net Super's shopping cart, about twenty packs or so. I thought that would satisfy her for a time but when I went to buy them that shrill voice which had become distressingly familiar recently echoed in my head.

"Insufficient. I want more." Twenty packs of chocolate-chip cookies, and you still want more?

"How much sugary food can you eat?" I enquired, a vision of a fat goddess appearing in my mind. The deplorable megami-sama was silent, for once.

OK then, what else do you want?

"Hufufufu, I was waiting for you to ask. Some of those Western-style cakes and

puddings and daifuku and sweet bean jelly and, oh I absolutely must get some dorayaki and..." I held up my hand, hold on hold on. That's quite a big order to keep track of. I ticked them off on my finger. Cake and pudding, daifuku, youkan jelly and plenty of dorayaki? That's it...

Right then, cake? I chose Mont Blanc and chocolate cake and added them to the cart. Pudding, the same custard pudding and pudding a la mode as before. Daifuku, I bought two bean daifuku and two strawberry daifuku and followed up with a complete box of youkan jelly. Oh, and 'absolutely' dorayaki, three off. Will that do?

"Fine, fine. Just hurry it up." Don't rush me, disappointing goddess.

"Wow, no, no, no, why are you here?" The goddess said in a squeaky voice.

"Nice to meet you, other-world-guy-kun." A different female voice sounded in my head.

"The same, other-world-guy." Yet another female voice chimed in, gruffer than the previous one.

"....." Yet another voice? Huh? What? Who?

"I saw what was going on the other day, Ninril-chan receiving delicious sweets from a different world. She was keeping it a secret from her fellow gods and goddesses to monopolise the source. Sneaky, huh? So I told everyone what she was doing, eating delicious sweets all by herself."

Oh, they are companions of the goddess. So the secret is out, finally.

"Don't hide yourself away, Ninril-chan. If you are eating delicious things, please let us know."

"That's right. It's not fair if it's only you who gets to eat such sweets."

"..." (A silent voice nodded in my head)

"Sh- sh- Shut up! Th- th- this guy, I- I gave him my blessing, it's the only reason I get offerings and prayers from him! Th- th- that's why it doesn't concern you lot." The deplorable goddess was panicking now.

"Ohhh, so that's how it works? Then I will give my blessing to this other-world guy and

receive offerings and prayers from him too." came the first voice.

"If it means I'll get to eat something delicious then I'll do that too." came the second voice.

"...Me too." came the silent voice. How did that work? I wondered. It's silent but I can hear it somehow...

"Y- y- you can't, you can't you can't you know---" Panicking, definitely.

"Oh, it's not up to you to decide such things, Ninril-chan."

"Ho ho ho, true that."

"....."

These strange voices echo in my head, just what was going on in the world of the gods?

"I am the Earth Goddess Kishar." the first voice explained. "Hello again. Well, I guess you overheard our discussion just now? The Fire Goddess Agni and Water Goddess Rusalka are with me."

"Hello there." the second voice said. Fire Goddess Agni, I presume.

"....." Water Goddess Rusalka-sama?

"So we will give you the blessing of three Goddesses if you would please give us sweets too?"

Eh? The goddess of water, the goddess of fire and the goddess of earth? I've already got the divine blessings of Wind Goddess Ninril right now so do I really need their protection too? I'm safe from abnormal status effects already, or so I think.

"Oh no, if you think about it, Ninril-chan's blessing is (small). She's a bit stingy in that regard, and besides it can't be said that status abnormality invalidation is perfect protection." the goddess continued. "And you've got no aptitude for wind magic. Ninril-chan's blessing (small) doesn't help you out in that regard. You'd be better off with the blessing of goddesses whose magic you can use right now. Like me. See?"

Thinking about it, I have earth magic and fire magic powers. If I received the blessing

of Earth Goddess Kishar and Fire Goddess Agni would I get any other benefits?

"I hear what you're thinking, kiddo. I'm Fire Goddess Agni. Since you've already got fire magic you'd be unbeatable with my divine blessing. You'd be able to use high-powered fire magic with only a little magical power."

Well ~ That's amazing.

"A-, Agni, what are you saying? We can't afford to give him all sorts of blessings. If we hand out divine blessings willy-nilly, we'll be scolded. That's why I only gave him my divine blessings (small)." Deplorable goddess-sama was panicking even more now.

"Well, there's some truth in what you say Ninril-chan, but it shouldn't cause problems if we just give other-world-guy-kun our divine blessings (small) too. Besides, if he's got an aptitude for fire and earth magic then getting divine blessings from Kishar and me is better for him, wouldn't you say?"

"Yeah. Ninril-chan's divine blessings (small) doesn't allow other-world guy to use wind magic at all."

"Yes that's right. Even if we only give you our divine blessings (small) your magical energy consumption will go down but your magical power will go up and you'll be able to use higher types of fire and earth magic. After we give you our divine protections (small), try your magics out and see what you can do. Do you understand?"

"Kishar said it all, nothing for me to add." Fire Goddess Agni chimed in. So Fire Goddess Agni and Earth Goddess Kishar have decided I'm going to receive their divine blessings whether I want them or not. Don't I get a say in this?

"Hey, did you just think you don't want our blessings? You might wanna reconsider blowing us off so lightly, kiddo." Fire Goddess Agni has a short temper, it seems.

"That's right, listen to what I'm telling you. You only want my blessing, isn't that the case?" A certain deplorable Wind Goddess' intervention wasn't going to help.

Ah, that is not that I do not want the blessings, but anyone with the protection of several gods and goddesses is going to be considered a bit strange, aren't they? I want a quiet life, really.

"Well other-world-guy-kun, I do remember hearing about a famous Hero in the past

who had two divine blessings but I don't recall anyone ever having more than that." Earth Goddess Kishar explained.

So having three of them would be considered strange, then? Even though hardly anyone else could Appraise my status and see all the blessings, I'd know they were there and that's bad enough. Besides I've got one goddess' blessing already and that will do me fine, thank you.

"C'mon, man up you wimp! Here you go, blessings of Fire Goddess Agni (small)!"

"Hey don't jump the queue, Agni... My turn now. Earth Goddess Kishar's blessing (small)."

"Aaaah-, you shouldn't have done that, you know?!" Deplorable goddess chimed in, ineffectual as usual.

"Uhufu, make offerings to us too from now on."

"I will expect delicious things from you."

Ah, I seem to have acquired two more divine proble- uh, protectors.

Maybe it's not really a big issue but I am worried if anyone else catches sight of my Status even by accident. Well I've always got Fer and Sui to rely on if it turns into an emergency situation.

"..... I? " The creepy silent voice was back. What did she want?

"A- Ah, R- Ruka-chan..."

"The other-world-guy's got no aptitude for water magic." Earth Goddess Kishar explained.

"Well, uh, hey....."

"Since he's already got Ninril-chan's blessing it doesn't make much sense to give him yours as well."

Huh? What do you mean?

"You don't have any aptitude for wind magic and water magic and you already have Wind Goddess Ninril's blessing (small). That means even if Ruka-chan here gave you her blessing (small) it won't add anything more to your status change invalidation powers. It's better for you to have blessings from Goddesses whose magic you can use already like us two. Receiving Ruka-chan's blessing as well won't make any difference to you." Agni-sama explained.

Well, that's something I suppose. Three blessings are bad enough, but four?

"..... If I don't give him my blessing I'd be the only one who can't get sweets. I'd have to share everyone else's offerings." Water Goddess Rusalka's quiet voice trembled.

"Hey hey, don't cry, Ruka-chan. You, other-world-guy, think of something!" Fire Goddess Agni's voice crackled with anger.

"Yes. It's your responsibility after all." Earth Goddess Kishar agreed.

Er, what the heck is that about? It's my fault and it's my job to figure out what to do? Really?

# Chapter 76

## The Companion Goddesses (2)

Well, what should I do? The goddesses are demanding I fix their problem with Rusalka-sama. It's like me asking some ants living by my front door to fix my leaky roof. Um, um, really, think think...

Basically the goddesses are telling me that if I got a divine blessing from Rusalka-sama then it wouldn't actually do me any good since I'm already covered by the previous divine blessing from a certain deplorable goddess. What if Rusalka-sama's blessing was bestowed on someone else..... Ah!

"Th- the divine blessing, that is Rusalka-sama's blessing should be given to Sui, my contracted monster."

"O, Oh, that's a good idea you know." said a particularly gluttonous goddess of my regrettably long acquaintance.

"Sounds good, doesn't it?" Fire Goddess Agni agreed.

"Well, that's one way to fix it." said Earth Goddess Kishar.

If it's not going to have any effect on me then there is only Fer or Sui left to receive Rusalka-sama's blessing (small) but Fer already has the full blessing of a certain deplorable goddess (Wind Goddess Ninril) so that just leaves Sui.

"I understand. A Slime is a monster with a water property so my blessing would be appropriate..... but can I really give it?" It seems that something was wrong.

"Hey, Ruka-chan? Do you have a problem giving your divine blessing to a Slime?"

"I am fine giving my blessing to a Slime but unlike you others I haven't been handing out blessings to all-comers without thinking about the consequences so I'm just a bit hesitant."

"Hey Ruka-chan, it's a bit of an overstatement to say that we've been careless handing

out blessings."

"That's right, Ruka."

"It's the truth though. Everyone else been handing out blessings to individuals at the rate of one every ten years. The God of Creation scolded us and told us we should only bestow our blessings once every century or so. It's been over 130 years since I last gave out a blessing. That means... good, there's no problem with me giving the Slime my blessing."

"Yay..."

"Good to go..."

"Ohohoho..."

Everyone was pleased that Ruka-sama's objections had been settled, but her comment about the God of Creation scolding certain goddesses for handing out their blessings too frequently, well...

"Well, everyone, please calm down. F- for the time being I will make offerings to everyone equally."

"No fair, I kept it secret because I was afraid it would be like this." grumped a certain overweight goddess. "I gave you my protection first so my share of the offerings should be bigger. I won't forgive you if you don't."

"What are you saying Ninril-chan? Other-world-guy-kun should treat us all equally. It's not nice of you to try and monopolise him so just stop it."

"But whoever was first should get priority, shouldn't they?" the deplorable goddess persisted.

"Ninril, quit it." Fire Goddess Agni growled.

Ha ha ha, I wish you four petulant goddesses would just grow up...

"Mumble mumble"

"Hey, that's not a nice thing to say Ruka-chan. Anyway I'm sure that other-world-guy-

kun will do his best for us." Earth Goddess Kishar said, trying to settle things down between her colleagues while dumping the responsibility onto the overworked underpaid salaryman i.e. me. Thanks.

"So, on that note, please offer us a little something for our efforts today ~ "

"..." (nods vigorously)

"Oh, I'm looking forward to eating sweet things but I wish I had some booze." Fire Goddess Agni muttered.

"Agni, don't say things like that." Earth Goddess Kishar chided.

"She's right you know. Don't mention alcohol."

"Booze, no good." Water Goddess Rusalka whispered.

"Hmm? Why?" I wondered.

"Why? Because if unusual things like alcoholic drinks from another world turn up here, THOSE GUYS will come."

"That's right. Troublesome individuals will definitely appear."

"The God of War, the God of Blacksmiths, all sorts of bothersome gods will push their way in if they smell alcohol."

Ah, so that's the reason not to offer up alcohol?

"Oh yeah, they get mad and argue when they start drinking."

"Yes that's true. Moreover they wouldn't pass up the opportunity to taste other-world alcohol, you know."

"So absolutely no liquor." proclaimed Earth Goddess Kishar. That seemed quite definite. The God of War and the God of Blacksmiths, do they really like alcohol so much?

"W- well, OK then, no booze. It seems a bit rough having to do without alcohol, I must admit." Agni-sama seems focussed on the idea of getting her hands on alcohol some

day though.

"So now we've got that sorted, how about you get those sweets on their way to us?"

"That's right. Offer us sweets quick."

I wasn't sure it was really 'sorted' but I arranged my Net Super purchases on the usual cardboard-box altar, closed my eyes and prayed.

"Goddess companions, I thank you for granting us everyone's blessing. Please continue to take care of us from now on."

When I opened my eyes the confectionery that had been on the cardboard altar had disappeared.

"This offering is not enough you know. It's meant to be for four of us, so increase it." The bitching started immediately. I sighed.

"That's right. Ninril-chan eats a lot and we want to eat as much as she does. It wouldn't be fair otherwise."

"True, true. Hand over as much as you gave Ninril." growled Fire Goddess Agni.

"..." (nods at high speed) Water Goddess Rusalka was equally vehement in her own silent manner.

"Yeah, lots and lots."

Ohhhh well, since you insist... I decided to hurry things along since the goddesses were getting fractious. I quickly opened the Net Super and bought all kinds of of sweet buns and cakes and Western sweets and Japanese sweets at random from the menu.

"Here's the extra sweets you requested." I prayed. "Please accept them as my offering to you. There's the same amount I offered to Ninril-sama for each of you so please do not argue over them." The last request was wishful thinking on my part.

After the second lot of confectionery I placed on the cardboard altar disappeared the goddesses' voices echoed in my head again.

"Hey, good job you!"

"They're so sweet, other-world-guy-kun."

"Other world sweets, gmm..."

"Muggumuggu (nodding while eating dorayaki)"

"Ah, what are you eating! I will not forgive you if you eat MY special offerings, you know!"

"Well, I don't want Agni-chan and Ruka-chan to eat all the good items."

"But why are you eating ALL the dorayaki, Ruka-chan? They're not just for you. I mean, dorayaki is my personal favorite, gobbling it like that is not nice-"

The hen-house clucking of the goddesses was suddenly cut off as the oracle ended, thank goodness. Deary me, the Goddess companions do make a lot of noise. I didn't know what the world of the Gods was really like before but now I wish someone would do something about it, please? What now... maybe I should Appraise the effects of my two new blessings on my status?

[ Name ] Mukouda (Tsuyoshi Mukouda)

[ Age ] 27

[ Job ] A person from a different world who got caught

[ Level ] 11

[ Stamina ] 194

[ Magic Powers ] 189

[ Attack Powers ] 175

[ Defense Powers ] 174

[ Agility ] 170

[ Skill ] Appraisal Item Box Fire Magic Earth Magic Familiar

[ Contracted Monsters] Fenrir, Baby Slime

[ Unique Skill ] Net Super

[ Protection ] Wind Goddess Nirril's blessing (small) Fire Goddess Agni's blessing (small)

Earth Goddess Kishar's blessing (small)

OK, Agni-sama and Kishar-sama's blessings are new. I'll see how effective they are tomorrow. Oh, my level's also gone up. Level 11, huh? It's been going up since I came here but Sui is still well in front. Ha ha ha... Wait, how has Sui's status changed now

she's got Ruka-sama's blessing?

[Name] Sui

[Age] 1 month

[Types] Big Slime

[Level] 6

[Fitness] 855

[Magical Power] 848

[Attack power] 834

[Defense force] 842

[Agility] 852

[Skill] Acid Bullet Restorative Medicine Creation Growth Water Magic

[ Protection ] Water Goddess Rusalka's blessing

Her age is still one month, the fractions aren't shown. I'm 27 years old on my status and that's all. I suppose days can't be shown for Sui's age or months for mine.

Oh, Sui is getting ahead of me, she's already level 6 after she evolved. Her magic skill has increased too. That will be due to Ruka-san's blessing. Sui's magic was already strong before, now she's received the Goddess' blessing she'll become stronger as the blessing of the Water Goddess increases the power of her water magic. Sui will become stronger in the blink of an eye, and she's still only a month old.

At any rate I'll have to test my magic skills but I'll also have to see what Sui's water magic can do as well. We'll do some magic experiments outside town tomorrow.

# Chapter 77

## Sui's Water Magic

I asked Fer to come with us to a forest a short distance away from the city.

"Like you said, you've got Fire Goddess Agni's blessing as well as Earth Goddess Kishar's blessing." Fer said after doing an Appraisal on me.

"That's right. After returning to our room yesterday and making an offering to Ninril-sama, I received blessings from Agni-sama and Kishar-sama for, ummm, various reasons. They're blessings (small), again for, ummm, various reasons. I've got to make offerings and prayers to them too now like I do to Ninril-sama."

"Is that so? But it's a good thing, isn't it? You're kinda weak after all and any kind of blessings, even blessings (small) are gonna be a big help to you." Oh yeah, I'm weak... Thanks for reminding me. I know I'm weak myself yeah, but couldn't you be a bit more diplomatic about it, Fer?

"Your master is weak, you just come out and say it to my face?"

"Well, it's true isn't it?" Fer said bluntly.

"No, well... I suppose so." I conceded. "Anyway, having got that out of the way, I came out here to try out my magic and see what effects the blessings have. I was told that even a blessing (small) means I should consume less magical energy when I cast fire magic and earth magic and the power of the spells will increase too. I'll also get additional different kinds of fire and earth magic too, they said."

Fer looked around the forest. "So that's why we're out here then, for you to try out your new powers?"

"Oh," I remembered to add. "And Sui now has the blessing of the Water Goddess Rusalka for, ummm, various reasons. The blessing is the same as the blessing you got from Ninril-sama, it's not (small)."

"What? Let me see..." Fer stared at the shoulder bag, obviously Appraising Sui-chan

who was sleeping inside.

"...As you say, Sui has Rusalka-sama's blessing. Sui's gonna get really strong with that." Fer paused, clearly thinking hard. "I wonder what sort of a fight she could put up against me now?"

What? Stop thinking like that! Even if Sui is getting much stronger she wouldn't be a match for someone like Fer who has maxed out his levels in so many ways.

"Don't say that please." I begged him. "She'd never be able to defeat you no matter how strong she gets."

"Nuu, I was just thinking she might be a good partner for a test of strength..." Fer was still considering it, obviously.

"No, no, She wouldn't be a good opponent. Even if Sui is getting stronger she's still way beneath you, Fer. Stop considering it, please." Please? Fer is totally a battle maniac but it's dangerous for him to say something like that. Let's get on with what we came here to do, test our magical powers and we can pretend Fer never said anything like that. Sui first, I think.

"Hey Sui, wake up." I said to sleepyhead Sui in the shoulder bag.

"Hmm? Aruji-, what is it?" I picked up a still-sleepy Sui to explain.

"Hey, Sui received a blessing from the Water Goddess. You can do water magic now."

"Huh? Is Sui able to make water magic spells now?" she asked.

"Yep." I said.

"Hey, yay!" Sui bounced up and down happily.

"Now I'd like you to experiment with various water magic spells to see what you can do."

"All right Aruji-. Water magic, water magic..... Oh, it looks like I can do this-."

A water ball about a metre in diameter appeared in front of Sui.

"From my experience, you can use most magic spells if you have a divine blessing from that Goddess." Fer commented. "That water ball is not clean water though, it's got impurities in it. Sui needs to concentrate on making it pure to start with." If a water magic user creates something they have to be careful to make it without impurities if they want it to be drinkable, it seems.

Fer shrugged. "However it wouldn't matter if you or I drink it though since we've got the blessing of a Goddess. We could even drink mud." I do not want to drink mud at all, thank you, even with a blessing to protect me.

"Well don't worry about water while Sui is here. When you need water, just ask." Sui said proudly.

"What else can you do, Sui?" I asked.

"Well- I dunno..."

"Can you throw the water ball far away fast?" I remembered water magic from novels and games and how it could be used as a weapon. Could Sui do the same?

"Yeah, I'll try that-" As Sui spoke, the water ball flew off at a tremendous speed. Thump! The water ball struck a thick tree, water splashed everywhere and the water ball disappeared. There was a creaking splintering noise... and then the tree fell over with a thud. The water ball had broken the tree in two. What, that power...? It had been a really thick tree. Huh?

"Wow, the tree broke. Wow wow!" An excited Sui leapt out of my arms and jumped around poing poing.

No Wow! from me, Sui is scary. I never want to be hit by something like that.

"Ah, I see, I wonder if this works?" Sui muttered to herself. As she spoke a strong jet of water sprayed from the tip of a tentacle. Shhh!

Huh? A nearby tree hit by the jet fell down. As I approached the fallen tree, I saw a beautiful cross section on the stump like it had been cut with a chainsaw. That's a Water Cutter? Sui really has gotten stronger. Acid Bullets, Water Balls and Water Cutters are really powerful finishing moves.

I should make something clear to Sui, I suppose since she's still quite young to have

such powerful attacks at her command.

"Sui, your water magic attacks are amazing but you should just shoot them towards monsters. You should never shoot them at people." I thought for a moment. "Well, okay, if they're bad people it's all right to shoot them but only if I tell you to. You shouldn't shoot it at anything else either unless I say so, OK?"

"Yeah, I got it. Sui will only shoot water magic at monsters. Sui will listen to what Aruji says to shoot. Sui is a good girl."

Yes yes, our Sui-chan is someone who listens to her Aruji. Sui is a good girl.

# Chapter 78

## My Blessings (Small) Turn Out To Be Really Useful After All

Right then, next up is the verification of the changes to my own magic powers. There are various things I want to try and they'll take a bit of time. In that case...

"Hey Fer, I want to try out my magic powers and it may take a while. While I'm doing this can you go find a Black Serpent and hunt it for me?"

"Oh, is that about you wanting a Black Serpent skin? You said something about it earlier."

"Yeah, that's it. Lambert-san talked me into agreeing to wholesale him a Black Serpent skin. Can you catch one for me?"

"Yeah, no problem. I'm not doing anything else anyway. I'll be right back." Fer hesitated. "Yes, I've put up a Barrier for you. I know how you worry about such things." Condescension doesn't suit you, Fer.

"Oh Fer-sama, thank you thank you thank you." Fer ignored my sarcastic riposte, dashing off quickly into the distance. He could really move when he wanted to. Right, to work.

"Lessee, let's try fire magic first." There was a danger of fires if I shot off Fireballs randomly in the forest so I first tried changing the size of a Fireball held on my palm. I started with a regular Fireball.

"Wow!" The Fireball I made was double the size of the ones I could create before.

"Is this the power of the goddess' blessing?" OK, dial it back a bit... I tried to deliberately make a Fireball of the usual size, using a lot less magical power... Oh, I made it. That looks good. So if I cut back on the magical power I feed into the Fireball it gets smaller. More power, it gets bigger. I kept pumping magical power into it and eventually I ended up with a Fireball about a metre in diameter.

"It takes a lot of effort to keep it this size." I muttered.

"Wow, Aruji is amazing-" Sui commented.

"Sui, this is a Fireball and it's really hot so you shouldn't get too close to it."

"I understand-"

While Sui was telling me I was amazing I saw the Fireball growing and shrinking. I had to concentrate to maintain its size.

"Next up, another Fireball at the same time..." I created two smaller Fireballs, one on each hand. That worked too. I spent about 15 minutes trying assorted combinations then I paused, puzzled by the way I felt.

"Huh? I'm not at all tired?" I would feel tired by now normally. I'd want to sit down after expending so much magical energy but it's no problem now.

"Is this reduction of magical power consumption from the blessing? The Goddess mentioned something like that... I'm OK afterwards even though my fire magic is a lot stronger too."

It turned out it was difficult for me to maintain a Fireball with a diameter of about a metre and half so I decided I'd only create a big one like that in an emergency. Whaddayaknow, the Goddess' blessings (small) looked like they were going to be useful after all.

Next I tried out my earth magic. First of all...

"Stone Bullet." Thunk, thunk, thunk, thunk... I went up to the tree I had used as a target and counted seven pebbles (Stone Bullets) embedded in the trunk.

"Seven Stone Bullets at a time is a big improvement, and they're embedded deep in the wood. It looks like their striking power has also gone up."

I kept experimenting, firing off Stone Bullet several times while increasing the magical power I fed into the effort. At my limit I could shoot nearly 30 pebbles at a time.

"It's a bit like a shotgun." I mused. It seemed to be quite powerful but again I decided I'd reserve that amount of effort for an emergency.

Next I tried using some new Earth Magic I had acquired. "Stone Wall." A stone wall about 2 metres long and tall and about 10 cm thick appeared on the ground in front of me.

"Oh, it worked." I was a bit surprised, I had only put a small amount of magical power into it since it was my first attempt at using this spell. I felt I could put a lot more power into it if I desired. It certainly felt different to the Stone Bullet spell.

Was it worth expending magical energy to simply create stone walls? Well maybe, perhaps if I thought I wanted to be somewhere for a long time. I decided to try something more elaborate but first I decided take a little break and restore my magical power levels again. Checking my Status, my magical power was reduced to nearly half from all the experimenting I had done. I also felt a bit tired and hungry now so I decided to eat something to restore my energy levels while I relaxed. I bought some sweet buns from the Net Super.

"Sui ~ Let's rest for a while." I called. Sui who had been busy practicing water magic came over at once. "Here's a snack for you." I offered her a sweet bun.

"It's not dinner-time, is it OK to eat just now?" Sui wasn't sure she was allowed to snack between meals.

"Yes you can, but only this one time." Sui-chan's a good girl, she deserved a treat now and then.

"Yay!-" Once Sui started eating, I started eating too, with my usual canned coffee accompaniment to the sweet buns. Yeah, sweet things when I am tired are delicious. After nearly an hour's break I checked my Status again. It wasn't totally restored but it had recovered to about 90%. Sui got sleepy as usual after she ate sweet things and she took a nap in her bag. I moved away a bit to avoid waking Sui again before I continued experimenting.

"Fu~, I finally managed to do it." It had taken a lot of trial and error but since I now had Stone Wall I thought I could perhaps make a house with earth magic. I only had the blessings (small) of Earth Goddess Kishar so I wasn't sure I could do such a complicated thing, but this is really useful.

The 'house' I created (although it's doubtful whether you could actually call it a real house) was a box-shaped room of roughly 10 tatami mats in size. It had walls, a

doorway and a roof, nothing elaborate or complicated but the difference between having it and not having it while travelling would be more than you'd think at first.

Fer's Barrier spell guarantees me a perfect defence and rain and breezes are kept off but because it is transparent it doesn't provide me with the reassurance of a solid wall. My biggest problem is when I go to sleep. I know that the Barrier is safe and reliable but since I can see through it I continue to worry and I can't rest easy. I want a wall between me and the world outside when I go to bed so I can sleep well, so this will be like sleeping at home. Good enough.

It took me about two-thirds of my magical power to make this 'house' though, but if it reassures me and helps me sleep better it'll be worth it.

It may only be a blessing (small) but it's doing a really good job. Well done! I was kinda worried this change in my Status would cause me problems but yeah, having it is good for me after all. I'd not be able to do this sort of thing otherwise, probably so in the end I'm glad I got the blessings (small).

# Chapter 79

## Chicken Namban

Just after I finished testing my new magic powers Fer returned, carrying a Black Serpent securely in his mouth. It seemed his hunt was successful. Saying that I didn't really expect otherwise even though a Black Serpent is an A-rank monster. I'm not really surprised by what he can do any more... Fer dropped the Black Serpent he had caught in front of me.

"Thanks, Fer." I put the Black Serpent in my Item Box.

"What's up with this?" Fer asked me when he saw the box-shaped house I had made.

"This is what I created with earth magic." I was kind of proud of it.

"What's it for?" Fer was blunt as usual.

"Hey, I just wished I had something like this to sleep in when we're travelling."

"You've got my Barrier, haven't you?"

"It's not that." I explained. "Fer, your Barrier is strong and safe, it keeps the rain off, I'm really grateful for it... but it's transparent and when I go to bed I feel uneasy and I can't sleep properly."

"Yeah, but is something like that thing better than my Barrier?" Fer was sounding peeved. I hurried to placate him.

"Look, there are times when you like an area and want to hang around or it's a nice place to hunt and you're going to stay there for a while, aren't there Fer?"

"Well, yes there are." Fer conceded.

"When you do that what kind of place do you choose to sleep in?"

"There's usually a cave or a big tree..." Fer said slowly.

"Why do you choose places like that?"

"Why? I don't know but somehow I can sleep better in a place like that..."

"That's exactly why I made this house." I said triumphantly.

"I see..." He still didn't sound convinced.

"Well, if we're on a journey I definitely want to sleep in something like this at the end of the day."

OK, I had partially convinced Fer my little 'house' was a good idea but another problem had cropped up. How do I get rid of the 'house' after I've finished with it? I can't just leave little buildings like this behind me as I travel with Fer, it's not eco.

Oh, it seems if I made it just with my magical power it should disappear if I try to make it go away. I used Stone Wall on the 'house', thinking 'disappear' and it disappeared like it had never been there at all. Perhaps only the one who used magic to create it can get rid of it but I can do it without a problem.

I had a great time today learning about my magic but it was getting late.

"Fer, do you want to eat here or are you going to wait until we're back in town? It may be almost dark by then."

"My belly's empty, let's eat here." The glutton had spoken. I'll make dinner for Fer right away. So what will it be today? Hmmm, since I have fried chicken cutlets in my Item Box, I'll use them up to make Chicken Namban.

I opened the Net Super menu and purchased what I was missing, mainly vinegar and tartare sauce. I thought about cooking up some rice but it would take too long so why not bread...? I chose hamburger buns this time.

First I had to make sweet vinegar by putting soy sauce, vinegar and sugar in a pan and warming it up. I soaked some fried chicken cutlets in the sweet vinegar letting them slowly absorb the flavour. I put them on a dish and finished off with plenty of tartare sauce on top.

Ah, I have to wake up Sui. "Hey Sui, we're going to eat."

"Oh, dinner?-" Darling Sui-chan was awake instantly.

"Yes, dinner." I confirmed.

"Dinner, let's eat-"

Now Sui was awake I put out another dish of Chicken Namban for her.

"It's kinda sour, but it's delicious when you eat it with this white stuff." Fer said while gobbling the contents of his dish.

"Yah, this white stuff is delicious.-" Sui agreed.

They seemed to like tartare sauce. I think tartare sauce is delicious too, by the way.

My turn now. I put Chicken Namban on a hamburger bun and added lots of tartare sauce then I bit into the completed Chicken Namban burger.

"Tasty-" The Chicken Namban and bread went very well together. Chicken cutlets glazed with sweet vinegar and plenty of tartare sauce are delicious.

"Hey, what you're eating, it looks delicious." Fer interrupted.

"Do you want to try Chicken Namban in a burger bun?"

"Yes, please."

"Oh, Sui also wants to eat it-"

I made Chicken Namban burgers for Fer and Sui.

"Eating this with bread is delicious-" Sui said.

Yeah yeah, if you liked the Chicken Namban by itself then this combination will be pretty much the same taste. As for Fer... he scarfed down a complete Chicken Namban burger in a single bite. I guess he thought it was delicious too.

We took a small break after the meal to settle our digestion and then we made our way back to the town.



"Oh, can we stop by the Adventurers Guild?" I asked Fer. He agreed, not being particularly hungry any more. When we got to the Guild we went straight to the purchasing counter where there was a young man on duty.

"Ah, is Johan-san around?" I inquired.

"Whaddaya want him for?" The young man said very brusquely.

"Eh, I just need him for something." The young man's attitude was rubbing me up the wrong way.

"Hang on." Saying that, he turned to the warehouse door behind the purchase counter and shouted, "Ossan, there's a customer here-"

"Oh- wait, wait." Johan-ojisan's voice came back. After a few moments Johan-ojisan appeared from the back of the warehouse.

"It's you, sonny?" he said. "You're gonna have to come back tomorrow, I'm not finished disassembling all those Bloody Horn Bulls yet."

"Oh, that's not what I'm here for, I have something different to ask you..." I know you're busy and I'm sorry for asking you to do more work but I need it done as soon as possible.

"Well, seeing it's you come on through." I followed Johan-ojisan back into his warehouse.

"So what you got for me today?" he asked expectantly.

"Uh, it's Black Serpent." I pulled the Black Serpent out of my Item Box.

"Ohoho, I'm starting to enjoy seeing you turn up here, sonny." Johan-ojisan said. "I never know what surprises you're gonna pull out of your Item Box. It's Black Serpent this time-"

I'm really sorry. "Please give me the meat and the skin and please buy the rest."

"I gotcha. I'm still working on those Bloody Horn Bulls though like I said. I'll give you

everything together once they're all done, OK?"

"Yes, that would be great." I'm going to get a Black Serpent skin I can sell to Lambert-san as we had agreed earlier. Time to go back to the inn.

# Chapter 80

## "Cheese In" is Justice!

I decided to make a lot of dishes to put in my Item Box, things I can store after I prepare them and then just pull them out when we want to eat. The smell of cooking so much food would linger in my room so I used the inn's courtyard instead after asking permission.

So what did I decide on? First of all, I made Orc General meat marinated in miso. It's easy, just put the meat and miso in a plastic bag and let it soak in. I could grill the meat afterwards but I'll probably deep-fry it since that seems to be a staple for us these days. I can do that any time if I've got the meat already marinated.

There are two types of rub, soy sauce based rub and salt based rub for the other meats, of course. I used Black Serpent, Rock Bird and Giant Dodo since they were like chicken. I coated half of each type of meat in the soy sauce based rub and the other half using the salt based rub. I was preparing an enormous amount of meat so I washed and drained some rice before I started cooking it.

After putting more money into the Net Super I bought yet another portable cooking stove and another big earthenware pot. I only bought one extra stove because I can't really manage more than four stoves at one time. It would be terrible to burn food if there's too much going on for me to cope with and I make a mistake so I made pots of rice on three of the stoves while I was also frying a lot of meat marinated in miso on the other stove. Given the eating habits of Fer and Sui I was cooking large amounts of food. Each pot of steaming-hot rice was stored in the Item Box when it was ready so that we could eat cooked rice anytime. I cooked more rice again on the three stoves, but this time only two pots of rice went into the Item Box for later and I held back one pot of rice to make onigiri.

"Fu ~, finally finished getting everything ready."

I took out the rice pot which I had put in Item Box so that it would stay warm after cooking, ready to make onigiri.

"Onigiri hmmm, I'll need nori, salmon, mix in some wakame and maybe whitebait

too?"

I bought the fillings from the Net Super and made lots of onigiri. OK, some of the onigiri (a lot of them) were badly shaped but that was kind of normal and entertaining in its own way, and it didn't affect the taste. To tell you the truth I'd really have liked to make some onigiri with mentaiko but it's kinda sticky and messy so I didn't bother.

I still had ambitions even after all this work. "Fahahahahah, I've wanted to get this since I saw it on the Net Super." It was a hand-operated mincer, sold in the cookware department. I could make minced meat with this.

I decided that I was going to make hamburger. Everyone likes fried or grilled hamburgers, right? I intended to fill some of them with cheese Japanese style ("Cheese In"), the two tastes go so well together. First of all, I had to mince a large amount of meat. I could use ground meat for all sorts of dishes so I decided to make a lot of it. I started with Bloody Horn Bull meat, turning it into ground meat.

Put the meat in the mincer and turn the handle, turn and turn..... I don't know how many times I turned the handle but finally I had a lot of Bloody Horn Bull mince ready to cook with. However I wasn't finished. Next I had to mince up a lot of Orc General's meat too. Like mincing the Bloody Horn Bull's meat, I put in the Orc General's meat and turned the handle, turned it and turned it and turned it and turned it..... I minced a large amount of Orc General meat that way.

"Well, I'm worn out but I can make hamburger now." I said, looking at the piles of minced meat with the satisfaction of a job well done.

I chopped up some onions to start with. Some folks like to fry the chopped onions beforehand but it's a pain so I don't bother. I decided I'd make the ground meat ratio for these hamburgers 60 percent Bloody Horn Bull and 40 percent Orc General meat.

I started mixing the ingredients. I added some milk to bread crumbs in a bowl and left them to soak while I mixed the minced meat with the onions, eggs, salt and pepper and then added the milk-soaked bread crumbs afterwards. I formed the mixture into patties of the right size, arranged them on trays I bought from the Net Super, wrapped them in film and put them in my Item Box for safe keeping. I made more the same way, and more... I finally got to the point where I could move on to the next step so when I was making the last batch of hamburgers I put cheese in the middle of each patty, Japanese style.

Afterwards, I cooked deep fried meat so I'd have it ready to eat when we wanted it. After warming up the oil, I deep-fried half of the marinated meat, cooking it twice to make the outside crisp. I also fried chicken cutlets and pork cutlets. I put cheese into a bunch of pork and chicken cutlets and fried them too since it seemed like a good idea. "Cheese In" is Justice!

"Ok, the oil is still nice and hot... how about fries?" I opened up Net Super again and bought some frozen fried potatoes, wedges with skin on as well as regular thin French fries. I could use them as sides for the fried meat and hamburger and fried potatoes go so well with beer, so I deep-fried a lot of potatoes.

"That's enough deep-fried food, I think." It was time to fry some hamburger. I used a shallow frying-pan, cooking both sides thoroughly without any oil. At home I ate them with a sauce I made with ketchup. After taking out the cooked hamburgers I added ketchup and Worcester sauce to the fat which had oozed out of the ground meat and reduced it in the pan, stirring regularly until it thickened. Some people might add sugar but not in my kitchen. Heathens.

I fried up some "Cheese In" hamburgers and made sauce for them as well.

"Alright, all done." Now for a taste. I was looking forward to...

"Gruuumble..." came the sound of a great empty belly behind me. I looked back and sure enough Fer was standing there, saliva dripping from his jaws. Sui was sitting next to him expectantly.

"Of course..." I gave into the inevitable and quickly prepared hamburgers for the two gluttons.

"It smells nice," munch\*munch\*munch "Oh, this is delicious." Fer paused thoughtfully. "Both are delicious, but the ones with the soft white stuff inside taste better."

"True, this is real good. The sticky white stuff inside is delicious." Sui agreed. "Cheese In" hamburger is popular, it seemed. "Cheese In" truly is Justice! I like "Cheese In" too of course. I had some fresh-cooked rice with my "Cheese In" hamburger and yes, it was delicious.

I worked hard cooking all day, so I decided I'd have some premium beer with potato fries as a reward. \*Pssssh... \* Ummm, that's nice.

# Chapter 81

## Soap, Shampoo and Conditioner

Next day I went to the Adventurers Guild to collect the Bloody Horn Bull meat and the Black Serpent's meat and skin.

Johan-ojisan came out when I announced myself at the Guild's purchase counter and I followed him along with Fer into the warehouse, a place I had become familiar with. Sui was in her new bag as usual. It seems that she found this bag quite comfortable.

"Well, the Guild Master hasn't come back yet, he's still talking 'bout the Mithril Lizard thing with Count Langridge-dono so I can't help ya with that." Johan-ojisan shrugged. "I can sort out the Bloody Horn Bull subjugation reward right now."

If the Guild Master was still in discussions with the Count that sounded like it was going to be a problem. Higher-ups and nobles are always trouble. I listened carefully as Johan-ojisan started explaining the payments he was making today.

"First of all, there are 324 gold coins for the subjugation itself. Then there's the purchases -- we're buying the Bloody Horn Bull horns, that's two horns each for 58 monsters at one and a half gold coins per horn, making a total of 174 gold coins. Then there are 57 skins since ya kept one, ummm they're eight gold coins each so that's 456 gold coins. You're lettin' us buy half the meat this time round, ten gold coins for each monster carcass so that makes 290 gold coins." Johan-ojisan scratched his bald head. "And I'm forgettin' something... ah. That other Black Serpent you brought it, you're keeping the meat and skin but the poison sacs, liver, fangs, eyeballs and its mana stone are worth 79 gold coins. That's a grand total of 1323 total gold coins. "

Bloody Horn Bull horns are used to make magical tools and it seems the leather is popular as a material for bags and shoes. Coincidentally, there was a bag made from Bloody Horn Bull leather in Lambert-san's shop. The meat is a bit high-priced but it's still popular and always in demand. Selling this many Bloody Horn Bulls at one time wasn't going to depress the market and hence reduce the price paid by the Guild.

"The Guild here has been making big profits since you came to town, kiddo." Johan-ojisan looked sad though. Why? "Problem is," he continued, "we've got a cash flow

problem, paying out so much to you in one lump is a stretch. If you could just wait for a few days..." My face fell. I'm sorry, I'm causing you problems, I'm sorry. Of course I'll wait...

Johan-ojisan suddenly grinned. "Just kidding, sonny. We can pay you right now."

Thump, thump, thump, thump, thump, Johan-ojisan dropped five heavy cloth sacks on the work table.

"There's 300 gold coins in each big bag and another 123 coins in this little one." He tapped a smaller sack to the left of the four big ones. 1323 gold coins.....

The money we're earning is just incredible. Well, the money Fer's earning is incredible, I should say. Of course we've still to receive the money from the Mithril Lizard subjugation as well.

"Oh, yes, there was a message from the Guild Master." Johan-ojisan said. "The disassembly cost for the monsters you sell to the Guild here is still free since you're selling us so much, sonny. Anything you catch while you're staying in this city counts."

So they still won't charge for dismantling? Great, but right now we have plenty of meat and there's no need for Fer to go hunting right now. Fer's been complaining about a lack of exercise though and if he does go off and hunt something then I'll happily sell it to the Guild, minus the meat of course.

"Now that's out of the way, here's the Bloody Horn Bull meat and Black Serpent meat and leather you wanted to keep." I got the meat of 27 Bloody Horn Bulls and the meat and skin of the Black Serpent from Johan-ojisan and put it all in the Item Box. That was a lot of meat. I mean, really a lot of meat. A mountain of meat.

Right then, time to go. Saying goodbye to Johan-ojisan I left the Adventurers Guild with Fer in tow and headed back. On the way I bought some things I needed from a general store.

"I'm going back to the inn after this to get some things ready and then I'm going to Lambert-san's store. What do you want to do, Fer?"

"I'm bored hanging around in that beast stable. I'll go with you."

"I understand. Well then I'll be busy in the room for a while so just hang around for a

bit." I said to Fer and then went back to my room.



"Well, I've been spending all my time at the Adventurer's Guild in this town up till now. I'm also a member of the Merchants Guild so I think I need to do a bit of selling too." was my thinking. It had taken me some effort to get into the Merchants Guild and I'd paid the membership fees so it seemed a good idea to earn some money that way. My plan was to buy some things from the Net Super and resell them here.

I took a look through the Net Super, wondering if this or that would be sellable but I had no real idea of what anything was worth in this world. I wanted to talk to Lambert-san about that, since he seems to be a top-ranking merchant.

To start with I bought some things I used myself from the Net Super. I bought 3 pieces of basic soap for 1 copper coin and 3 pieces of rose-scented soap for 3 copper coins. Next up I purchased 4 assorted refills of rinse-in shampoo, regular shampoo and conditioner for 4 copper coins total. I figured this would sell well here. It came to a bit over 8 copper coins since I added a pack of hair wraps to the order at the end. I bought the shampoos and conditioner in refill packs since I thought I'd sell them here as special items and I couldn't do that if they were in plastic bottles.

I started by taking the bars of soap out of their other-world packaging and putting them into individual small cloth bags which I'd bought at the general store earlier. Since soap seems to exist in this world, I figured selling soap bars would be easier than trying to sell liquid soap and body wash. I'd price the rose-scented soap a bit higher than the basic soap since I thought it would be a luxury item here.

"Well, let's put the shampoo and such into the bottles I bought at the general store."

I decanted the rinse-in shampoo and regular shampoo and conditioner from their refill packs into longnecked bottles sealed with a cork. I filled three bottles of each. The rinse-in shampoo would be OK for everyday use (although it appeared that in this world baths weren't that common among ordinary folks, richer people would bathe every day). The separate shampoo and conditioner are intended as luxury goods. The shininess of someone's hair is improved if they use shampoo and conditioner properly and it feels better to the touch.

I put the hair wraps I bought as an afterthought into a small wide-mouthed jar I

purchased from the Net Super. Since the wraps were an other-world item they might make someone's hair beautiful by magic and I could sell them at a high price too.

So, that's all there was to it. Although this stuff was likely to sell well here I didn't know what price to ask for them. I wanted to consult with Lambert-san about that. I should use any connections I have, I think, to make things easier for myself. I don't know what the people in this world might think of shampoo and conditioner -- surely they've got some kind of hair cleaning products of their own? Anyways I'd take these with me tomorrow and talk to Lambert-san to see what he thinks.

Aaaand, I'm going to take a bath... Although I'm getting used to just wiping my body with a wet towel, I'm Japanese after all and I'd really like to take a bath.

I want a bath.

# Chapter 82

## It Seems Baths Are On Sale

"Hello. My name is Mukouda, is Lambert-san available to speak to me?"

I went to Lambert-san's shop but unfortunately today Lambert-san was not in the shop that day. I spoke to one of his employees who seemed to recognise me. He immediately went off to call Lambert-san.

Lambert-san came from the back of the store. "Mukouda-san, welcome."

"I've brought the Black Serpent's skin that you wanted, Lambert-san." I got right down to business.

"Oh, that is excellent news." Lambert-san said with a smile on his face. "Please, this way."

I followed Lambert-san into a reception room at the back of the store. A maid brought tea as soon as I was shown to a chair. The tea smelled and tasted like oolong.

"So may I show you the skin of the Black Serpent?" Lambert-san nodded so I extracted the Black Serpent skin from my Item Box and displayed it to him.

"Ho ho, this seems to have few scratches. It is in wonderful condition." said Lambert-san, examining the skin minutely. "Truly wonderful". It seems that skins with only small amounts of damage are rarely available.

"Because this is such a good skin I will make a good offer... hmmm, how about 50 gold coins?"

Huh? 50 gold coins for just the Black Serpent's skin? Lambert-san explained his thinking to me.

"As I said before, this skin has only a few scratches. Scratched or torn parts of a skin can't be used to make high-quality leather items such as bags. This skin is almost undamaged so I'll be able to use more of it than usual."

I see. Still 50 gold coins seemed a lot. It is an unexpected extra income but welcome all the same.

"Very well, I agree, 50 gold coins it is."

When I said that, Lambert-san went off to a back room and returned with 50 gold coins and stacked them on the table before me, five stacks of ten coins each.

"50 gold coins, please check the total." said Lambert-san.

"Yes, I have received 50 gold coins." I said formally, completing the deal. I carefully put the 50 gold coins in the Sand Snake skin wallet I had bought in this shop earlier.

"Oh, that's from our shop." said Lambert-san appreciatively, noticing the wallet.

"Yeah, I've been a little hesitant to use it but since this money was earned at Lambert-san's store, I thought it appropriate to start keeping coins in it from now on."

"Heh, I hope that you use it profitably for a long time to come." Lambert-san said. A Sand Snake skin purse with 50 gold coins made me feel rich somehow even though it's a small part of my entire fortune.

I remembered I wanted to consult with Lambert-san about selling goods so I put a serious expression on my face and sat up straight.

"Well, I'd like to discuss some other business with Lambert-san if I may..."

"Discuss business with me?"

"Yes, but before we begin... I got hold of a lot of Bloody Horn Bulls so I felt I should share the bounty." I brought out the Bloody Horn Bull's skin Johan-ojisan had disassembled for me and presented it to Lambert-san.

"Are you sure?" he said, admiring the skin.

"Of course it is. As I said, I got a lot of them." It's easier to ask someone to do you a favour if they feel they're indebted to you because of something you gave them. It's not a bribe, honest. Since Lambert-san seemed ready to accept my 'gift' I continued with my explanation.

"You see, I'm also registered in the Merchants Guild." I showed him my iron ranked guild card.

"Ah, that's unusual. Few people join both the Merchants Guild and the Adventurers Guild."

"What I'd like to consult with you about is some goods I have, whether you think they would sell and what sort of price I should ask for them." I brought out the soap, rinse in shampoo and other items I had prepared.

"This soap, for example..." I took some of the cheap soap out of its bag and showed it to Lambert-san. "This other soap, however is scented and I'd expect to charge a bit more for it." Lambert-san sniffed the scented soap with some interest. I continued with the shampoo and conditioner, showing him the bottles I had filled earlier.

"This liquid is used to wash your hair. Your hair will be smooth and shiny after you use it. Women will especially like this, I'm sure."

Lambert-san picked up the bottle containing the rinse-in shampoo and pulled out the cork stopper to sniff the scent. I showed him the regular shampoo and conditioner bottles.

"These are also for washing your hair but they're better than the first one. I'd hope I can charge more for these for that reason." I held out the shampoo bottle. "You use this one to wash your hair," and then I presented him with the conditioner bottle. "And then you rinse your hair with this one afterwards." I put the two bottles down, side by side on the table. "It leaves the hair glossy and beautiful, admired by everyone who sees it."

Lambert-san checked the scent of the shampoo and conditioner, pulling out the cork stoppers. I finished up by showing him the hair wraps in their small jar.

"This last item is special," I explained, "after washing your hair, you put it on and leave it for a while. It makes any type of hair look beautiful just like magic."

Lambert-san opened the jar and sniffed the scent as he had all the other items then he sat back, eyes closed, obviously thinking hard. His ferocious concentration made me nervous, then he opened his eyes again.

"Mukouda-san." he paused, then continued. "It's been a great pleasure for me to

become acquainted with you, Mukouda-san." he said earnestly. "You see, it will be my wedding anniversary in two weeks time but I've been fretting over what sort of present to give to my wife..."

He explained that he usually gave her something like a bag or other leather accessory for obvious reasons but his wife had not-so-subtly hinted that she would like something different this year, saying she had as many items like that as she'd ever need so he had been worrying about what to give her as a gift this time.

"My lovely wife adores soap, and indeed she worries a lot about how her hair looks, so if I could gift her with these items, Mukouda-san I'd be very much relieved!" He lined the bottles and bags up on the table before him, muttering something like "I'm saved..." Couples are bad news, I thought but I kept that to myself.

Something in Lambert-san's words caught my attention. "If your wife loves soap, does that mean you have a bath?" Lambert-san's store was obviously a high-class establishment but I had thought that only the mansions noblemen lived in had baths.

"Yes," he said with a smile, "We have a bath. My wife demanded we buy one." So they did have a bath. I really wanted to see what a bath in this other world is like, and find out if I could buy one as well.

"Oh, I'm sorry to be rude but could you possibly show me your bath?" Although it might be a bit weird to just up and ask someone to show them the bath they have in their home I couldn't stop myself, I wanted to see it.

"Yes, that's fine." he said, surprising me with his prompt agreement. He led me into the house attached to the store and guided me to his bathroom. The bath there was like an enlarged washbowl made of brown pottery but it was definitely a bath. I'd fit in it easily, no problems.

"We're really proud to have this in our home." Lambert-san said boastfully. It seems that it's a mark of success in business for a merchant to have a bath at home. "A wonderful bath, isn't it?" I agreed wholeheartedly and Lambert-san told me more. It was made of pottery with specially treated ground-up mana stones kneaded into the clay before it was fired and glazed and that made it very expensive. The crushed mana stones in the pottery kept the water at just the right temperature all the time with no need to heat it and it never cooled down. Lambert-san's simple brown-coloured bath apparently cost him 350 gold coins when he bought it. Other baths with nicer colors

and with decorations were more expensive.

Th- three hundred and fifty gold coins, boy that was pricey. But thanks to Fer I had money burning a hole in my pocket so... Basically, I wanted a bathtub, big time. Just seeing this one only increased my determination to get one for myself.

First up I asked Lambert-san where I can buy a bath. It turned out that Irario Company owned a large shop that was the only place you could buy a bath in this town. It seems that shop was their head office but they had branches in other cities as well. I really wanted to buy a bath, so I planned to go there and check them out later. I had to conclude my business with Lambert-san first though. I needed to reassure him that the soap and hair treatments were safe and suitable to give to his wife as a present.

When we returned to the meeting room I indicated the bottles and bags on the table. "Lambert-san, please try all these items for yourself. If you're fine with them I'll bring you more so you can give them to your wife on your wedding anniversary."

"Well, yes," Lambert-san said, "I'd be in serious trouble if I gave her something that did strange things to her hair and skin without testing it myself first after all." Lambert-san, I don't want you to get into trouble...

"Could you give me some guidance about setting the price for such goods if you're happy after trying them out?"

"Certainly." Lambert-san smiled. "Solving this problem which was worrying me more than anything to do with business is definitely worth a little advice." I thanked him profusely and left Lambert-san's shop.

Once I know what sort of prices I can charge I could start to figure out how much I can sell. The soaps, shampoo and treatments have all sorts of fragrances so I could change the prices around for the different types and of course there's the fashionable 'organic' versions too. There's no doubt that these sorts of things were a better sales prospect than simple salt and pepper. I was looking forward to seeing what Lambert-san would say about them.

# Chapter 83

## Lambert-san's Wife

Fer, Sui and I were having a relaxing breakfast in the courtyard of the inn when the landlady brought a boy aged about 13 or so to us.

"You have a visitor from Lambert Company." she said. I recognised the face of the boy when I looked closely, it was the lad I had seen assisting Lambert-san with his wagon on the way to Carerina.

"You see, the owner is waiting at the store..." the boy seemed distracted by something. What's up? You're drooling, kid. I wondered if he was remembering the meal he had enjoyed while returning to town as he watched us eat. Okay then, growing kids have healthy appetites so your sempai here will treat you to breakfast.

"It's maybe a bit much for breakfast, but since you're young I think it'll be good for you." I said as I quickly grilled some Orc General meat pickled in miso, made a dish of Orc General miso-yaki-don, and passed it to him. The boy looked between my face and the miso-yaki-don, back and forth.

"Someone as young as you are will never get enough of something like this." I reassured him.

"Oh, it's that good, is it?" He was still unsure.

"I made it for you." I pushed the bowl at him.

"Oh, thank you!" The boy began gulping down Orc General Miso-yaki-don.

"Oh, it is tasty..." he said, eating it with a happy face. Once he finished the bowl I gave him some roasted green hot tea. I warned him to blow on it before drinking since it was something he hadn't encountered before.

"The food was very delicious and this tea is also delicious. Thank you so much." the boy bowed to me in thanks. Yeah yeah, he's a pretty polite kid. Having to work for a living when you're his age, this other world is a tough place to grow up in. Work hard,

kid and don't give up.

"Oh, the store owner is waiting for you..." the boy suddenly remembered why he had been sent to meet us.

Of course, Lambert-san wants me to call on him. I accompanied the boy to Lambert-san's store along with Fer and Sui.



Lambert-san hurried out to greet me as soon as I entered his store.

"Mukouda-san, you finally came, I'm saved..." he blurted, a relieved expression on his face. A woman suddenly appeared from behind Lambert-san. She was about 30 years old, a determined-looking beauty with long olive-brown hair put up in a complex style.

"Dear, you promised to introduce me," she said, elbowing him in the ribs.

"Oh, ah... Mukouda-san, this is my wife..." he stuttered. Pushing past Lambert-san, his wife took over.

"I am Lambert's wife, Mary. I am very pleased to make your acquaintance." she said, curtsying in her long skirt in a very refined manner.

"I owe much to Lambert-san so I am similarly pleased to meet you too." I replied, rather flustered as Mary-san slowly approached me, silently staring into my eyes.

"What is it?" My heart pounded as such a beautiful wife came close to me.

"You see, these items are..." She held out a basket containing the soap and rinse-in shampoo I had given to Lambert-san yesterday to try out. It turned out that Mary-san had noticed a nice smell from Lambert-san after he had a bath last night. Lambert-san had tried to conceal his use of the soap and shampoo because he was planning to surprise her with them on their wedding anniversary, but Mary-san would not be deterred from discovering the truth. Truly a determined lady.

"The fragrance of the soap the master of the household used while bathing was astounding." she explained. "There are no issues with hair loss in our family line so I said that I was fine with trying the hair treatments. I hadn't really bothered with taking

care of my hair before now, but when I saw how clean and glossy my lord and master's hair was after his bath I couldn't wait to try it. As you can see my hair is smooth and glossy too." She looked down shyly but I wondered, given her forcefulness and assertiveness before whether it was only an act. Her "lord and master" was clearly under her thumb..."I don't believe there is a woman anywhere who wouldn't wish for such hair too."

So it seemed I had guessed correctly, women liked such scented things but as a result of Mary-san's sensitive nose Lambert-san's plans were uncovered.

"I was really surprised when I tried the soap my husband had used." Mary continued excitedly. It seems the cheap soaps I bought at the Net Super were like high-class soaps in this world, they foam up well and leave a smooth feeling in the skin and the scent is superior too. The shampoos do a better job of cleaning and treating hair than just soap and water, the usual way to wash hair in this world.

Mary then held out a small jar, the one with the hair masks. "But this product is the truly amazing one." She stroked her long hair tenderly.

"When I heard that Mudouka-san told my lord and master that this item 'makes any type of hair look beautiful just like magic', I just had to use it immediately. After all the soap and shampoo were so wonderful how could I resist? When I actually used it..." She stroked her long hair repeatedly.

"Before, my hair had been dry and stiff and a great problem for me but now it is smooth and shiny and soooo soft..."

Mary-san was dreamily stroking her hair over and over again... Mary-san, do you love your hair that much now?

"I was also surprised at this," Lambert-san explained, looking at his entranced wife with tender eyes. "Mary's hair has become impossibly smooth and glossy and it smells so wonderful too. She is even more beautiful than I could wish for."

Mary-san punched Lambert-san's arm lightly, saying "My darling..." and his cheeks reddened.

.....Normies, go figure.

"So then, actually..." Lambert-san seemed distracted by his affectionate wife cuddling

up to him. I guessed I had a sale. So how much soap and shampoo and hair treatments will you buy for your wife then?

"Mukouda-san, will you please let me sell these items in my store?"

Huh...? Did Lambert-san just ask to sell these things in his own store? I blinked, had I misheard him? Lambert-san owns a leather goods shop, it's not somewhere that you'd expect to sell soaps and shampoos and the like.

"I understand your surprise Mukouda-san, I wasn't sure myself whether it was a good idea but..." Lambert-san looked over at his wife.

"You are still worried about that?" Mary-san interjected. "You don't understand. These items will be very popular and you're a merchant, aren't you? Are you going to let another shop get all the profits from their sale?"

She poked him in the arm again, all business now. "If you sell these items in the store all the aristocratic ladies as well as my friends and ordinary women and girls will come to buy them here." She stroked her hair again. "No woman who sees my hair could resist buying such items."

"But, we sell leather goods..." Lambert-san muttered.

"Yes dear, the store specialises in leather goods but you can allocate a small area to showcase Mukouda-san's goods. You don't have to have all of the stock on display at one time after all." Mary-san explained.

"Yes, that's true..." Lambert-san said, obviously thinking hard about it.

"If you don't want to sell them yourself, dear I will deal with those customers personally." Mary-san went on, pressing her attack.

"No, no, that's not it, ummm." Lambert-san sighed and then gave up, overwhelmed. "Very well, we'll do it your way. Mary, I entrust the selling of Mukouda-san's goods in our store to you."

Mary muttered "Heh heh heh, just watch me." as a greedy expression crossed her face. M-, Mary-san?

Lambert-san coughed. "Mukouda-san, will you please wholesale these goods to me?"

Thank you Mary-san, I didn't want to sell these items to people directly. I don't have a shop and I didn't want to do any complicated customer service.

"Of course I will." I bowed to Mary-san. "I would appreciate it very much if you would sell my goods in your husband's shop."

"Thank you very much! It is very kind of you to agree!" Mary said happily. I couldn't refuse, could I, in the face of a woman's obsessive desire for beauty. To say no was, well, unthinkable.

"Well then, let's discuss the details in the back room." Mary-san said commandingly and Lambert-san and myself followed her there like obedient servants.



[A short digression on plumbing in this world]

"Lambert-san, how do you drain the bath after use?" I was puzzled about how this world dealt with such things.

"The drainage is dealt with by a tank under the bathroom, buried in the ground." Lambert-san explained. "There is a magic tool inside the tank to purify the water held there. After the water is clean it is released through a drain pipe out into the river."

"Oh, so they have things like drain tanks and drains in this different world too..." Mukouda-san thought to himself.

"It's advisable to hire a user of earth magic to deal with such things when installing a bath in your home." Lambert-san went on.

"Oh, earth magic. Isn't it expensive if it's for that sort of complicated work, tanks and drains and such?"

"Yes of course. I hired an earth magic user to install the tank and its purifying magic tool. The final total including the bath itself was more than 500 gold coins..."

"500 gold coins, really?" I was amazed.

"Yes, it was a lot to spend but I have worked hard to provide such things for Mary, the love of my life."

"Ah, of course." I murmured. It probably will not be so expensive for me because I have Sui who has water magic and purifying water should be a snap for her especially since she's a Slime. Hooray for Sui-tan!

## Chapter 84

# How 3 Pieces Of Soap Worth One Copper Coin Was Converted Into 4 Silver Coins

I sat down with Lambert-san and Mary-san in the drawing room at the back of the store. It seemed that Mary-san was determined to be part of the discussion.

I listened as Lambert-san made it clear he wasn't going to give in completely to his wife's wishes. He had decided he would give her a small area on the main shop, about two tatami mats in extent for her sales floor.

"I think that it should be larger, my esteemed husband doesn't understand it's the only place in town these goods will be on sale..." Mary-san says sorrowfully. However I understand Lambert-san's thinking. They are new products, totally different to the leather goods his store has been selling until now. It's a good idea to start small and see how they sell.

"Well, if the sales area is going to be so small does that mean you should limit the goods you sell too?" I suggested. I said that perhaps it would be better to agree to sell just three different things at first. I listed the possibilities -- two kinds of soap, the rinse-in shampoo, the shampoo plus conditioner and the hair wraps. What did they think would be the best ones to offer for sale, at least to start with?

"No, we shouldn't limit the number of items. We should sell all of them." Mary-san leaned forward, speaking emphatically. "Don't you think so, dear?"

Pressured by Mary-san, Lambert-san could only reply "Ummm."

"Mukouda-san's goods are a woman's dream come true. I can't think of any woman who wouldn't want them." Mary-san said confidently, like a lady who is sure of her facts. "I've actually used them myself. I will promote them to my friends although when they see how I look they're going to ask me straight away how my hair achieved this smoothness and lustre, ho ho ho." Saying that, Mary-san stroked her hair again and again. Yeah yeah, I know, your hair is wonderful.

"That's why I believe that I should sell this soap for 4 silver coins." Mary-san said, pointing to the cheapest soap.

Huh? Mary-san, three pieces only cost me one copper coin, I thought to myself.

"Mary, is that not too expensive?" Lambert-san asked.

"You think so? I tried washing my hands with this soap. It foams up well and I think that smell is good if not so good as the scented soap I used in the bath." Mary-san tapped the package with the cheap soap on the table. "Recall the sort of soap we have used until now, dear. Even though it doesn't foam and its smell was unpleasant, it still cost three silver coins. "

"Oh, is that so?" I said, amazed.

"That's right. Considering how much better it is, I think that this product can sell for four silver coins. Really I think it's cheap at that price."

"Well, I suppose so..." Lambert-san was being completely overwhelmed by Mary-san's enthusiasm but he hesitated. "Of course, the price we sell for will depend on the price Mukouda-san will wholesale it to us. What are your thoughts on the subject, Mukouda-san?"

Huh? You're asking me? The wholesale price is up to me? Well I don't really know about that kind of thing but maybe 50% of the selling price is about right?

"Well, how about 2 silver coins?" I asked tentatively.

Lambert-san was surprised at my offer. "No no no, you mustn't give us preferential treatment. How about two silver coins and five copper coins? That's a wholesale price which is still very favorable to us."

What? Is it okay getting that much? If 3 pieces of soap bought for 1 piece of copper can be sold for 2 silver coins and 5 copper coins then I'm not going to complain.

"Well then, we'll settle on that." Two silver coins and five copper coins for three bars of cheap soap, wow. Easy money. Mary-san moved on to the scented soap.

"This soap is really fragrant and using it means you don't have to wear perfume afterwards. I think Mukouda-san said it costs a bit more. We should sell it for six silver

coins. What do you think? "

"Well, for this soap, as Mary says, six silver coins looks to be a good price." Lambert-san agreed, staring at the soap on the table. "This pleasant scent adds value and besides it's the sort of thing nobles will want."

I thought that the rose fragrance soap would be a luxury item but it still only cost me 3 copper coins for three pieces. Could they really sell it for six silver coins?

"What would you want for the wholesale price for this soap, Mukouda-san?" Lambert-san inquired.

I thought quickly. Considering the price for the cheaper soap..."Well, how about 3 silver coins and 5 copper coins?"

"Is that enough profit for you?" Lambert-san asked in reply. Turning three copper coins into three silver coins and five copper coins was definitely profitable enough for me.

When I nodded "Yes" Lambert-san said "Thank you so much". Did Lambert-san think I was giving him preferential treatment even at that price? I wasn't sure but I decided to just let it go.

We settled on a wholesale price for the rinse-in shampoo of 4 silver coins with the selling price to be 7 silver coins. The shampoo and conditioner were to be sold as a set since they needed to be used together. The selling price was to be one gold coin, the wholesale price 6 silver coins. The customers would pay extra for the bottles the first time they bought it and then bring them back for a refill afterwards. Mary-san said she would add the price of the bottle, at cost, to the initial purchase. I bought these bottles locally so the extra cost didn't add to my profit margins but I was making so much anyway...

Mary-san held up the small jar with the hair wraps. "This particular item, I'd like to introduce it to only those who purchased the shampoo and conditioner set in order to make an extra rather than selling it separately. Having used it this way," she stopped to stroke her hair again, "It really makes my hair look beautiful like magic. With this effect in mind, I'm thinking about a price of 2 gold coins."

Cough cough... I nearly sprayed the tea that I had just drunk. She said "two gold coins"? I bought a pack of hair wraps for 8 copper coins and put them in two jars I got from

the Net Super. So one jar and 4 copper coins of hair wraps and she's intending to sell that for 2 gold coins? Only I know how much they really cost but isn't that too much regardless?

"I know how effective these are in making hair beautiful so two gold coins is a good price." Mary-san emphasized. Still, two gold coins?

"This is a very special item, and this container is also wonderful with such clear glass which is included in this price." She went on, holding the glass jar up to the light. Oh I see, but the jars were cheap on the Net Super too. I decided to just accept her thinking and we decided that the wholesale price, including the Net Super jar would be a gold coin and two silver coins for each one.

"Let's sell these goods on a trial basis for the time being." Lambert-san announced once the wholesale prices had been agreed. Lambert-san intended to purchase larger amounts after seeing how they sell in his shop but for the time being he was going to buy 30 of each item (the shampoo and conditioner as a set) to begin with.

"Oh, Lambert-san and Mary-san, if possible, I'd like you to keep quiet about who you get these things from." Although I'm OK with selling them to Lambert-san I don't want to be bothered by other merchants and even noblemen if they found out who he got them from. That would be a pain.

"Of course, of course." Lambert-san reassured me. "I'm sure that these products will sell well. As long as you can wholesale them to me on an exclusive basis I'm not going to tell anyone else who I get them from."

"I see, a good supplier is a valuable asset for a merchant. I won't sell these items to anyone else." This arrangement would be good for both of us. I suddenly thought of something else.

"One thing, I won't always be in this town, is that going to be a problem? If I'm going to travel around I'll deliver as many products as possible before I go." Fer wants to go to the sea so I'll probably be leaving soon.

"That's fine." Lambert-san reassured me. "I'd only be buying these goods from you a few times a year. If you can let me know in advance when you're leaving I'll place an order beforehand." Lambert-san bought leather in bulk several times a year in the same way, placing orders and arranging collection well in advance. Planning ahead

was a thing good merchants did as a matter of course.

"Well then, I'll go get your initial order ready and deliver it tomorrow." I said.

"Thank you." Lambert-san and Mary-san chorused as I left the shop.

Well, time to get busy, I thought to myself. I had to prepare the initial wholesale order for Lambert-san's shop. I wondered if I could supply the liquids in big bottles for delivery and they could refill the small bottles at the shop as trade picked up. Since bottles are to be priced separately, I felt it would be OK if I asked Lambert-san to do it that way. It would save me a lot of time and effort.

For the hair wraps, they were a special item so I didn't think there would be that many to do... If I was in a hurry I could just put them all into a big jar and ask the Lamberts to refill the original hair wrap jars too. I still had to get that first wholesale order sorted out though. I'd talk to Lambert-san and Mary-san about how to speed up later deliveries after they had started selling the first batch.

On my way back to the inn I needed to drop by a grocery store and buy some more bottles.

## Chapter 85

# Sweet and Sour Chinese Miso Stir-fry with Eggplant

I bought cloth bags and bottles at a general store before I returned to the inn to start fulfilling Lambert-san's wholesale order for delivery the next day.

Once I got back to my room I opened Net Super and started buying soap, 10 packs of 3 cheap soap bars and 10 packs of 3 rose-scented soap bars. After that I bought 10 large refills of rinse-in shampoo, 10 large refills of regular shampoo and 10 large refills of conditioner. Each refill pack would fill three of the glass bottles I had bought from the store. I also bought hair wraps. Each pack of hair wraps would fill two jars so I bought 15 packs. I had to buy 30 jars from the Net Super to put the hair wraps in.

I put all of the items in my Net Super cart and clicked on "Buy". The total came to about 30 gold coins. Once I had fed the required coins into the Net Super screen a large cardboard box appeared in front of me.

I started with the cheap soaps, removing each bar from its other-world packaging and putting it in a cloth bag, 30 pieces in all. I did the same with the rose-scented soap. After that came the rinse-in shampoo, decanting each refill pack into three of the glass bottles I had bought from the local store before corking each one. That made 30 bottles of rinse-in shampoo. I did the same with the shampoo and conditioner refills.

"Fuuu, thank goodness that's finished." I muttered, looking at the 90 bottles and 60 cloth bags lined up in front of me. I looked in the box again and noticed there was still more items left. "Oh, there's still the hair wraps to do." I opened the packs and put four hair wraps in each of the 30 glass jars I had purchased from the Net Super.

"Well, I finally finished." I sat back, relieved. "The smell of soap and shampoo though, it makes me want to take a real bath, not just wipe myself down like I've been doing since I got here." When we got paid for the Mithril Lizard's subjugation I was going to buy a bathtub and have a proper Japanese soak.

Looking out of the window, I saw it was began to get dark. "Is it that time already?" Dinner, I decided. I picked up Sui's bag and headed down to the beast stables.



I was in the mood for a feast. I decided to start off with ground meat, an easy and tasty dish. Going to Net Super I bought tubes of the sweet-and-sour Chinese miso that I've used before, that's what I needed for Chinese-style sweet and sour stir-fried ground meat. Oh, and eggplant too.

I cut up the eggplants about 2cm square in their skins then fried them in a pan until well-done. I added the minced meat (three parts Bloody Horn Bull beef and seven parts Orc General pork) and kept frying until it browned nicely. Cooking for Fer and Sui I added lots of ground meat. I put sweet-and-sour Chinese miso in a small amount of water and mixed it thoroughly then added potato starch to thicken it before adding it to the contents of the frying pan.

Really tasty. I served up Fer and Sui's portions over rice because it's especially delicious when you eat it that way.

"Here you are." I put the bowls out.

"Well, that smells good," said Fer, drooling.

"It really does -" Sui-chan agreed. The two of them started to eat.

"It's delicious when it's sticky like this..." Fer mumbled.

"Yes Yes-" Sui agreed. The potato starch makes the sauce thicker, you see.

Watching them gobble down the sweet and sour stir-fry I'd made I realised it wasn't going to be enough for those two. What else... hmmm, I had some cheese-filled chicken cutlets ready in my Item Box.

"Still hungry? Here, eat this." I passed over some chicken cutlets.

"Oh, it's the tasty food with white stuff in the middle. Sui likes the white stuff-" Sui seems to like cheese, doesn't she? I decided I'd cook more dishes using cheese when I got the time.

"Seconds." ordered Fer as he finished his stir-fried sweet-and-sour Chinese miso ground meat over rice.

"Sui also wants more-" Oh, Sui-chan, too? I fed them some more cheese-filled chicken cutlets while I made another two servings of sweet spicy Chinese miso stir-fried ground meat rice bowl.

"They're ready." I said, handing over the the freshly-cooked stir-fry. While they were eating that I made some more Chinese sweet-and-sour miso stir-fry just for myself, cutting back on the amount of meat to just a cup-full.

I took a mouthful... the fried meat with sweet and sour sauce plus the eggplant made a delicious combination.

"Seconds here." Fer ordered. Shouldn't that be thirds? Whatever. Okay then, I pulled out some more cheese-filled chicken cutlets from my Item Box.

"Sui wants to eat something different this time, the ground-up fried meat filled with white stuff-"

"That's hamburger with cheese in. Is Sui wanting to eat that?"

"Yup. It's delicious, full of white stuff-" Sui really likes cheese.

"Well, just a little." I fried up some cheese-filled hamburger for her.

"Thanks, Aruji-" Sui-chan is definitely cute. Of course when Fer smelled the cheese-filled hamburger I cooked for her he wanted some too so I had to do it all over again and then when I smelled it myself... I made mine with ketchup, mixing it in the frying pan with the juices from the hamburger then I took a bite. Cheese-filled hamburger truly is Justice! Gulp.

# Chapter 86

## Wyvern Attack (1)

The next morning I went to Lambert-san's shop to deliver the soap, shampoo and hair wraps for sale on a trial basis. As soon as I entered the store Mary-san appeared.

"Mukouda-sama, I have been waiting for you." she said, obviously ready to get started selling.

"I've made up 30 sets of each item to start with, so where do you want me to put them?"

"Can you do put them here?" She pointed to some empty shelves in a corner of Lambert-san's shop. Ah, you already have a sales floor arranged. That was quick.

"I asked my husband to set up an area for sales quickly because I talked about the items to my friends yesterday. I think some people are going to buy some right away." Getting the word out already?

I put the goods on the shelf leaving Mary-san to arrange them nicely. "Yes, this is excellent," Mary-san said, looking at the items. "Now what should go where..."

I was led by an assistant into the back room where Lambert-san was waiting to receive me.

"Mukouda-sama, Thank you for the quick delivery." he said, quickly getting down to business. "As agreed here are 84 gold coins as payment for the goods. Please check." As with the payment for the Black Serpent's skin, he had prepared stacks of 10 gold coins in a row.

"That is correct." I agreed. I had intended to put the coins in my Sand Snake wallet but the money I had received for the Black Serpent skin earlier was still in there, filling it up. I ended up putting the gold coins in a spare cloth bag I had bought for soap.

Having concluded our business Lambert-san went into the store where Mary-san was already dealing with one of her lady-friend customers. Lambert-san and I were

surprised at this development.

"I can't even begin to understand how women's gossip can spread so quickly." Lambert-san mused.

"Me too." I commiserated with him. We had told Mary-san to advertise these goods to her friends, but we had no idea there would be customers turning up so soon.

"Please give my best regards to Mary-san. If there are any issues, I will come quickly if you send a message to the inn." Saying that I thanked Lambert-san again and left the store. I wondered what to do while walking down the street. I had been super-busy for so long it was kinda strange to have some free time.

"I'm kinda bored... I don't have anything I need to do right now." I said.

"Well, then let's go hunt." Fer said, perking up.

"Well, it's not something I want to do myself but I suppose so. I just don't want to go anywhere unpleasant though."

"What do you consider unpleasant?" Fer inquired.

"That goblin village for example." I shuddered. All those green bodies... I had horrific flashbacks of the scenes at the goblin village.

"You're crazy to be so afraid of small fry like goblins." Fer dismissed my fears carelessly.

"Be quiet. It's because of you, Fer that I've got a phobia about goblins." And kobolds, and...

"Fuu, my esteemed lord and master is a coward, is that it?" Fer sneered.

"Hey, I'm not a coward..." I burst out. "It's just that I'm careful, can't you understand that? Anyway, maybe it'd be nice to go hunting but I'd like to understand the risks first, OK?"

"Of course, of course." Fer said sarcastically. Don't snigger Fer, it's not becoming of a level-1000 monster that can destroy a country. Safety first, though, safety always.

"Right then," I decided. "Let's go to the Adventurers Guild and see if there are any subjugation jobs worth accepting." We headed for the Adventurers Guild.



One of the staff members spoke to me as soon as I entered the Adventurers Guild.

"Mukouda-sama, I was instructed to take you to the Guild Master's office as soon as you arrived. Please follow me." He led me to the office and knocked politely on the door before opening it and announcing me.

"Guild Master, Mukouda-sama is here."

"Oh good, please come in." The Guild Master said.

The Guild Master was seated at his desk writing something on a document. "I'll be finished in a moment, please sit down."

As soon as I took a chair opposite the Guild Master he finished writing and got down to business.

"Firstly, thank you for dealing that Bloody Horn Bull subjugation so quickly." he said.

"It's OK, Fer wanted to eat Bloody Horn Bull meat so he wasn't going to waste time." I explained.

"I see, we're still grateful it was done promptly." He glanced down at Fer who was sprawled on the floor beside my chair.

"So then, I have finally finished my discussions with Earl Langridge. He is very grateful to you for discovering the mithril mine on his lands. Although the Earl wanted to thank you personally I told him that you wished to stay anonymous because you didn't want to stand out too much. He was quite persistent but I showed him the message from the royal palace that ordered that you were not be bothered or inconvenienced even by the nobles and that settled things. He was surprised that it involved the contracted beast Fenrir rumoured to be in the country, however he still insisted I pass on his warmest regards to you."

That means Earl Langridge wasn't going to bother me. Good.

"So, as to the reward," the Guild Master continued. " Earl Langridge has been very generous. The total sum for the suppression of the Mithril Lizard, the discovery of the mithril mine and the purchase of the Mithril Lizard itself is," he paused dramatically, "5800 gold coins."

.....

.....

.....

F- five Th- thousand Ei- eight hundred gold coins? That's weird. I thought I heard him say "5800 gold coins" but did my ears deceive me? "Excuse me, did you just say 5800 gold coins?"

"Yes, that's correct, 5800 gold coins." he said smugly, enjoying my reaction.

..... gold coins, 5800 gold coins... 5800 gold coins, 5800 gold coins, 5800 gold coins... was there an echo in this room?

"Your surprise is understandable but what you achieved is worth every coin." The Guild Master reassured me. I didn't do it, Fer did it, I thought to myself.

"Because it's such a large amount, we will have to pay in large gold coins." Thump, thump, the Guild Master put several heavy cloth bags on the table. When I looked inside they were full of large gold coins. The regular gold coin is about 500 yen in size, but the large gold coin is as big as 1.5 gold coins as its name suggests.

I do not care who actually earned this, but I am going to buy a bath. I want a bath. I put the cloth bags containing the large gold coins in my Item Box. Just as I put away the last one someone banged loudly on the Guild Master's door.

"Guild Master! There's an emergency! W- W Wyverns!" One of the Guild's staff members shouted as they burst into the room.

"Wyverns? Do you mean there's a pack of Wyverns here?" From the way the Guild Master reacted it seemed quite a dangerous situation.

"A- a six-person party of beginner adventurers had gone to the western grasslands after they were re-opened for training and it seems that Wyverns have suddenly appeared there too... the beginners managed to get away somehow." The official caught his breath. "However, two of them are seriously injured. One of them is being treated and will live but the other is badly scratched and suffering from being

poisoned by the Wyverns..."

"We'd heard rumours about sightings of a single stray Wyvern, was it carrying out a reconnaissance?" The Guild Master said. "They probably came to the grasslands planning to hunt the Bloody Horn Bulls but since they had been subjugated the Wyverns went after the adventurers instead. Damn it!"

Oh? Maybe it would have been better to leave the Bloody Horn Bulls alone? However they've already been subjugated so it's pointless to speculate. More importantly, from what he said it seems that Wyverns were poisonous in some way...

"What's wrong with the poison antidote?" the Guild Master asked.

"Well, unfortunately we don't have any at the moment." the Guild official admitted.

The Guild Master swore. "A high-grade potion then? If you use a high-grade potion it won't eliminate the poison but it will give us time to get hold of some poison antidote."

"Yes, that would work but... we've got plenty of intermediate grade potion in stock but we're all out of high-grade potions too."

The Guild Master banged on the table. "Why have we run out of poison antidotes and high-grade potions right when we need them?"

"Sorry, sorry..." the Guild official apologised.

"Go ahead and use an intermediate potion anyway, it might help a bit." The Guild master ordered.

Potion?... Ah! "Wait, I have a high-grade potion you can use." I took out a bottle containing some of Sui's Deluxe High-Grade Potion. Thankfully I had put it in a bottle I had bought in a grocery store, decanting it from the PET bottle it had been in before. Actually I had five of Sui's Deluxe High-Grade Potions, ten intermediate potions and ten lower-grade potions in total, all in locally-bought bottles ready for use. Safety first, remember?

The Guild Master stared at the bottle I passed to him. "You're a remarkable man, to own such a high-grade potion... I'm sorry, I will pay you any price you ask for this." The Guild Master ran from the room carrying the bottle of Sui's Deluxe High-Grade Potion, followed by the Guild official who had interrupted us. Fer and I tagged along

since there was no-one else left there.

# Chapter 87

## Wyvern Attack (2)

There was a group of Guild staff members clustered near the reception desk. "Move aside, move aside!" the voice of the Guild Master separated the group. The figure of a blood-stained man lay on the floor in their midst. From the games I had played I remembered that Wyverns had a poisonous barb on their tail. The man seemed to have been stabbed in the abdomen with that sort of stinger. Blood was flowing from the wound and the skin around the hole was a horrible purple colour.

The Guild Master opened the bottle of Sui's Deluxe High-grade Potion I had given him and sprinkled it on the man's belly wound. The hole where the potion was sprinkled healed up as we watched and even the surrounding skin which had been purple returned to a normal skin color in a few moments.

"Wha, what's this... as soon as the wound heals, even the poisons are counteracted..." the Guild Master said, looking at me. No, I do not want you to look at me. I stared at the Guild Master, feigning ignorance. Don't ask questions, not here where there are so many nosy Adventurers around.

"Well, well, this fellow seems to be healing up. Take him to the aid room and put him in a bed to rest." The Guild Master instructed then called "Listen up!" to the gathered Adventurers.

"Right, as you people know," he loudly announced, "A pack of Wyverns have appeared. All C-rank Adventurers and higher are now conscripted to fight them, no exceptions. This is an urgent quest order from the guild!" On hearing the words of the Guild Master the Adventurers present started muttering to themselves dispiritedly.

"Quiet!" the Guild Master thundered. "I know that the idea of fighting Wyverns worries you, but if you don't fight them now they'll come and attack the town!" His voice softened. "It's what it means to be Adventurers, to fight for others. As Adventurers, let's go and save this town! "

Loud cheers greeted his words, the Adventurers excited by his call to arms. However my mind was still stuck on what he had said earlier, that all C-ranked Adventurers had

to go fight the Wyverns? I'm a C-rank, aren't I?

"Wait, you lot." Fer said, having stayed silent until now. Fer's voice over-rode the loud voices filling the Adventurers Guild. Whispers started as they stared at Fer. "It's a Fenrir...?" "You sure, I thought it was a Great Wolf?" and so on.

"Let us take care of that pack of Wyverns for you guys." What? What are you talking about, Fer?

"What's the problem?" Fer turned to me. "It will be good exercise for me, and I told you Wyvern's meat is delicious, remember?"

"No no, you didn't tell me." I lied desperately.

Fer turned to the Guild Master. "Hey you, when we deal with the Wyverns will they all belong to us?"

"Of course, of course," the Guild Master said in a relieved voice. "Wyverns that are subjugated belong to the ones who succeed in the task. Besides, if you subdue them we will pay you a subjugation fee too."

"Well in that case I'll go and take care of them right away. It's been a while since I could go all out in a fight." Fer was eager to get started but I wanted him to slow down. If I could have a quiet word before we go haring off...

"Hold on a minute and calm down, Fer." I said telepathically. "It's not for you to deal with these Wyverns, the people here will handle them. Just step back and let them do their jobs."

"Nu..." Fer whined. Whined?

"Are you going to fight, Aruji? Sui will fight too!-" Sui said telepathically as she poked herself out of the bag,

I heard more whispers from the Adventurers, "That, that Slime?" "Can you really have a Slime as a contracted beast?" and so forth.

"Morons. Sui is a Slime, true but if any of you tried to hurt her I'd destroy you all." When Fer spoke, the room went deathly quiet. Hey Fer, I know you're only trying to protect Sui and they all know you're a Fenrir now but maybe that's a bit over the top?

Haa~, I suppose it's some kind of miracle that we've kept Fer's identity a secret as long as this. Well, saying that we've still got the letter from the royal palace promising us we won't be bothered. That should keep us out of trouble...

"Fer-sama, please save this town with your power." Saying that the Guild Master bowed to Fer.

"Yeah, I got it." Fer replied, nodding in agreement.

"Thank you Mukouda-san, too." Huh? Guild Master, are you not going to let me refuse? It was an official request now...

The Guild Master turned to the Adventurers in the room. "Let me make this clear to all of you. Do not bother or harrass Fer-sama and Mukouda-san. This country's rulers have proclaimed they are to be left alone, to go where they will and do as they will as long as they wish to stay here. That being the case the Adventurers Guild will offer them any assistance they require." He fixed them with a steely glare. "Understand?" The resulting silence was agreement of a sort. Well, the Guild Master certainly made things clear, didn't he?

"Hey, get on." said Fer.

"Huh?"

"We're going to deal with those Wyverns." Fer said exasperatedly.

"No, no, just go by yourself, I'll be waiting here." I countered feebly.

"Idiot. After my exercise I'm gonna be hungry. If you're not around who's gonna cook dinner for me?" What, you want me to go into a danger zone where Wyverns are flying around just so you can eat a hot meal afterwards? "Right then, get on quick."

"Mukouda-san, the entire town is in danger. Please help us." Hey, Guild Master, are you going to sacrifice me too?

"Hurry it up." Fer was getting impatient and grabbed my collar with his teeth. "Whoops-" I fell onto Fer's back as he swung his head.

Hold on tight or you'll be shaken off." Fer warned me.

"Damn, why is it turning out like this-" I wailed silently, clinging to Fer's back for dear life. As we headed for the door I heard some Adventurers mutter things like, "We're saved" and "a pack of Wyverns, even if we were all C-rank, half of us would be killed." and such. Wyverns, are they really that dangerous?

"Well, let's go." said Fer as he dashed towards the gate leading to the western grasslands. Why is this happening to meeeeeee--- !!!

# Chapter 88

## Fer and Sui, Obliterating Wyverns

Wyverns had come to the western grasslands, attacking Adventurers and turning the area into a super-danger zone. I really didn't want to come here with Fer. No, let me emphasise, I really REALLY didn't want to be here.

"Would you look at those assholes? Flying around like they owned the place." Fer muttered.

1, 2, 3, 4..... I counted 12 Wyverns in all. They looked big and ugly. Very big and double-ugly. The flying creatures looked more like Pteranodons in dinosaur movies rather than Wyverns in games. Fer, is it really okay?

"Gyaah, gyaah, gyaaaah..." Even the cries they made sounded evil.

Uh oh, are the Wyverns headed straight for me?

"Ah, you noticed?" Fer said casually.

"Th- they're coming straight for us! W- what are you doing to stop them!?"

"Don't panic. You're safe," Fer shook his head. "I've put up a Barrier like I always do."

"No, no, but that's..."

Sui interrupted. "Are we gonna fight those things?" she said as she jumped out of her bag.

"Hey Sui, don't get out of your bag, it's dangerous!" I ordered but she wasn't listening to me.

"That's right, Sui." Fer said.

"Those big flying things, yeah-?" Sui trembled with eagerness.

"I'll show you how to hunt flying prey. C'mon." Fer continued.

"Yeah." Sui said.

"Where are you going? D- don't just go off and teach Sui weird things. " Sui-chan...

"Your Aruji is going to stay here, Sui." Fer shot me a look filled with disgust. "Let's go, Sui."

"Yes-"

"W- wait just a-" Without listening to what I said, Sui followed Fer and headed towards the Wyverns who were now gliding at a low altitude straight for us, attacking us head-on.

"Why won't you listen-" I complained as Fer and Sui stopped about 300 meters away, directly under the Wyverns.

"Right then, Sui." Fer lectured. "When going after flying prey you should aim at their head or their wings. If you hit their head it's an instant kill." Sui listened to Fer's advice eagerly, trembling in excitement. "Sometimes though the head is too small a target to hit reliably. In that case aim for their wings. Damage the wings and most flying prey will fall to the ground and then you can hunt them there." I could hear Fer's voice resonating in my head as he taught my darling Sui-chan how to hunt dangerous flying creatures. Fer, how could you-?

"OK, head or wing. Sui'll try it-" W- what's Sui going to do? Huh? Is that a tentacle? Sui extended her body like a long stick towards a Wyvern.

"Gyah, gyaaaah!" One of the flying Wyverns crashed into the grass.

"Ah-, I missed. I was aiming for its head." S- Sui, did you shoot an Acid Bullet from that tentacle? Are you some kind of sniper?!

"Remember what I said earlier. Since a Wyvern's head is kinda small you might miss it. However it seems that it was quite a good hit anyway, right at the base of the Wyvern's wing so it can't fly anymore." Fer explained.

"Wow, I was praised~. I will hit the next one harder and better, for sure-." Sui started to steadily shoot down the Wyverns with her Acid Bullets.

"OK Sui, you've got enough enemies, it's my turn now." As Fer said that, he fired several volleyball-sized stones and hit three Wyverns simultaneously. These two guys... OK, I knew that both Fer and Sui are strong, but when I saw them shooting down these flying monsters so easily I didn't know what to think.

"Okay, that's all of them shot down now." Fer concluded.

"Yeah-" Sui sounded disappointed, somehow.

"Next thing, we have to finish off the survivors but remember Wyvern meat is delicious so we don't want to mess them up. The best thing is to cut their head off at the neck like this." Professor Fer continued his how-to-deal-with-terrifying-monsters lecture as Sui listened avidly.

Splat, roll... I guessed that Fer used wind magic. He sliced the Wyvern's neck and the head rolled clean off. F-, Fer, how can you do that so nonchalantly?

"I understand." said Sui. "Sui will try to do it like Fer-ojichan."

"Monsters like these have some resistance to magical attacks so if you're going to cut their heads off with magic, you should put a bit more mana into your spell."

"OK-" Saying that, Sui approached a fallen Wyvern and cut off his head. Was that a Water Cutter?

"Yay! I did it." Sui bounced happily.

"Yes, that was well done Sui." Fer said approvingly. "You've got the knack. I'll help you deal with the rest of them."

"Yeah-"

The two of them went ahead and cut off the heads of the fallen Wyverns one after another, chop chop chop. Wow, they didn't even hesitate. It was just like Sui-chan was turning into another Fer and that kinda worried me. OK, she was powerful, legendary even (for a Slime) but I'd rather have the cute Sui-chan, the one that trembles and bounces.

"Gyaaaa... Shhhhh..." A blast of wind accompanied the loud cry. Oh shit, another Wyvern was hovering directly in front of me. It looked like we'd missed one, there

were 13 of them not 12. Was I going to die?

"Gyaa, gyaa, gyaaaaah!" The Wyvern was seriously pissed off after seeing all his friends killed in front of him.

"Oooooooooooooooooooooo, Fer, do something, save me— — — — — !!!"

Chunk, chunk, chunk, chunk! The Wyvern stabbed at me over and over again, attacking me with the poison stinger in its tail. However thanks to Fer's Barrier spell the strikes bounced off and I was safe somehow.

Chunk, chunk, chunk, chunk! "Hiiii---" The Wyvern screamed in frustration but didn't stop trying to stab me with its tail.

"Oh, there's one left." came Fer's voice. "Die, asshole." Slash. Suddenly the Wyvern's head fell off and black blood spouted from its neck. Thump! I collapsed sideways as the Wyvern's huge body slumped to the ground in front of me.

"Wow! Fer-ojichan is sooo strong!" A high-spirited Sui jumped around, poing poing.

"I, I'm saved....."

"Of course you're safe so stop yelling. My Barrier wouldn't even get scratched by a mere Wyvern attacking it." Fer pointed out.

"Yabbut, a Wyvern..." I tried to explain. "It scared me, it's such a big monster and it tried to stab me with its poison stinger and..." I gave up under Fer's withering gaze. Monsters such as Wyverns were nothing to him.

"I was hoping for a bigger flock of Wyverns, not this mere handful." Fer said dismissively. "It was good practice for Sui though."

Fer thought that 12- no, 13 Wyverns is an insignificant number... I didn't really understand just how strong Fer really is.

"Ok, will we go back to town after I collect up the Wyverns?" I asked.

"No, not yet. We'll go back after we've eaten." Fer announced.

"Sui is hungry, I want to eat dinner too-" Sui-chan chimed in.

...so that's how it's going to be, huh ~. Well, it was the only reason these two battle maniacs brought me along, to cook for them. I figured it was time to get to work and started making dinner.

# Chapter 89

## After a Hard Day's Work, Let's Deep-fry Some Mincemeat Cakes

First up, we dealt with the Wyverns...

"Sui, can you extract all the blood from the Wyverns?" Since Sui was able to suck up the the pools of Bloody Horn Bull's blood I thought she'd be able to do that.

"Yes, I can do it-" Sui agreed.

"Wyvern's blood? What are you going to do?" Fer looked puzzled.

"Well, I think that bleeding the carcasses thoroughly will prevent the meat from rotting or smelling funny, that's all."

"Oh, is that so Aruji-? Sui will suck out all the blood then." If I tell them that the meat they'll be eating will taste better they're all for it, of course.

A thought occurred to me. "Ah, hold on. Wyverns are poisonous aren't they? Does that poison have any effect on the blood or meat?"

"Wyvern's poison isn't a problem if you watch out for the poison sac in the middle of the tail and the poison needle itself." Fer explained. "You won't contaminate the meat or poison the blood if you're careful."

So that's how it is. "Sui, there's a poison sac in the tail so watch out for that." I cautioned. "Can you drain all the blood anyway?"

"Yeah, I got it-." Sui said as she trembled and burbled. Big Slime? Yep, after she grew in size she split into small Slimes to do the work.

"Everyone, drain the blood of the monsters over there-" Sui ordered the little Slimes. Each of the Slimes headed off to a different Wyvern corpse and latched on to the body's neck stump. As I watched each transparent Slime gradually turned red as they sucked

the Wyverns dry of blood. As each Slime completed its task it dropped off the Wyvern's neck stump.

"Aruji, all done-" Sui informed me.

"Thanks, Sui." I stored the blood-drained Wyverns in my Item Box. I wasn't sure what to do with the Wyvern heads but I decided to take them back with me so I stored them too. Maybe the Guild would buy them.

Right then, food. As I thought about preparing a meal the smell of Wyvern blood all around distracted me.

"Sui, I'm sorry to ask you but can you suck up the Wyvern blood that's lying around here?"

"Yeah, easy -" The small Slimes slowly sucked up the blood pooling on the grasslands nearby, leaving the entire area pristine. Great.

"Thank you, Sui. I will make something delicious for you."

"Yay! I want to eat now-" Sui bounced happily.

"Nnnn, now is good for me too." Fer added.

"Yeah, yeah." Now is always a good time for Fer to stuff himself.

Well, I gave some thought as to what to make and decided quickly that deep-frying was the way to go. Eating fried food under the blue sky, yes! I'd make fried mincemeat cakes. I'd buy ingredients from the Net Super but the mincemeat I'd make from what I had to hand. Hmm, how about some 100% Bloody Horn Bull mincemeat and some 100% Orc General mincemeat as well as a mixture of the two, I thought to myself? Three different flavours, a nice contrast.

First I chopped a lot of onions up, I'd need them for fried mincemeat cakes. It's like hamburger steak but with breadcrumbs -- oh, I had to buy more breadcrumbs from the Net Super. While I had the menu open I bought some premium beer too because fried food and especially fried mincemeat cakes go well with beer, or is it the other way round? Whatever.

I started off by soaking some dry breadcrumbs in a small amount of milk and then

added the chopped meat, a 50/50 mix of Orc General and Bloody Horn Bull, the chopped-up onions, eggs, salt and pepper and mixed it all up thoroughly until it got sticky. I made the mixture into suitably sized balls and then pressed them flat. Since I was still experimenting I made them small enough for me to eat in a single bite. I repeated the steps with the Orc General meat and the Bloody Horn Bull meat, to get a good comparison of the different flavours. I dunked the meatballs in wheat flour then in whisked egg and finally in dry breadcrumbs before deep-frying them in oil.

Gulp... Is there nothing that can't be made tastier by deep-frying it? No sauce, just a single bite and... success. The meat juices oozed out, delicious and flavourful, the breadcrumb coating crispy. Simply fried mincemeat cake with no sauce or other additives, a winner!

"Hey, why're you eating it all? Give some of it to us too." Fer was drooling over my shoulder.

Yeah yeah, hang on. "OK, first of all here's some fried mincemeat cake, it's a mixture of Bloody Horn Bull and Orc General." I passed the two battle maniacs some samples straight from the frying pot. "Watch out, they're hot."

"Huh, this is hot but delicious. The meat juices are bursting out." Fer said telepathically, his mouth too full to talk.

"Really, this is delicious-" Sui agreed. Both of them gave fried mincemeat cake a thumbs up.

"Well, try these ones. I've added some sauce to them." Worcester sauce is recommended for fried mincemeat cakes.

"Oh, it's even more delicious with this black sauce on top."

"Yes, yes-" Sui agreed. They seem to prefer them with sauce. I got down to business, quickly frying mincemeat cakes of all three types before dishing them out.

"This is fried mincemeat cake made just with Bloody Horn Bull meat." I passed them each a plate. "And these plates are fried mincemeat cake made from Orc General's meat." handing back another plateful each. I kept back my own servings, I remembered the times I'd had little or nothing left to eat myself after the gluttons had done their worst. Never again. The two of them wolfed down their portions.

"So, there were three different types, which one did you prefer?" I asked for future meal planning.

"Well, it's all tasty but I prefer the Bloody Horn Bull meat by itself." Fer said after thinking about it.

"Sui thinks they're also delicious, but I guess this is the one I like best-" Sui's tentacle pointed to the fried mincemeat cake made just from Orc General's meat.

"Well, my own preference is for the mixed mincemeat cake." I declared. "All three of us like different versions."

"Hey, they're ALL delicious. You should make all of them again." Fer said.

"Sui wants to eat them all again too-"

I'm the one who does all the cooking around here so it's up to me, but I'll make all three types of mincemeat cake again since you asked.

"Fu ~, Sui's tummy is full-"

"Well, I'm stuffed too." Fer chimed in. The gluttons had had enough. Victory!

I fried up a lot more mincemeat cakes for storage, holding out just one portion of mixed mincemeat cakes for myself before I finally settled down to leisurely enjoy the fruits of my labour.

Psshhhh, glug glug glug. Ha~, beer is delicious. A bite of freshly fried mincemeat cake, mmmm. I put some Worcester sauce on the next piece. Success! The sauce and the meat juices mingled on my tongue. I swallowed and then drank more beer and smiled.

"Hmm, yes, it's the best." I slowly enjoyed the combination of premium beer and fried mincemeat cake.

# Chapter 90

## Sorry We're Late, We Stopped To Eat

When we got back to the Adventurer's Guild we found the Guild Master and his staff, many Adventurers and even the leader of the city's Knights Order wearing full plate armour waiting for us.

"Oh, you're back. We were starting to worry about you. Are you all right?" The Guild Master said, hurrying over to me as we entered.

"Yes, we're all fine." I reassured him. "All the Wyverns have been dealt with too. Isn't that right Fer?"

"Yeah. There's no sign of any Wyverns anywhere nearby so we got all of them." Fer agreed.

"So there-" I began but I was drowned out by a great cry from the crowd standing nearby.

"Hurray! We're saved!" The Adventurers were cheering and slapping each other on the back in relief. Some of them were even crying. Okay, I understand you're all happy the crisis is over but was it really that big a deal?

"Well, we weren't sure you'd return safely." The Guild Master explained. "A few of the Adventurers here said that even a Fenrir couldn't face up to a flock of Wyverns and they were seriously worried. I didn't think that myself, but as time went on and you hadn't returned I was getting worried myself."

Well, of course subjugating the entire flock of Wyverns didn't take THAT long. The meal afterwards, with all the cooking and such... I couldn't tell them we were taking our time eating before we came back. It would be-

"Dealing with the Wyverns was easy." Fer said bluntly. "We were late back as I was eating dinner." I face-palmed. Fer, you shouldn't have said that.

"You stopped to eat dinner afterwards...?" came questioning voices from the crowd

around us. Well, no, that is yes, just a snack, um... Well, you guys, don't look at me like that...

Sui jumped out of the bag and bounced around me. "Today's dinner was really really tasty ~" she proclaimed.

"Yeah, today's meal was delicious." Fer agreed.

No, no, let's read the atmosphere you two. Of course Sui's comment was just a telepathic thought between us three but Fer spoke out loud which didn't help. The pressure of the accusing eyes on us increased.

"Uh, you know, we were hungry and..." Luckily for me the Guild Master stepped in.

"Well, you're back now safe and sound." He gestured to the stairs. "Let's go up to my office and discuss the rest of the business regarding the subjugation, shall we?" I nodded and we followed him and the Knights Order's leader, silently thanking him for his timely intervention as the celebrations behind us grew even louder.



In the office I sat down beside the Knights Order's leader, across the table from the the Guild Master.

"First of all, thank you for saving this city." The Guild Master bowed deeply to me.

"I also thank you," the Knights Order's leader said as he also bowed his head. "You succeeded in a task the Knights Order and the Adventurers Guild together should have dealt with. I really appreciate it."

"No no," I waved my hands, "It wasn't me, it was Fer and Sui that did all the work."

"I understand Fer's power, but a Slime..." the Guild Master said, staring at Sui who was sitting on my knee. "It seems that Slime has a strength that you can not imagine from its appearance."

"Yeah..." I said somewhat smugly. "That's because Sui is a special individual, she's quite strong." I'm proud of my Sui-chan.

"As you say. Thank you for dealing with the Wyverns." The Guild Master bowed to Fer

who was lying on the floor next to me and then to Sui on my knee. Fer didn't say anything but Sui trembled.

"So, how many Wyverns were there?" The Guild Master asked, moving on to business.

"There were 13 in all." I replied.

"Th-, thirteen you say..." The Guild Master and the Knights Order's leader looked at each other as I answered.

"If there were thirteen Wyverns then," the Guild Master said, white-faced, "if the Adventurers and all the city's Knights worked together to deal with them, half of us would have been killed."

"Guild Master, I do not think it's just half, it's entirely possible all of us would be dead by now." the Knights Order's leader said shakily.

"I see..." Hey, was it really such a big deal? Fer and Sui cut the heads of the Wyverns so easily, I sorta thought it wasn't a big problem like these guys did. Of course when I was attacked personally at the end I was truly a bit scared. A bit. Just a bit. Really.

"It seems we were fortunate." the Guild Master said, glancing at Fer and Sui.

"That may be so, Guild Master." The Knights Order's leader commented. "But we can't rely on luck from now on because we don't know when something like this might happen again."

"Certainly." the Guild Master agreed, his face hardening.

"Most of the time this city is peaceful and the Order of Knights can usually take it easy." The Knights Order's leader went on, his own expression matching the Guild Master's. "When news of the Wyverns reached us some of my subordinates were, ah, reluctant to step forward and volunteer. When they heard that Mukouda-sama had gone off to deal with the Wyverns by himself they apparently felt relieved..."

"That was the same for the Adventurers who are members of the Guild." The Guild Master said in a dark voice.

"I have decided," the Knight's Order leader said firmly, " that I am going to beat my Order's members into shape." His gauntleted fist smote the table loudly. "I will turn

them into a force that can deal with any threat to this city, even one that might appear without warning like these Wyverns."

"That sounds like a fine idea." The Guild Master agreed, nodding. "For myself, I think I need to review just what the Adventurers Guild stands for. I have come to the belief that being an Adventurer isn't just to earn points and increases in rank. A good Adventurer is one who has endured some hardship and perhaps it's time for them all to do so, ha ha ha..." The expression on their faces frightened me even though I knew I wasn't the focus of their displeasure. As for the Knights and Adventurers, uhhh sorry guys, it looks like you're in for a hard time. Good luck and I hope you survive. Me, I just want to go back to the inn soon...

The Guild Master turned back to me. "My apologies, Mukouda-sama, I was distracted for a moment. So you collected all the Wyverns you subjugated?"

"Yes, of course I collected them all." I was relieved they had changed the subject.

"How badly are they damaged?" the Guild Master enquired. I thought for a moment before answering. The Wyverns in my Item Box weren't really beat up as both Fer and Sui had beheaded them cleanly to finish them off.

"The heads were all cut off at the neck," I explained, "so I don't think they're damaged much..."

"T- the Wyvern heads, to cut them off just like that... that's astounding." the Knights Order's leader said.

"Well, Wyverns are magically resistant so doing something like that is a tough job, even with a Mithril sword." the Guild Master added. Fer and Sui hadn't had any problems cutting the Wyvern necks though, I thought to myself but I wasn't going to say anything about THAT.

"So, will you wholesale the Wyvern materials to us?" the Guild Master asked, all business again.

"Yes," I nodded, "Everything except the meat as usual."

"Ok, then shall we move to the warehouse?" the Guild Master stood up headed for the door.

"Excuse my rudeness," the Knights Order leader said as he stood up, a harsh gleam in his eyes, "but I have to go discuss some, ah, matters with my subordinates and the sooner I get started the better." He shook my hand. "Thank you again, Mukouda-san." I watched the broad armoured back of the Knights Order leader disappear down the stairs in front of me, heading back to the barracks. Please don't kill all of them, Leader-dono, I prayed as the Guild Master and I headed towards the Guild's warehouse, a place I was becoming more than familiar with.

# Chapter 91

## Oh Lord How More Money Rolls In

At the warehouse door Johan-ojisan was waiting as usual. I wondered idly if he lived there, I'd never seen him anywhere else even within the Guild. We went inside after the Guild Master explained to him that we had dealt with the Wyverns and the Guild was purchasing the materials from the monsters.

"Can you take out just one Wyvern out for now?" the old man asked. I did as he requested and the two of them examined the beheaded Wyvern carefully.

"There's not much damage." Johan-ojisan declared. "Huhu, I'm gonna get a lot of good materials outta it." The old man grinned. "13 Wyverns in all, you say? Are the other 12 like this one?" I nodded and his grin broadened.

"Ummm, thirteen of them, that's maybe too many..." The Guild Master said to Johan-ojisan, looking at the giant body of the Wyvern. It was really very large, a true monster and I'd not even brought out its head -- well, they were all jumbled up in my Item Box, I wasn't sure which head went with which body.

"Yeah, if we took all of them in one go they'd not all fit in here." Johan-ojisan confirmed, looking around. The warehouse was pretty big but twelve more Wyverns were going to fill it right up and then some.

"I guess you're right. In that case can you disassemble them in two batches?" The Guild Master inquired.

"That's the only way I can do it, Guild Master." He thought for a moment. "I can start with seven of them and then once I'm finished with that lot I can deal with the rest." Johan-ojisan turned to me. "You okay with that, sonny?"

"You're wanting to disassemble them in two batches, is that right? Fine by me." I agreed. Leave it to the expert.

"Now that's settled... You're wholesaling all the Wyvern's materials to us?" The Guild Master asked.

"Well, you can have everything else but I'll hold on to the meat."

"That's fine. Selling the materials from so many Wyverns is going to be very profitable for us. There's always a demand for such items."

Almost all of an S-rank Wyvern's materials are valuable, the Guild Master explained. Not only the meat but also the skin, the fangs, the poison sacs and poison needles are much sought after. There's also a mana stone in such high-ranking monsters, of course. Even without including the meat the materials from thirteen such creatures will sell for a lot.

"The disassembly of all 13 monsters is going to be free of charge for me, right?" I asked. The Guild Master nodded in agreement and I thought for a moment. Right now I've got plenty of money and it's not going to cost me anything for the disassembly so...

"Can I change my mind? I'll wholesale the other materials, the fangs, poison sacs and poison needles from all thirteen monsters but can I hang on to the skins and magic stones from five of them?"

"Yes, that's fine." The Guild Master agreed. "Actually it's a bit of a relief if you want to hold on to those materials. We're running low on cash to pay you until we get paid for the other materials you've brought us." He shrugged. "Purchasing the materials from the Wyverns, even without the meat will cost us more than 2,500 gold coins."

More than 2,500 gold coins...? I can understand why they're running out of ready cash... I'm going to buy myself a bath. Will that cost more than 2,500 gold coins? I don't care. I'm going to buy myself a bath. I expected the Guild would pay me in large gold coins given the amount but that didn't matter. Bath store, here I come.

"As S-ranked monsters," The Guild Master explained. "All the materials from Wyverns are exceptionally high quality, especially the skin and the mana stone." It seems the Wyvern skin is highly resistant to magic, thin, durable and light so it is often made into cloaks although the price tag for such a cloak would make your eyes pop out. The mana stones are very large and don't appear on the market very often.

"Thanks to your good self this branch of the Guild is earning its highest-ever profit since it was founded," the Guild Master said with some satisfaction, "but purchasing all the materials from 13 Wyverns in one deal would be difficult for us. You should take the remaining skins and magic stones to the Guild of another city and sell them

there."

Oh, other cities have Adventurers Guilds too? Well, of course they do. I could hold on to those items and sell them later at another Guild. Saying that I had more than enough money as it stands. Maybe I could get a cloak made for myself instead. The only outfits I've got are just regular clothing, nothing special. Since it's leather maybe I could ask Lambert-san whether he could make me a Wyvern-skin cloak. Even if he couldn't do it himself he should know someone who could.

"Hey, can you give us six more Wyverns to start with?" Johan-ojisan interjected. "Guild Master, it's gonna take me three days to get through this first lot. Oh, and I'm gonna need the Guild's Mithril knife for this job."

"You're right, Johan." the Guild Master replied as I pulled out six more Wyverns from my Item Box. "It's been a while since I handed out the Mithril knife." Monsters like Wyverns with resistance to magic can't be dismantled without using a Mithril knife. It seems that because it's such a valuable item the Guild Master keeps it under lock and key until it's needed. Without such a knife disassembling the Wyverns would be impossible.

That reminded me about the Mithril Lizard which was still in my Item Box. "Umm, Guild Master, I will give you the Mithril Lizard now if that's OK? The attack of the Wyverns stopped me handing it over earlier."

"Oh yes, that's right. I almost forgot about it." The Guild Master looked embarrassed. "I paid you a lot of money for it, if I didn't get it from you that would be a real problem, ha ha ha."

I pulled out the Mithril Lizard from my Item Box. The Guild master and Johan-ojisan both admired the creature.

"No matter how many times I see it, it's wonderful." The Guild Master said reverently. "Yeah." Johan-ojisan agreed, transfixed by the monster's gleaming skin.

"Right then, I'll come back in three days and hand over the rest of the Wyverns then." I said, impatient to go back to the inn.

"Yeah, I'll be ready for them." Johan-ojisan said, tearing his eyes from the Mithril Lizard's body.

"You truly saved our lives today, Mukouda-sama, and we are in your debt." the Guild Master said, clapping me hard on my shoulder. He may have been an old man long retired from adventuring but he remained strong and the blow hurt. I tried not to grimace. "If there is ever anything we can do for you don't hesitate to ask."

Right then, I said telepathically to Fer and Sui, let's go back to the inn. We got more money today so I'm going to the bath store tomorrow and look at some baths and then if I see one I like then I'm going to buy myself a bath.

# Idle Talk 7

## Three Heroes, Initially Levelling Up

Kanon, Rio and myself were standing in front of the dungeon entrance accompanied by our three Knight companions. We had spent the previous week since we had been Summoned to this world learning the basics of how to use swords and spears as well as how to cast magic spells. We had also registered as Adventurers as the leader of the Kingdom's Knights had recommended.

Now we were going to raise our levels and entering the dungeon before us was, as it had been explained to us, the most effective way of doing that. The dungeon entrance looked just like it would in a game and I felt excited at the idea.

"Well then shall we go in?" said Leonard as we stood in line with the Adventurers waiting at the dungeon entrance. He gestured for us to go ahead.

"Hey, is this okay?" Rio asked. We were getting some stares from the other Adventurers as we pushed forward through the crowd towards the entrance.

"There's no problem." Kanon replied. "The Knights are escorting us so it's fine. We're honoured guests of the Kingdom after all."

"It's as Kanon says. We're just getting priority, that's all since we're Heroes." I added. I didn't want a boring wait like the others, I wanted to get into the dungeon quickly.

"It still doesn't feel right though." Rio muttered.

"Come on, let's hurry. The Knights are waiting for us." Kanon prompted. Rio was a bit reluctant to push through the crowd but followed Kanon and me anyway.

"Right then everyone," said Leonard. "Ready?"

"Yes!" we chorused.

"Today is your first time in a dungeon." Leonard gestured at the open portal before us. "It's a limbering-up exercise but I'd like to push forward as far as we can. Because I've

got a teleportation mana stone we don't need to worry about making our way back afterwards so please fight the monsters with all your might."

A teleportation mana stone is a magical item that allows teleportation as its name suggests. We'd been told that it was an rare item drop that sometimes appears when you defeat the 10th floor boss of a dungeon. It's an incredibly valuable magic item, a national treasure and we as Heroes have been privileged to borrow it for our training. Knowing that we're regarded so highly by the Kingdom's rulers just makes me want to do my best.

The first floor of the dungeon was populated by Slimes, the second floor with Giant Rats and the third floor with Grey Wolves. We progressed rapidly through these initial floors. The Grey Wolves were tricky as they moved quickly but we were able to deal with them without much difficulty.

The fourth floor had goblins. Kanon and Rio had some qualms about fighting monsters that appeared to be a bit like people but they were pretty repulsive-looking and I had no problems attacking them. The first goblin I hit died and then the body disappeared. After that Kanon and Rio joined in dealing with the goblins.

The fifth floor held a mixture of goblins and Grey Wolves. There were a lot of both types of monsters but we beat them without any real problems. There was a Boss room on this floor with a Goblin General who we defeated soundly and we got an item drop. We were ecstatic even though it was just a normal sword, nothing special but it was our first-ever drop, just like in a game. It gave us a real kick and we pushed on with greater enthusiasm.

The sixth floor had poisonous spiders which were called Poison Spiders, not surprisingly.

"These monsters are poisonous as their name says." Aaron explained as we descended the stairs. "The ones on this floor, the Spider's poison won't kill you but if you're bitten you'll be paralysed for ten minutes or so. You'd be defenceless and you might be killed then so be careful, OK?" We nodded.

The Poison Spiders were about 50cm long and made screeching sounds as they descended from the high ceiling on spider threads. I remembered something Louise had said in our training, that spider monsters were weak against fire and we should use Fire magic on them.

"Blazing orb of fire, burn our enemies to ash! Fireball!" I chanted, casting the Fireball spell we had been taught in our magic training sessions at the spiders. They caught fire immediately, screaming as they burned.

"That's well done." said Louise behind me and, encouraged by her praise I launched more and more Fireballs at the monsters. After that we cleared the sixth floor easily thanks to our Fire magic.

The seventh floor was also populated by Poison Spiders but in addition there was also a Giant Poison Spider, more dangerous than the ones we had encountered on the sixth floor. The bite from a Giant Poison Spider would be fatal, we were warned so we should be extra careful. Kanon and Rio looked worried when they heard this but I felt our Knight companions were being a little over-protective since we had Fire magic and that had sufficed on the previous floor.

There were a lot more Poison Spiders in the seventh floor than on the sixth but I just launched more Fireballs into the clusters of monsters and then we dealt with the survivors with our swords and spears.

We finally reached another Boss room on this floor with a Giant Poison Spider. It was really big, maybe two metres tall with a horde of smaller Poison Spiders clustered around it.

"Kaito, use a Fire Arrow on that big guy." Lousie ordered while Kanon and Rio were advised by Leonard and Aaron to use Fireballs on the smaller Spiders. Good idea, I thought as the Giant Poison Spider started to move towards us. I needed a powerful hit to take that monster down quickly.

"Fierce-flaming arrow, pierce my enemy. Fire Arrow!" I chanted.

The Fire Arrow hit the Giant Poison Spider and the monster exploded in fire while the Fireballs launched by Kanon and Rio burned the other Poison Spiders.

"Hooray! We did it!" we shouted in triumph but our Knight companions brought us back down to earth.

"You're not finished yet." they said as some surviving Poison Spiders scuttled towards us. We got back in formation and cut them down. When the last Poison Spider was dealt with and its body vanished, a bundle of glistening threads remained, an item drop which we Appraised as "Thread of Giant Poison Spider".

"That's proof that you defeated the Giant Poison Spider." said Lousie as she gave the threads to me. "Okay, the seventh floor is clear, let's finish here for today and go back." We returned to the entrance using the teleportation mana stone. When we got back to the royal palace, I checked my status using Appraisal.

[Name] Kaito. Saitou

[Age] 17

[Type] A Hero from another world

[Level] 5

[Fitness] 926

[Magical Power] 882

[Attack power] 891

[Defense force] 867

[Agility] 860

[Skill] Appraisal, Item Box, Holy Swordsman, Fire Magic, Water Magic, Earth Magic, Wind Magic, Light Magic, Lightning Magic, Ice magic

Wow, I'm at level 5 already! Great! Kanon and Rio are also level 5 now, of course. We'll get even stronger in the future and then, maybe Louise would...

(Knights' Conversation)

"So what do you think?"

"Well that's their first-ever dungeon. They did okay."

"I think that it was a decent effort for a first dungeon myself."

"Kaito's Fire magic was quite good, however Kanon and Rio may need a little more training."

"They're a bit sluggish using magic, that could be a problem later."

"Their use of swords and spears is pretty good for just one week's training but we need them to improve quite a bit more to justify calling them Heroes."

"Don't tell them that though."

"Is it maybe too early for them to go back into the dungeon?"

"Yeah, maybe. The lower floors are a lot harder and they were starting to struggle as it was."

"Right then... for the time being, we'll abandon the idea of them going back into the dungeon tomorrow and concentrate on training them up in magic as well as fighting with sword and spear."

"Sounds good. We're getting pressured by the higher-ups to work fast but it'll all be for nothing if they get injured or even killed."

"Yeah. Still, they fought in their first dungeon all day and only got to level 5. Are they really Hero material?"

# Idle Talk 8

## Strange Cravings of the Goddesses

A number of Goddesses were gathered in the temple of the Wind Goddess Ninril. The mistress of this temple, Ninril-sama was a slender beautiful woman with clear blue eyes and long white hair. Beside her stood the Earth Goddess Kishar, a voluptuous beauty with an hourglass figure, dark brown eyes and long golden hair. On her other side was the Fire Goddess Agni, golden-eyed and dark-skinned, her fiery red hair pulled back in a ponytail. Almost hidden by the other Goddesses was the diminutive Water Goddess Rusalka, a pretty child-sized girl who appeared to be seven or eight years old, with green eyes and shoulder-length hair of a deep blue colour.

The four Goddesses were gathered around Ninril-sama's scrying pool gazing at a certain party residing in the world below.

"Other-world-guy-kun, when are you planning to make an offering?"

"Really, he's a bit late."

"Do we totally need to send him an oracle?"

"...(nods silently without saying anything)"

The goddesses were getting impatient. It seems that not only Ninril-sama but also the other Goddesses had become captivated by the sweet offerings of the other world.

"Agni, you just said we should send him an oracle so go ahead and do it."

"Yes!"

"...(silently nods)"

The Goddesses figured that Agni-sama should do it since she had been the first one to suggest it. Agni-sama disagreed.

"H- hey, why should I be the one to do it? No chance. Sending an oracle to the world

below, other Gods and Goddesses might pick up on it and then our secret would be revealed. Besides, if the God of Creation finds out what we're doing He'll get angry again and I'll be the one that gets the blame."

"It'll be OK, just this one time. I've done it twice before and I haven't been caught."  
(thinks: lucky for me)

"Oh yeah, it's bound to be OK if you do it just this one time." (thinks: besides if it does go wrong I won't get the blame)

"...All right" (thinks: I don't know if it's actually a good idea but I'll deny everything if I'm asked)

Goddesses can be quite ruthless and unfeeling, especially if they want to avoid the wrath of the God of Creation.

"Guhhh... It was my suggestion to send an oracle so it can't be helped. But... since I'm the one taking the risk I'm gonna get something I want. We agreed that asking for booze was a bad idea but that's what I want from the other-world-guy and I'm not gonna send him an oracle unless I can ask him for some alcohol."

"Ummm..." (thinks: Alcohol, that's going to attract those troublesome Gods but without an oracle I won't get anything I want...)

"Alcohol, is it?..." (thinks: That means those troublesome Gods will turn up but if it's only one or two of them, would that really be a problem?)

"....." (thinks: The booze-loving Gods are bound to come around but I don't care because I don't drink)

The three other Goddesses thought that Agni's request for alcohol was worth agreeing to since they wanted to receive their own offerings as soon as possible. Goddesses can be quite self-centred and greedy too.

"Hey, what are you lot thinking about?" asked Agni-sama as the three other Goddesses looked hesitant. "Are you up to something behind my back?"

"It's just, if we're sending him an oracle we can maybe ask for other things at the same time, you know." (thinks: Sweets, of course. I'll ask for more sweets this time around when Agni sends her oracle. She's very persuasive and this time the other Goddesses

won't get a share of the extra sweets. Fufufu...)

"Other-world-guy-kun's forgetfulness in not delivering our offerings on time is inexcusable, isn't it? One or two cans of beer is the minimum he can offer you to make up for his lapses, yes?" (thinks: If she falls for that and agrees then I'll ask for something special myself. I totally want that soap, shampoo and conditioner he's selling down below and the only way I'll get them if other-world-guy-kun offers them to me. Maybe I can sneak in a request while he's praying to us...)

"...I think that's fine." (thinks: If you're going send a special oracle to other-world-guy-kun then, well sweets are nice but that food he made looks delicious. I want to eat that food too)

The three Goddesses agreed, seeming quite reasonable on the face of it but their hidden desires were another story. There were few chances to acquire things from the World Below after all, even for Gods and Goddesses.

"However, just a couple of cans, no more."

"Yeah. More than that and Those Guys will definitely turn up."

"...(nods vigorously)"

The other three Goddesses knew that once Agni-sama started drinking she wouldn't stop since she was a real booze-hound so limiting how much alcohol she could ask for was their only hope of keeping the secret from leaking out.

"I got it," Agni agreed, obviously annoyed. She turned to the scrying pool again. [Hoy, other-world-guy-kun, can you hear me? Send us offerings and be quick about it.] It was a very Agni-sama-like oracle in its own way.

Thus the hidden desires of the three other Goddesses were made plain to other-world-guy-kun.

(Sweets, sweets, lots of sweets just for me! Dorayaki is the most important thing, lots of dorayaki, you know!)

(I want soap and shampoo and conditioner, oh and those hair wraps too. I can't wait to try all of them)

(Food, food, food, food, food)

The Goddesses took the opportunity to demand things of the different world that other-world-guy-kun had come from a little time ago.

# Chapter 92

## No More Than 3 Silver Coins Each

"I've gotta make an offering to the Goddesses soon or they're gonna start bothering me again." I suddenly realised. It was evening, I'd finished eating, Fer was resting in the inn's beast stables and Sui was sleeping peacefully in her bag, dreaming away. Better get it over with. I'd just opened Net Super to start selecting items for the offering when a Voice sounded in my head.

"Hoy, other-world-guy-kun, can you hear me? Send us offerings and be quick about it." That didn't sound like Deplorable-sama--

"Is this Agni-sama speaking to me?"

"Yup." She sounded impatient but maybe that's how she always sounded.

"I am just about to get you all some offerings," I explained. "Please wait a moment."

"Right then, and send me two cans of beer like you were drinking earlier."

"Hold on, am I supposed to send you alcohol? I thought I was told alcohol was a no-no last time I made an offering..."

"This is Ninril." Ah, deplorable goddess-sama, right on cue. "This one time it's all right, as a special case. But only two cans, mind."

A special case? I suppose if it's like that then it should be fine but--.

"Oh, and while you're about it, well, you remember that it was me, Ninril, who was the Goddess who first gave you her blessing so, well, because of that I want you to increase the amount of sweets you send us. Dorayaki especially, no limit on those, you know. Oh, but keep this confidential and don't let the others know I told you to do it."

Ninril-sama, what are you asking for this time, and why are you being so sneaky about it? Everyone should get a fair share, that was what you all agreed last time--

"Me, me. Earth Goddess Kishar here. Hey, other-world-guy-kun, it was pretty interesting seeing the stuff you're selling down there. That soap, shampoo and conditioner and wow! those hair wraps too. I want you to send some of that to me as well~. Pleeeeee." the new voice hesitated for a moment. "Oh, and don't tell the other Goddesses about this."

...Kishar-sama, you too? I'm disappointed in you. I thought that Ninril-sama was the only deplorable Goddess...

"...it's me, Rusalka. Food looks delicious. I also want to eat food. Give me food. This is a secret."

Ruka-sama... Are all the Goddesses of this world the same? Are they all deplorable-samas? They're telling me to send them things and to keep it a secret from the others but--

"Ahem-. Goddess-samas, I hate to break it to you but you're all demanding special items and wanting me to keep it secret from the others. You do realise that I'll be sending the offerings all in one go and you'll all see everything I sent when it arrives?"

There was a long pause.

"Ha-, you got a point".

"Oops, that's true."

"...Eheheh..."

"Hey you lot, what were you trying to pull?" Agni-sama sounded mad.

"No, no, Agni, it's just..."

"Oh, ummm, you see, it's like, you know, ahhh..."

"....."

"You mean that you all requested other things you wanted?" Agni-sama sounded like she was about to blow her top. The Goddess of Fire, did that include volcanoes in her job description? "You sneaky--. Right then, If it's like that then I get what I want too."

"Does that mean alcohol? I've told you before why that's a bad idea."

"That's right, absolutely no alcohol, we agreed you know."

"...Booze, no good"

"Humph. They asked for what they wanted, why am I in the wrong for doing the same?" I distinctly heard the sound of knuckles cracking. "Right then, other-world-guy-kun, I want alcohol. Beer, premium beer, two cans and right away."

"I still say it's a bad idea."

"That's right, you know."

"...Not good"

The voices of the selfish Goddess-samas resounded in my aching head. I figured I had to step in or they'd go on arguing like this for eternity with me stuck in the middle listening to them bicker. I shuddered, no way. I tuned them out temporarily while I came up with a plan. Snacks up to three hundred yen? Yeah, that might work, after all they're acting like elementary schoolkids on a class outing...

"Hey hey, everyone quiet down." I interrupted. "Last time I made an offering, you all shared what I sent you, right? "

"No, that's..."

"But, I want something to make me more beautiful, not just sweets..."

"Sweets are good, but food..."

"Beer and snacks are better than confectionery..."

Huh, everyone wants what they want and they don't want to share. Elementary schoolkids? Nope, kindergardeners. I sighed.

"Okay, I understand. Each of you now wants me to offer you different things, right?" Silence, which I took to be agreement. "It's impossible for me to offer up infinite amounts of anything, yes?" Silence again. "So if you tell me what you want and it only costs up to three silver coins each then I will offer it to you."

The Goddesses would argue forever, literally if I didn't lay down some rules about the offerings. Setting a budget and spending the same amount for each of them was one way to make it seem fair.

"Three silver coins, that's too little you know. I tell you it should be more than that."

"Oh, only three silver coins, not enough..."

"I want a little bit more..."

"...(nods vigorously)"

"Nope, three silver coins worth of weekly offerings each, I think that's enough." I had to be firm. They seemed to be willing to accept the idea of a budget which was something to be thankful for but I was making a big concession, agreeing to spend as much as three silver coins each on their offerings as it was. Time to finish it.

"If you don't like that idea then I'll return your blessings and we can call it quits..." I bluffed.

"Wait, wait, waitwaitwait. You can give us offerings worth three silver coins. Three silver coins are enough, please!"

"Well, okay. Three silver coins are enough. We can accept that."

"Oh, ah. Thumbs up, three silver coins of offerings a week are enough."

"...Good with only 3 silver coins."

They all agreed quickly and I breathed a (silent) sigh of relief. For some reason the omnipotent Goddesses who could read my thoughts and see my every action had fallen for my bluff. Could I actually return the blessings after they'd been bestowed anyway?

"Right then, I'll take your requests, each in turn please. If you all ask at once I won't know who wants what."

"Well, I gave you my blessing before the others did, and I'm also the oldest Goddess here so me first." Ninril-sama, are you really the Goddess-sempai? Surely not...

"I desire sweets. Dorayaki, as much as possible." Well, that's simple, just like Ninril-sama. Uh, not simple, ummm consistent. If she keeps eating such sweet things she'll soon be overweight but that's her choice. I bought ten pieces of dorayaki from the Net Super along with assorted cakes, pudding and chocolate and then I added a sweet cola drink to the shopping cart so that the order came to 3 silver coins in total. One down.

"Who is next?" I asked.

"If you go by age, it's me, Kishar. What I want is the soap, shampoo, conditioner and hair masks you recently started selling."

"Oh, that's no problem but there are various kinds of shampoo and conditioner depending on your hair type and its condition. You understand?"

"Huh? Are there truly so many kinds?" Kishar-sama seemed amazed.

"Yes, there are dozens of different treatments to deal with all sorts of hair problems. If you don't mind, can you tell me about the current state of your hair and I can perhaps choose what's most suitable for you, Kishar-sama."

"Really? Well, right now my hair is very dry and frizzy. It's a pain making it presentable every morning."

It sounded like her hair was lacking moisture and with split ends. What she needed to deal with that was a non-silicone oil shampoo, a moisturising conditioner to match and a premium hair wrap treatment which cost nine copper coins each. I added in three pieces of rose-scented soap for the remaining 3 copper coins and that was 3 silvers exactly. Two down.

"Right, who's next?"

"Oh, that's me, Agni here. I would like all sorts of booze but I've agreed to limit myself to two cans of premium beer, oh and some snacks to go with them. The rest of the offering, make it sweets."

Agni-sama wants premium beer, snacks and sweets. The packaged nibbles I could get from the Net Super to go with beer, things like dried fish weren't very appetizing but... yep, I still had a good quantity of hot potato fries that I made earlier in my Item Box. They'd go nicely with a premium beer. How much would they cost though? Hmmm, as a prepared dish I priced the fries at two copper coins each. Another copper coin would

buy a fried mincemeat cake... ah, the dish wouldn't come back from the offering, can I get paper plates? I placed my order in the Net Super and finally I had two cans of premium beer, a paper plate of potato fries and three fried mincemeat cakes on another paper plate. I made up the rest of the offering with cakes and pastries like I bought for Ninril-sama. That should be OK. Three down.

"Next is me. Sweets and food."

The last Goddess was Ruka-sama, who wanted sweets and food. I assumed she wanted to eat the sort of things she had seen Fer, Sui and me eating. So, fried cutlets and fried mincemeat cakes and, quick check, yes I still had Cheese In chicken katsu and Cheese In hamburger in my Item Box ready to go. I bought 3 onigiri and 6 bread rolls from the Net Super to go with them, each costing one copper coin. The Cheese In chicken katsu was a bit big, so I priced it at 2 coppers each and the hamburger just one copper each. Everything laid out on paper plates came to one silver and 5 copper coins. The rest would buy sweets, cakes, pastries etc. like Ninril-sama and Agni-sama's offerings.

I prepared four separate cardboard-box altars and put the offerings for each Goddess on them.

"Right then, I'll get started. First of all is Ninril-sama's preferred sweets. Please accept my offering." It wasn't very prayer-like but deplorable-goddess-sama's offering disappeared promptly anyway. I faced the next cardboard-box altar.

"My offering to Kishar-sama, your desired soap and the shampoo treatment I recommended. This is more luxurious than the shampoo and conditioner I sold to Lambert-san so please give it a try." Kishar-sama's offerings disappeared in a similar manner to Ninril-sama's. I turned to the third altar and bowed my head.

"Agni-sama, I offer to you beer and snacks and sweets. The snacks are food I made myself. I think they go well with beer and I hope you enjoy them. Please eat them with my best wishes." Agni-sama's offering vanished.

"Finally, I make my offering of food and sweets to Ruka-sama." I bowed to the last altar. "I also made some of this food, the bread rolls and the onigiri make good side dishes." Ruka-sama's offering were gone when I looked up again.

"Well, please decide what you want next time and be sure it will be properly within the budget." I reminded the Goddesses before they started in on my offerings.

"I understand, you know." Mmmble...

"Understood, yeah." Sniff...

"Gotcha." Pssshhh...

"..." (chewing vigorously)

I wasn't sure the Goddesses were really listening to me since they had other things on their mind right then but I just hoped next time I had to make an offering would be a bit easier. Three of them were noisy and annoying like teenagers but the last one, Ruka-sama was quiet and reserved. I suppose since she's the youngest that's understandable but the other three were truly deplorable. Good grief.

As I was considering the evening's events the oracle ended and the Goddesses' voices were abruptly cut off.

"Fuuuuh~. Finally finished". I stretched. I'm tired. I'm going to bed. G'night.

# Chapter 93

## Mukouda, Buying a Bath

I headed for the Irario Company's store the next morning, accompanied by Fer. According to Lambert-san it was the only shop in the city that sold baths. His directions to get there were on spot-on but it was a big shop and not easy to miss regardless. I stopped to admire its impressive architecture for a moment before I went in.

A store clerk dressed in a smart uniform turned to greet us as we entered. His expression froze as he caught sight of Fer, not surprising for anyone first on seeing such a large monster. He recovered his aplomb quickly though as you might expect from someone trained to be a salesman in such a high-class establishment and he quickly came forward to greet us.

"Can I assist you in finding what you want?" He was very polite.

"Uh, can you show me some baths?"

"Baths, certainly. Please come this way."

It was pretty clear store-clerk-san didn't think I looked wealthy enough to afford a bath but he seemed fine with letting me look around. I followed him into an area of the shop at the back where there were a number of baths lined up on display. There were three sizes of bath, large, medium and small. The one I had seen in Lambert-san's house was a small-sized bath, it seemed. I thought about it and decided that a similarly-sized bath would suit me. Even stretching out by myself I'd fit nicely into such a bath.

"A small bath is enough..." I muttered, looking at the range of baths on offer.

"We have several such baths in stock so please take a look." The store clerk overheard my comment and quickly directed my attention towards the small baths on display. He really knew his stuff, I thought to myself gratefully as I looked them over.

The first one was the cheapest, a simple pottery-brown-coloured one costing 300 gold

coins. As Lambert-san had said, baths were quite expensive, even the most basic ones. The next bath I looked at was a deep green colour, a very relaxing shade but it cost 370 gold coins. A different colour made the price rise significantly. I asked the store clerk and he explained that making a large piece of pottery like a bath with a smooth uniform colour was very tricky and this resulted in an increased cost.

Although colored baths were more expensive, they were more attractive than the simple pottery-coloured one and since I had a lot of cash on hand I decided the green one would be on my list. The next one I examined was a pure white bath. It looked like a normal bath like the one I had back home in Japan and it had an air of hygienic cleanliness about it. It cost 430 gold coins, even more than the green-coloured bath I had my eye on.

The clerk explained that this white-coloured bath was a new product, only recently coming on to the market. In order to produce the white colour a special material was mixed in with the clay. That material was rare and expensive hence the higher price for the finished product.

The next bath I looked at was a luxurious model with a floral painted finish under the glaze. It looked expensive but I was still surprised when I saw the price tag -- it cost 500 gold coins. It seems that it's harder to paint such decorations rather than simply colouring the pottery with a single colour and it takes considerable artistic skill to achieve an attractive effect. There weren't many craftsmen who could do such a fine job hence the higher price. I appreciated its looks but it was the sort of bath a nobleman's home might boast to display his wealth and taste to others. I'd be taking my bath with me as I travel so such elegance would be pointless. I turned back to my first candidate, the deep green bath. Yosh.

"Excuse me but I'd like to buy this green bath." I said to the store clerk.

The store clerk was a bit surprised that an ordinary-looking guy like me who just walked in off the street wanted to buy something as expensive as a bath with so little hesitation but he was a professional and rallied quickly.

"It costs 370 gold coins, you understand." Does someone like me have 370 gold coins to pay for a bath? was what he was obviously thinking but he was very polite and didn't let his doubts show.

He he he, thanks to Fer-sama's hard work that amount is small change to me.

"Yes, it costs 370 gold coins, right?" I took out two hemp bags from my Item Box. The bigger bag held 300 gold coins and I took 70 more gold coins out of the smaller bag before presenting them to the astonished shop clerk.

"W- well, allow me to verify the amount, customer-sama." The clerk counted the gold coins carefully, stacking them in piles of ten on the counter.

"...370 gold coins..." He nodded. "Yes, that's the correct sum. Would you like us to deliver the bath to your home?" He was smiling broadly now and I wondered if he worked on commission. Ganbatte, store-clerk-san and perhaps next time you'll not pre-judge a customer by his appearance.

"No, it's okay, I'll put it in my Item Box and take it with me. I won't need it delivered." Besides, I was living in an inn and I didn't have a home like Lambert-san's to have it delivered to.

"Ho, having an Item Box, how I envy you."

"This bath will just about fill it up though, but it comes in handy." Actually my Item Box seemed to be almost unlimited in capacity -- it currently contained half a flock of Wyverns as well as a mountain of meat from the herd of Bloody Horn Bulls and other monsters Fer had subjugated (not to mention Chimaera-san and Orthros-san) but I wasn't going to let others know just how big it was if I could help it. Of course people like Johan-ojisan and the Guild Master knew but I didn't want it more widely known as that could become troublesome.

I put the bath in my Item Box and politely thanked the clerk for his assistance as he escorted me to the door of Irario Company's store. Success! The long-awaited bath was mine!

Once I was away from the entrance of the Irario Company's store (and hopefully out of sight of store-clerk-san) I spontaneously struck a victory pose, my hands raised in V-signs. I couldn't help it. Yahoo, I had a bath!

"What are you acting so happy about..." Fer asked, puzzled by my behaviour. I couldn't explain it, he wasn't Japanese so he could never understand but Japanese people and baths are, well... I had finally fulfilled my heart's desire, I had bought a bath. Now to use it, but... ah, there was nowhere in the city I could actually take a bath, was there? The inn, no... We'd have to go outside the city somewhere.

"Hey Fer, I want to take a bath. Let's go out of town to a quiet place in the forest, somewhere there's no Adventurers or monsters around. Can you find me somewhere like that?"

"Outside the city, that's nice." Fer was a country boy at heart. "Right then, climb on me."

# Chapter 94

## My Heart's Desire, Taking A Bath

Fer swiftly brought me out of the city and into a deserted part of the forest. He erected a Barrier around a large area to ensure my safety and then headed off to hunt. Me, I was in a hurry to have a bath.

First off I cast "Stone Wall" repeatedly inside Fer's Barrier, creating a roofless square-sided room with four walls. I wanted to be able to look at the sky while enjoying my bath and if it rained? So what, I was going to get wet anyway. I pulled my new bath (MY bath!) out of my Item Box and positioned it in the middle of my magical bathhouse.

"Sui, are you awake?" I enquired telepathically and Sui popped out of her bag.

"Fuh~ ... whaaaat zit, Aruuuji..." Sui-chan was still sleepy. She was finding her new bag very comfortable, it seemed.

"Sui, can you use your Water magic to fill this for me?" I indicated the bath.

"Ok..." Sui's tentacle stretched out and pure water flowed from the tip into the bath, filling it quickly.

"Sui, that's enough." The flow of water from Sui's tentacle stopped when the bath was about 80% full.

Now for my Fire magic..."Fireball!" I made a small fireball and plopped it into the bath water. The fireball disappeared in a sudden explosion of steam and boiling water. Oops, maybe it was a bit too much... I needed to stir the water but I had forgotten to get a paddle, I didn't want to scald my hand after all. I needed other things for my bath anyway so I opened up Net Super and started ordering various necessities.

"Lessee, a paddle for stirring the bath, yes and body wash." I personally prefer a liquid body wash soap to regular soap. I added a bottle of rinse-in shampoo as it's less bother to use and it was just for me. Towels, I bought some face towels and bath towels too. Is that all? Oh, bath salts, something that would smell good and invigorate my skin. I

put everything into the shopping cart and fed the Net Super some coins to settle the bill. A cardboard box with my order popped into view.

I stirred the bath water with the plastic paddle, waiting for it to cool down a bit and then I realised it was being kept at that temperature by the crushed mana stones embedded in the pottery. It was a magical bath, after all, the water wouldn't cool down naturally. Duh. "How stupid of me..." I muttered to myself. "Sui, can you add some cold water to the bath?" Sui-chan obliged, squirting cold water from a tentacle. I gingerly put my hand in to the water to test it, thinking I should get a bath thermometer next time I ordered anything from the Net Super, but it was just right now. Excellent.

I stripped off my clothes and began preparations to bathe by thoroughly washing my hair. I'd only been able to wash my hair with plain water since I got here and it wasn't in the best of condition.

"Geh, the shampoo isn't lathering up at all, my hair is super-greasy after so long..." I added more shampoo after a first rinse and finally got bubbles to appear. Thinking about the condition of my hair I washed my body down twice with the liquid soap from the Net Super. I put some hot water from the bath in a large pot and washed each foot carefully. I didn't want my new bath (MY bath!) to get dirty footprints in it after all.

"Okay, my feet are clean!"

Finally I sprinkled bath salts into the bath and stirred them until they dissolved in the hot water. They were a favourite choice of mine with a citrus-y smell. I paused, savouring the moment, before I got into the bath.

"Oooo"

After such a long time without having a bath, I couldn't stop moaning as I finally got to soak myself properly again. I patted the rim of the bath (MY bath!) contentedly.

"Ohhhh yes, having a bath feels grrreat..."

"Aruji-, does being in the water make you feel good?" Sui asked me curiously.

"Oh yes, the water's nice and hot, so it feels good." I thought for a moment. "Do you want to come in too, Sui?"

"Uh-huh-" Splash, and Sui was floating in the bath beside me.

"Oh, you're right. This warm water feels good. The smell is good too~" Sui seemed to like being in the bath.

Myself, I stretched out, feeling the knots and tensions in my body dissolve in the hot water. The smell of citrus wafting from the bath water added a relaxing effect to the overdue experience. Life is good, I decided, bathing is best. I looked up at the open sky above me. It is a wonderful thing to take a bath while looking up at a blue sky. Paradise, paradise.

Japanese people can not live without a bath. This is simply a fact. I thoroughly enjoyed my bath with Sui.

I took a long indulgent bath. The water stayed hot because of the magical properties of the crushed mana stones in the pottery and I didn't have to add more hot water half-way through. The bath had been expensive but boy was it worth it, I decided.

After climbing out of the bath and drying myself and changing my clothes, it was time to clean up. First of all I erased the Stone Walls of my temporary bath-house using my Earth magic.

"Sui, can you get rid of this water and all the foam bubbles?" I asked. I didn't want to just tip the water out on the ground, it would become muddy.

"I understand~" Sui burred and turned into her Giant Slime form before splitting up into a host of Little Suis who sucked up the bath water and froth, cleaning everything up nicely.

"I want to drink something cold after a bath." I decided so I bought some milk coffee from the Net Super. Sui-chan had been in the bath with me so I bought her some fruit-flavoured milk.

"Sui, this is delicious when you drink it after having a bath." I explained as I put the fruit milk in a dish for her.

"Wow, it's true. It's cold, sweet and delicious-" she said, sucking up the fruit milk with a tentacle.

Yeah, for me drinking cold sweet milk coffee just after a bath hits the spot.

# Chapter 95

## Beef Bowl and Beef stew

"Fer, why aren't you back yet?"

"Fer-ojichan, why aren't you here?" Sui added plaintively.

Sui and I were waiting for Fer to come back from hunting but there was no sign of him at all.

I didn't think he'd forgotten about us but I couldn't be sure. I expected he'd be back once he got hungry so instead of just waiting around I got started preparing dinner. What to cook though... well, there's lots of Bloody Horn Bull beef so maybe we want to eat some of that. Right, beef bowl it is. Quick to cook, delicious to eat and the pinnacle of cheap fast food in Japan. It brought back memories -- sometimes after I finished work I'd stop by a local store for a quick beef bowl. It's simple, sliced beef over plain rice with some sweet sauce.

I checked my stocks, I had onions, soy sauce, sweet cooking sake and ginger. I was short on regular cooking sake and instant dashi soup granules so I bought them from the Net Super.

Right, let's get started. First of all, I sliced up some Bloody Horn Bull beef. Since I planned to make two large pots of beef bowl I sliced up a lot of beef.

I peeled the onions and sliced them up then I put water in the pots and added the soy sauce, sugar, cooking sake and the dashi granules before squeezing out some grated ginger from a tube and stirring it in as the mixture came to a boil. I added the onions to the pots and after they softened I added the sliced beef. I let the sauce reduce over a slow heat for about ten minutes. It smelled really good, how did it taste? I tried a mouthful, the beef was tender and juicy and the onions fell apart in my mouth. Just right.

I made two pots of sliced beef at the same time as I knew how much Fer and Sui could eat. By the time I was finished though Fer hadn't come back yet. Sui had gone to sleep in her bag and I didn't want to start eating by myself so I decided to cook some more

food while I waited.

Cooking the beef for the beef bowl got me into the mood for some beef stew. Most folks would just use a roux or sauce in jars to make beef stew but not me. It's more work but I prefer my own recipe for this, prepackaged sauces are not the same.

Stew does take a long time to cook but I had to wait for Fer to come back anyway. I used the Net Super again for more ingredients -- I had plenty of onions but no carrots or potatoes so I ordered some. I also added butter to the cart, I had run out of ketchup and consomme so they went on the list, oh and a can of demi-glace sauce and some red wine too. I paid for the order and the usual cardboard box appeared in front of me. I looked over the ingredients, did I have everything? Yep, it all looked OK so I got started.

First I cut up Bloody Horn Bull beef into bite-sized pieces then I peeled and diced the onions. I peeled the carrots and potatoes too before cutting them up into bite-sized pieces. I made the potatoes a little bit bigger though.

After melting some butter in the bottom of the pot, I browned the Bloody Horn Bull beef, seasoning it with salt and pepper. Once the cubes of meat were thoroughly sealed I added water and red wine to the pot and then the onions, potatoes and carrots. When the mixture started to simmer I added a cube of consomme.

I kept simmering, skimming the scum off the surface until the potatoes and carrots softened. When that happened I added a can of demiglace sauce and some ketchup to the stew then let it simmer for another 20 minutes. That's it, a familiar dish for me. I sometimes add butter at the end to make it a bit richer but not always.

By the way I use a can of demi-glace sauce rather than making a roux because it's easier. Weighing out the exact amounts of butter and flour to make a roux from scratch is a pain and it's too easy to burn it if you're not careful. Canned demi-glace works just the same and it still tastes delicious but it's a good idea to cook the meat well before adding it.

I sampled the stew, it tasted just the way I wanted it. It seemed I had managed to cook beef stew perfectly well in these conditions. I put the finished beef stew in my Item Box and looked around but Fer hadn't come back yet. Funny, I thought the smell would have attracted him...

"Hey Fer, how far have you gone?"

# Chapter 96

## Fer Hunts Something Amazing

I was starting to worry as the sun set with no sign of Fer but then he suddenly returned, noisily bursting through the tree branches and startling me.

--Thump-- Fer casually dropped a big lizard that he was carrying in his mouth onto the ground in front of me.

"I was delayed." Fer not-apologised for his tardiness in a very Fer-like manner.

"...Uh Fer, what's with this big lizard thing?" I asked nervously, dreading the answer. It looked a bit like a Komodo dragon lizard I had seen on TV but bigger, from the tip of its snout to the end of its tail it must have been at least five metres long.

"I caught a sniff of something special and followed my nose." Fer said in a satisfied tone. "I came across something that would put up a fight against me at last."

That's not what I asked, Fer, just what is this big lizard thing?

"That flock of Wyverns got my hopes up but they turned out to be a disappointment." Fer shrugged. "However after I tracked down this Earth Dragon, I finally got a little exercise."

...Fer, what did you just say? I wondered if my hearing was getting worse.

"Uh, Fer, what did you say?"

"Is your hearing getting worse? I said, because that flock of Wyverns were a disappointment I went off and got some real exercise with this Earth Dragon here."

"...A-, an Earth Dragon?" I stuttered.

"Yep. That's it. That's an Earth Dragon." Fer nudged the big lizard with his snout. "Right there."

I used Appraisal on the giant Komodo Dragon lizard thing lying on the ground.

[ Earth Dragon]

That's all, there were no other stats because, well, Fer had killed it. Ummm...

"What, what did you...?" I stumbled to a halt, my brain locking up as I tried to deal with what Fer had just done.

"What? What did I do what?" Fer looked confused, as if he naturally hunted dragons every day, no biggie and why was I surprised?

"What?" I repeated myself. "An Earth Dragon, why did you hunt it?"

"Why not?" Fer shrugged. "Dragon meat tastes delicious, I told you before. Isn't that a good reason to hunt it?"

I thought hurriedly, trying to explain to a confused Fer. "No no no, it's great that the meat is delicious, that's not a problem." I waved my hands. "If the Adventurer's Guild couldn't purchase the Chimaera and Orthros you hunted earlier then do you think they could buy the materials from an Earth Dragon?"

Fer looked disappointed. "Nu, Dragon's meat is really delicious." Stop drooling, Fer, we're having a serious discussion here. He suddenly perked up.

"Hey, even if they wouldn't buy the materials, couldn't you get them to dismantle it anyway?" Oh, just dismantling? That might work... Smart thinking, Fer.

"I'll talk to the Guild Master and Johan about it, see if they can dismantle it for us. However it's a Dragon... I don't know if they can actually disassemble something like that."

"Hm, you've got a point. I was looking forward to eating Dragon's meat after a very long while. We'll wait and see what happens..."

I'll see what they say but it's an Earth Dragon after all. Looks like they're in for another surprise. Haaa~.

Fer's nose wrinkled as he sniffed. "Hey something smells good." Now the matter of the Earth Dragon was dealt with -- at least for now -- Fer had reverted to his usual

gluttonous self. I deposited the giant body of the Earth Dragon in my Item Box to make some space to serve dinner.

"You want to eat dinner here?" Stupid question.

"Well, yeah." Predictable answer.

I started serving the beef bowl. Leaving the beef stew for later will make it taste better as the beef gets more tender. I put rice I had cooked beforehand into dishes and then piled plenty of meat on top. I woke Sui up.

"Sui, your dinner's ready."

"Oh? Dinner-"

"Yes, here's your dinner."

"Dinner-"

I gave a beef bowl (extra large portions) to Fer and Sui.

"Mumu, this is delicious."

"Really, the meat is soooo tasty~"

The way they were talking it was clear they both liked beef bowl so I decided it was my turn to eat and what I'd like was to put some eggs on my beef bowl. When I opened Net Super and looked at the eggs on offer something special caught my eye. Oh yesssss... I bought hot spring eggs which had been soft-boiled in natural hot water. Soft-boiled eggs on a beef bowl are delicious. I broke them into the meat letting the runny yolk soak down into the rice below then stirred them in and popped some into my mouth.

"Yummy~"

Adding the soft-boiled eggs mellows the taste. Delicious. This calls for tea, doesn't it... I took a PET bottle of green tea I had bought earlier from my Item Box. Gulp gulp gulp... my mouth was refreshed, then back to the beef bowl. Yum yum.

"Hey, seconds here." Fer squinted suspiciously at my own bowl. "Hold on, why've you

got eggs on yours? You trying to be sneaky? I want some too."

"Sui wants seconds too. Put egg on Sui's-"

Yeah yeah. I made up two more beef bowls (extra large), got two more hot-spring eggs and broke them on top of the meat before handing the out the dishes to the two gluttons.

"Muuu, putting the egg on top is completely delicious."

"Sui also likes the way the eggs taste-"

So they both like beef bowls with runny soft-boiled eggs, devouring them greedily. Several servings later they finally declared they were satisfied.

"Fuu-, that was really tasty." Fer announced.

"It was really delicious-" Sui agreed.

"Well then, are we going back to the city now?" I enquired. We were all done here, I thought.

"Uh-huh."

"Yup."

I was going to get on Fer's back for the trip back to town but...

"Fer?" I couldn't get on his back. Yuck.

"What?" He looked back over his shoulder at me.

"You- you're dirty." I blurted out, staring at Fer's matted hair.

"W- what?" Fer exclaimed.

Until now I hadn't really taken any notice but now I'd had a bath and I was all clean myself I couldn't ignore it any longer. I poked at the clumped masses of dirty hair on his coat.

"See, all the hair here is filthy, it's sticking together and matted. You've got to have noticed it's in terrible condition, haven't you Fer?"

"Uh, well, that's not really-." Fer hesitated. "Look, I groom myself regularly..." He couldn't look me in the eye as he said that though.

"No no no, you're do not doing it right." I declared. It was obvious he wasn't taking care of his coat properly at all.

"Ummm-"

"Right, I've decided, I'm going to wash you tomorrow, Fer."

"Wh-" Fer whined.

"Are you scared of water? Is that what you're telling me?" I pressed him.

"P- positively not." Fer declared, still unable to look me in the eye.

"That's good then. I'll give you a bath tomorrow, Fer. I've decided."

"Gwuuh" Fer whined quietly, his muzzle pressed against the ground in submission. He really wasn't keen on the idea but I had to be firm, the condition of his coat was a disgrace. I'd have to get some dog shampoo and a brush to wash and groom Fer properly. Could I buy dog shampoo from the Net Super?

# Chapter 97

## Washing the Demonic Beast Fer

Next morning it was time to wash Fer. I had purchased dog shampoo, a dog brush and the largest-sized bath towel I could find on the Net Super. There was a great variety of pet food and other pet supplies available for purchase there, not surprising as the number of pet owners is increasing and many of them are willing to pamper their pets regardless of expense. This was handy for me since I could easily buy such things from the Net Super thanks to that. I hesitated looking at the plushy dog toys on offer but I decided if Fer wanted to chew on something there were plenty of S-ranked monsters around in this world.

With Sui safely tucked away in her shoulder bag I went down to where Fer was waiting for us in the inn's beast stables.

"Fer, let's go out of town again. I want to give you a bath like I said yesterday."

"Nu... you're really intending to wash me?" Fer seemed a little hesitant.

"Of course. Could it be you're scared of water?"

"W- well, that's not really true but I don't like to get wet, you see..." Okay, he was very hesitant.

"I'm not planning to drown you, just wash you so it'll be OK, I promise. Let's go." I didn't want to spend all day arguing with him like a toddler.

"Nuuuu, I give in..." I was starting to get a handle on Fer -- he'd agree to do something he found necessary but unpleasant as long as he had made it clear to everyone within earshot that he was doing it reluctantly and under duress. Now that was over with we left the beast stables and headed out of the city to the same remote area we had gone to yesterday for my own bath.

First up I had to brush out Fer's coat. I needed to do this before I washed him, remembering what a dog-owning workmate had told me once. Just washing a dog's matted hair won't clean it properly but if the coat is brushed beforehand the shampoo

can get deep between the hairs and do its job. That was the theory, at least. Now to test it.

"Fer, first of all I'm going to brush out your hair to untangle it."

"W- well, okay." He seemed uneasy somehow. Then again it was probably the first time ever in the thousand years he'd been around that anyone had brushed him. I started working on Fer's hair with the dog brush I had bought from the Net Super. It was for large dogs, supposedly but Fer was extra-large so I didn't know quite if it would work. They didn't sell Fenrir brushes unfortunately.

"Ow ow-- Hey, take it a bit easier will ya?" Fer growled. The mighty Fer couldn't deal with a little discomfort? I was amazed.

"Sorry, sorry." I apologised. I brushed his coat more carefully, not pulling too hard at the places where the matted hair clogged the brush and tugged at his skin. It was a lot of hard work since his body was easily as big as a cow.

"Huff- this is working..." Fer's hair mats were starting to unravel as I persisted with the brush. It wasn't easy especially around his belly which had a lot of really thick hair mats but I finally managed to finish brushing him down properly. At the end I had a mountain of loose hair almost as tall as Fer himself... I got rid of this shed hair by digging holes with earth magic and burying it.

After the brushing I prepared to shampoo Fer's coat to clean it properly. First I took my bath out of my Item Box.

"Sui, will you wake up? I want your help for a moment." Hearing my thought Sui crawled out of her bag at once.

"What is it Aruji-?"

"Can you put some water in here please?" I indicated the bath.

"I got it-" Sui filled the bath with water and I added a small Fireball to heat it up. After stirring with my bath paddle I checked the temperature. It was maybe a little bit hot so I asked Sui to add more cold water. Some more stirring and yup, that seemed fine. It would stay at that temperature now thanks to the magical wonderful delightful bath (MY bath!). I scooped up some hot water in a bucket and poured it over Fer.

"Guuuh..." Fer shuddered and tried to back away. It seemed the mighty Fenrir didn't like getting wet after all. I kept on scooping and pouring the hot water over him but it was taking a lot of time as there was a lot of Fer to thoroughly soak down. Fer was getting more and more fidgety as it went on.

"Haven't you finished yet?" he grumbled.

"I'm getting there but wetting all of you down properly is hard work, Fer." I said pouring yet another bucket of hot water over him.

"Can't you use Sui's water magic somehow?" He wanted this over and done with, it was clear.

Oh, is that possible? Sui had Ruka-sama's blessing so she could do all sorts of water-related things and she's a Slime after all...

"Sui, can you suck up the hot water in this bath and spray it over Fer, like it was raining? You don't have to do it too hard." I added, remembering the power of her Water Cutter which had snipped off Wyvern heads like daisies in a meadow.

"Uh, I'll have a go-" Saying that Sui stretched a tentacle into the bath and sucked up hot water while stretching another tentacle from the other side of her body. Hot water spouted from that end like a hose.

"Uh, something like this?" The tip of her tentacle spread out and hot water came out like a shower from the end.

"Yes, great. As expected Sui can do it."

"Uhufufu. Sui is great-?"

"Yes, Sui is great. Can you keep doing this until I finish washing Fer?"

"Yeah, easy-" Sui confirmed. With the help of Sui's shower I got Fer's giant body thoroughly soaked. Time for the shampoo. I planned to use a shampoo for dogs I bought yesterday. Actually it was a shampoo suitable for both dogs and cats, according to the label. I chose it based on a report from a veterinarian who recommends various pet care products on the Net Super. He wrote that it is optimal for maintaining the health of the pet's skin and it can be used for puppies and kittens because it is mild. I didn't tell Fer this, of course. It had a conditioning feature like a rinse-in shampoo and

the label said that after washing the hair would be soft and well-nourished. It was a bit expensive but I bought it because it promised to be good.

Following the instructions on the label I worked the shampoo into Fer's coat, starting from the neck down to his shoulders and then along his back and then back up to the neck again, against the lie of the hairs to get shampoo all the way down to his skin. I did it gently, the label said this would relax the dog being washed and encourage it to cooperate, at least that was the theory.

I added more shampoo and kept working away. "Fer, is this itchy or stinging?"

"Umu, it's OK. You can put in a bit more effort if you'd like."

Oh, I see. Fer wanted me to treat him like a dog. Right then... I washed harder, rubbing at his coat vigorously as Fer obviously wanted me to.

"Ooooooh, yes, there, there... and there." I kept rubbing hard at the places Fer indicated.

"Oooooh, that's soooo nice..." Fer, didn't you say you didn't like getting wet earlier? Back, sides, belly, feet, I finally finished washing all of his body with the shampoo. Massaging the shampoo deep into his coat seemed to have mellowed him out. All that was left to wash now was his head. I wasn't sure about putting shampoo on there, I know I didn't like getting such stuff in my eyes myself so I figured I'd just use plain hot water.

"Hey, Fer, it's time to wash your face, can I spray hot water there?"

"O-, on my face? Nuhhh... Well, I can stand it. Do it quick-" Fer said, bravely closing his eyes. Fer really wasn't keen on his face getting wet, a legendary Demonic Beast that one-hitted high-ranking monsters bang! bang! was afraid of a little hot water. I mustn't laugh, I mustn't laugh... I let out a stifled laugh anyway.

"Nuuh, did you laugh at me just now?" Fer looked round at me suspiciously.

"I- I didn't laugh." I denied, trying desperately to keep a straight face. Change the subject quick. "Sui, can you spray some more hot water for me?"

"Yeah-" Sui started pumping more water from the bath. I directed the spray onto Fer's face.

"Gnuuuh-" he whined, flinching away as the gentle spray touched his face.

"Fer, hold still so I can wash your face." I chided. "Be brave."

"Guuuh-" the whining continued but courageous Fer held his head still as commanded while I thoroughly wetted his face. Finally that part was done.

"I'll rinse off the shampoo next." I said, taking the tip of Sui's tentacle and spraying fresh hot water over Fer's body, rinsing it thoroughly and leaving no bubbles. Fer's wet coat was now gleaming, clean and smooth.

"Yes, that's very good." I said, standing back to admire my work.

"Fuu-" Fer seemed glad I had stopped spraying him.

"And that's it, you're done, back washed and all." I announced.

"Huh, is it really all over?"

"I now just need to dry you off with a towel... waah, stand still-" I had picked up the extra-large bath towel just as Fer shook his body vigorously, just like a dog shaking off water after a bath.

"Uh, Fer?" I was drenched in the resulting spray.

"What? Oh, sorry." Fer said insincerely.

"You're not sorry at all, are you?" I looked down at my soaked body. "I'm completely doused thanks to you." I spat out some water that had gone in my mouth. It was my own fault though, I should have realised he would do something like that. Sometimes I forgot Fer was just a big dog, sort of. I spat again, some of Fer's loose hair from the grooming had been shaken off with the rinse water and got into my mouth. Uck. I had intended to wash Fer but I ended up getting a shower myself. Haa~.

Speaking of Fer, after shaking off most of the water he created a warm breeze and finished drying off his coat. It seemed that with Ninril-sama's blessing he could do all sorts of things with wind magic, not just use it to destroy enemies.

Fer definitely wasn't keen on getting wet but he seemed happy with the final results of his bath, saying "wow" as he looked over his clean body. His glossy smooth coat now

gleamed marvelously like silver. Of course it would need to be kept that way.

"I'll need to wash you like this at least once or better still twice a month from now on, Fer." I announced.

"What? Hey, aren't you finished with all this now?" Fer grumbled but still unable to take his eyes off his clean coat.

"What are you saying? It's bad for your skin to remain dirty." I scolded him. "Besides the way you're looking at your coat, you're quite happy for it to be that way, aren't you? Well you'll have to wash it regularly to keep it looking like that."

"Well, no, I'm not really..." He was conflicted. Getting wet, nope, being clean and shiny, yep. Come on Fer, admit it...

"You look great now and you know it, a true Fenrir with a smooth silvery coat. You don't want to go back to being a scruffy-looking Fenrir, do you Fer? That's such a depressing sight."

"Well, a dirty Fenrir... Grummm-" Fer was still not sure but he was teetering...

"Well, you can only keep your coat looking like that if you wash it regularly. Don't worry, I'll help you do it properly." I played my trump card. "Hey Sui, how do you think Fer-ojichan looks right now?"

"Nnnn, Fer-ojichan's coat is beautiful and fluffy!" Sui bounced around happily.

"See, even Sui-chan agrees with me." Take that, Fer.

"Muu, it can't be helped then, I'll wash my coat, once or twice a month." Fer looked up. "But that's all. No more than that!" he declared. Yeah yeah Fer, lay down the law, tell us how it's going to be. I didn't care, it meant I wouldn't be climbing on the back of a dirt-covered Fer any more when we travelled. A thorough washing once or twice a month would be enough.

# Chapter 98

## Getting a Big Order

I visited Lambert-san's store the next day as I was interested in how the soap and shampoo and other items were selling.

"Good afternoon, Lambert-san." I said as the store's assistant led me to where he was working.

"Oh, Mukouda-san, good to see you." Lambert-san welcomed me with a broad smile.

"So are the soaps and shampoo selling well?" I enquired, getting right down to business.

"Yes, very well. I originally thought to use the regular shop staff to sell these items but..." As Lambert-san explained, Mary-san's word-of-mouth publicity campaign was highly successful and what's more, the ladies who bought soap and shampoo from her went on to tell all their friends, bringing in more customers.

"As you can see, Mary is personally demonstrating the items which has also boosted sales considerably."

In the corner of the shop where the soap and shampoo were laid out on display Mary-san was speaking enthusiastically to a lady while getting her to touch her hair. The customer seemed surprised touching Mary's hair, discussing the effects of the shampoo eagerly with Lambert-san's wife.

"Thanks to Mary, sales are excellent. Of course, the goods I bought from Mukouda are of the highest quality."

The best sellers were the cheaper unscented soap and the rinse-in shampoo. It seemed they would be sold out in a little while. The lower price made them an easier sell. The sets of rose scented soap and shampoo and conditioner seemed to be popular among ladies who were more well-off, with nearly two-thirds of them being sold already. Although the hair wraps were particularly expensive, it seems that Mary-san had sold nearly one-third of my original delivery in the same time. I was amazed.

"I'm also surprised at the level of sales." Lambert-san said. "I underestimated the effort women would make in the pursuit of beauty." He shrugged. "Why, some customers bought as many as five high-end scented soaps at one time just because of the smell."

This world is different from mine in many ways but women's obsession with beauty is a universal constant. My older sister is a beauty otaku who says things like "these days guys who don't care about looking good are no good". When I was younger, living with her at my parents' house she would chop and change, experimenting with all sorts of new shampoos and conditioners and face and body lotions as they came on the market. Anything that she abandoned half-empty she pushed on me to try.

"The sales of leather goods in our main business is also doing well, surprisingly." Lambert-san added. The ladies who came to buy soap and shampoo here also saw his leather goods and they'd often buy something if it caught their eye while they were in the store. Ladies bags were a popular item, they seemed to go well with the hair care and soaps Mary-san was selling. The well-dressed men who sometimes accompanied the ladies were also often tempted by some of the store's more regular offerings.

"I didn't expect that the sale of such things would affect the sale of bags the way it did but," Lambert-san smiled, "in this case I'm rather pleased I miscalculated on that score." I wasn't surprised he was smiling, improving the sales of his regular leather goods even by accident was a good thing for him.

"So let's talk business..." I asked about any new orders Lambert-san wanted to place with me. It seems that Lambert-san was now convinced that Mary-san could sell the soaps and shampoos from the first trial order I had provided with little difficulty. We quickly agreed on the next order, the cheapest soap × 600 pieces, rose scented soap × 200 pieces, rinse-in shampoo × 500 bottles, shampoo and conditioner × 200 sets and finally 60 jars of hair wraps. Some of the quantities surprised me a little. He wanted 600 of the cheap soaps?

According to Mary-san, for regular folks who are neither aristocrats nor merchants even the cheapest unscented soap is expensive but she had sold such soaps to people like Merchants Guild staff members and even female Adventurers who were willing to pay for them. It turns out it was a mistake to put the scented soaps in bags, Mary-san explained as the scent attracted the attention of ordinary women visiting the shop. They might not be able to afford the scented soap but the plain soap was often within their means. Lambert-san expected that they would be able to sell even more of the plain soaps in the future.

"Because the order is quite big is it possible for you to fill the bottles here in your store, Lambert-san?" I asked, considering how much work it was going to be to do it all by myself. "I can bring the hair wraps in the glass jars and you can sell them directly."

"Yes, that's fine." said Lambert-san, thinking hard." Also, if someone has already purchased shampoos and the like or the hair wraps, if they bring the containers back we can fill them again here in the store and charge them a little less." I remembered suggesting something like that before and obviously Lambert-san had remembered my comment, not surprising for a master Merchant such as he. Anyway it was a relief that I wouldn't have to fill nearly a thousand bottles by myself.

"Well then, I will bring it all along tomorrow." I would have to hurry and get to work once I got back to the inn as I hadn't been expecting such a large order. I couldn't hand out the refill pouches or packets I bought via the Net Super so I'd have to decant the liquids into some containers I obtained locally. On the way home I stopped off and went searching in a general store where I bought some wooden boxes and a number of large jars before I went back to the inn.



Once I was back I immediately started preparing the order I had received from Lambert-san. I bought a lot of stuff from the Net Super. The order for the cheapest soap is 600 bars, it comes in packs of three bars of soap so I needed to buy 200 packs. It turned out that the maximum number I could order in one transaction on the Net Super was 99 of each item so I ordered 99 packs, another 99 packs and then 2 packs.

The order for rose scented soap was 200 bars. Since each pack contained 3 bars I ordered 67 packs. I could do this in one order since it was less than 99. That made 201 bars, one over the order but I kept the spare for my own use. On to the liquids. The rinse-in shampoo order was for 500 bottles, each refill pouch would fill 3 bottles so I bought 167 pouches in two orders. This was a little more than the order requested but I decided to donate the extra to Lambert-san. The order for shampoo and conditioner were for 200 pairs of bottles. I bought refill pouches again, 67 of each and again I left the extra to Lambert-san. Finally the hair wraps, 30 packs each with 8 wraps. I also bought 60 glass jars to put the hair wraps in. Whew.

I checked the quantities I had ordered, making sure I hadn't missed anything before starting to unpack and decant all the items. The plain soap bars were unwrapped and packed into wooden boxes, then I did the same with the rose-scented soaps into more

boxes.

"Wow, I'm tired but I still have to sort out the refills next." I continued with the rinse-in shampoo, pouring the contents of the refill pouches into large jars, each with a lid. I think they were used in this world for fruit wines or preserves, each holding about 8 litres. I poured and poured and poured, eventually filling 13 jars with the rinse-in shampoo. The large jars worked really well for this purpose.

I did the same for the shampoo and conditioner sets, filling yet more large jars from the refill pouches. Finally I got on to the hair wraps, putting 4 hair wraps in each of the glass jars I had bought from the Net Super.

"Yes, finally, finished!" By the time I had finished the sun was beginning to sink low in the sky. Dinner time?

"Aruji, Fer-ojichan is hungry and waiting for you-" Sui announced. Yeah yeah, I took Sui and hurried down to the beast stables behind the inn.



When I got there Fer was grumpy. Well, grumpier than usual.

"Hoi, where were you?"

"Sorry sorry. Please forgive me for being late, I've got a real treat for you tonight." I took out the pot of beef stew from my Item Box. I had prepared it the night before since I had the time to simmer it properly. I had a good feeling the slow-cooked meat was going to taste great. I put out two servings of beef stew on plates for the two gluttons.

"Right. Be careful as it's hot." I warned as I put the plates down for them.

"This is the first time I've seen this. What is it..." Fer inquired suspiciously, then the smell hit him. Darling Sui was already digging in to her helping but Fer wasn't far behind.

"Ooo, this meat's so soft, it's just melting in my mouth." Fer said indistinctly, vacuuming up the stew on his plate.

"It really is." Sui added. "And it tastes delicious too!- "

Beef stew seems to be quite popular with the two gluttons as well.

"Seconds!" they chorused. I dished out even more stew for them while I started eating my own portion along with some French bread I had bought from the Net Super, dunking it in the gravy.

Ooooh, the meat is almost too tender, falling apart in my mouth. And sooo tasty. I wish I had added mushrooms, maybe I'll put some in next time I cook this dish.

I bought French bread because I thought it was better to eat beef stew with a crusty bread, but the Net Super version of French bread is actually quite soft and not crusty at all. I wasn't really surprised since at home I could never get proper crusty French bread anywhere except a specialist bakery. Were there any crusty breads in this world, I wondered. Well, there's that hard black bread, the sort I had eaten when I was travelling with the Iron Will team of Adventurers soon after I arrived in this world. Just eating it by itself as travel rations, it's tough and not very tasty but it might go well with beef stew since it's got a hard crust. I'll buy some black bread locally and keep it for next time, I decided.

"Seconds!" Shouldn't that be thirds? Whatever. I dished out more stew. Fer spotted the French bread I was eating my stew with.

"Nuu, is that something tasty you're eating this with?"

"Well yeah. I like eating beef stew with bread." I confirmed, reaching for the Net Super display. I knew what was coming. Lessee, bread, bread, bread... ah.

"I want to try it then." Fer announced, his previously-immaculate muzzle dripping with gravy. And I just washed you earlier, I sighed.

"Sui also wants to eat-" Yeah yeah. The order, two loaves of French bread arrived. I cut them apart and immersed some of the chunks in beef stew on the two dishes.

"Try some of this, I will add more if you like it."

"Umu-" Fer was muzzle-down in his dish of beef stew before I finished speaking and Sui didn't hesitate either.

"Well, this is really tasty. The bread soaks up the gravy and that makes it delicious." Fer declared as he came up for air.

"It really is." Sui chimed in. "The stew is delicious when you eat it with bread."

Fer and Sui seemed to like eating bread with the beef stew, demanding more "seconds" (fourths, fifths? I lost count) before finally...

"Well, I'm full." Fer said, sitting back at last. "It looks like Sui's full up too."

"Both of us are full up-" Sui agreed.

"Uuuuurp... I may have eaten a little too much." Fer said deprecatingly, licking his stained muzzle to capture the last of the gravy adhering to it. Yeah, right. I peered into the pot which was now empty of beef stew. It had turned out to be a hit with my two gluttonous companions. I'll have to make more when I have the time to cook it properly. And include mushrooms.

# Chapter 99

## Made to Order from Wyvern Skin

I arrived at Lambert-san's shop ready to deliver the goods he had ordered the day before. I presented the boxes and jars containing the soap, shampoo, conditioner and hair wraps to Lambert-san in the store's reception room. As usual Fer and Sui accompanied me but paid no attention to the business being transacted. Fer slept behind my chair in the reception room and Sui was also sleeping but in her bag of course.

"Yes, this is just as I asked for." Lambert-san smiled. "I should have placed this order sooner. We've actually run out of this commodity already." Lambert-san put his hand on one of the crates containing the cheaper soap as he spoke. "As for payment, since it's more than 100 gold coins, may I pay with large gold coins?" he inquired.

I nodded. "Yes, that's fine." I worked it out yesterday, the total price for everything should be 612 gold coins. I'm getting used to getting paid large amounts of money and the shock is wearing off a bit. I didn't even stutter. When I was living and working in Japan I often struggled financially with little money left before payday. I didn't really expect that arriving in a different world would be so profitable... Yup, not scraping for every copper coin is a good thing.

"Well, here are 60 large gold coins and 12 regular gold coins." Lambert-san said, laying the money out on the table before me. "Please check." As usual in this world, the coins were stacked in piles of ten during transactions. It was correct, 60 large gold coins each worth 10 regular gold coins plus another 12 gold coins, 612 gold coins in all.

"Yes, that's correct." I confirmed. Lambert-san said that between Merchants it was customary to use large gold coins involving payments of more than 100 gold coins. It made travelling around to other cities to do business with other Merchants a bit easier, especially if the Merchant didn't have an Item Box. Conversely a single large gold coin was a bit too much for normal day-to-day transactions such as buying food from a stall or paying a city's entry tax. I have a lot of regular gold coins anyway but I also have an Item Box of course. In passing, a white gold coin worth 100 regular gold coins is a coin made from an alloy of Mithril and gold. It's used for trading between countries or

sometimes by wealthy Merchants carrying out very large deals.

As Lambert-san arranged for the wooden crates and jars to be taken off to the storeroom I remembered something.

"Oh yes, I have something I want to ask Lambert-san. Can I have a cloak made here?" I inquired.

"Well, of course we also accept commissions for custom made leather goods so there would be no problem." Lambert-san explained. "What kind of leather do you wish to use?"

"Well you see..." I explained to Lambert-san about the Wyverns.

"Oh, Wyvern..." his eyes widened. "I had heard that a flock of Wyverns had appeared near the city and been subjugated but I had no idea Mudouka-san was involved..." No, it wasn't me, it was Fer and Sui who dealt with the Wyverns but I didn't tell Lambert-san that. I pressed on instead.

"So I'd like you to make me a cloak and a belt with Wyvern skin." I requested.

"I have always wanted to work with Wyvern skin some day." Lambert-san said with a faraway on his face. He nodded. "I proudly accept your commission. It is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for my shop, to work with Wyvern skin." Oh, working with Wyvern skin is uncommon? I had spoken to the Guild Master back at the Adventurers Guild about having a cloak made but he hadn't told me it was going to be difficult. I had gotten the idea it would be easy. Lambert-san went on to explain.

"However, it takes some time to work with Wyvern skin, is that all right with you?"

"How long will it take?" I asked.

"Hmmm," Lambert-san stared at the ceiling, deep in thought for a moment. "It will take about six months..." That long really? Then again Johan-ojisan back at the Adventurers Guild said he would need to use a Mithril knife to dismantle the Wyverns I was selling so maybe tanning the skin and making a cloak and a belt and maybe even some shoes, that would take quite a long time due to the difficulty of working the leather. Well, I wasn't really in a hurry so waiting half a year wouldn't be that problematic.

"You see, even if you are supplying the skin yourself the sorts of craftsmen who can work with such materials are uncommon and of course it will take them a long time to carry out the work. The price, well..." Lambert-san could only give me an estimate of the cost but it was going to be not less than 500 gold coins.

The old me might have swallowed at hearing that price but now I could afford it easily, even after paying 370 gold coins for my bath (MY bath!) two days ago. Getting something made-to-order always cost more than off-the-peg after all. Working with Wyvern skin was a tough job so it was going to cost in terms of time and labour. It couldn't be helped.

"Oh, that price, can I pay it with the leftover Wyvern skin?" Wyverns were big creatures and Lambert-san should be able to make a cloak, belt and shoes from a single Wyvern skin and still have a lot of leather left unused.

"Eh-, are you sure?" Lambert-san said. He paused for a moment in thought. "Wyvern skin is very rarely available on the market so that might be a good deal for me..." He shook his head. "I can't agree immediately, Mukouda-san, I will have to give it some consideration but it is certainly a tempting offer. Let's talk about it later, please?"

The only use I have for Wyvern skins is to sell them for money so if I can trade one skin to pay for the making of the cloak, belt and shoes I want then I don't have a problem with that. It would save me paying for them in cash otherwise.

"Then I would be happy if you would accept this commission, Lambert-san." I said. Lambert-san nodded and I stood up, picking up Sui's bag as Fer came to life behind me.

"Well, I'm going to the Adventurers Guild now. I'll bring the Wyvern skin back here afterwards, so thank you."

"Yes, I will be waiting for you." said Lambert-san as he escorted me to the front door. We left the shop and headed for the Adventurers Guild.

# Chapter 100

## The Earth Dragon Can't Be Dissassembled

As soon as we arrived at the Adventurers Guild the receptionist hurried off to fetch the Guild Master who then accompanied us to the warehouse where Johan-ojisan had been hard at work.

"Ah, you're here? I'm done with the first lot of Wyverns for ya." Johan-ojisan looked tired but there was a smile on his face. He was someone who enjoyed his job, it seemed.

"Here's seven lots of Wyvern meat, sonny, and two Wyvern skins and two manastones." Johan-ojisan scratched his bald head. "I dunno how you did it but it's the first time I've dealt with monsters where the blood's all been drained out. Made dismantling a lot easier though." Oh, bleeding. That was Sui's work.

"Sui drained the blood." I explained. I patted the bag by my side and Sui popped out.

"Is that a Slime?" Johan-ojisan peered closely at Sui who peered back at the bald-headed old man. "I didn't know Slimes could be used like that."

"Yes, Johan." The Guild Master chimed in. "If any Slime could do something like that then it's probably that Slime there. It seems to be really special."

"That's a shame." Johan-ojisan laughed. "If every party of Adventurers had a Slime that could drain blood it would make my job a lot easier." He shrugged. "Well, it doesn't matter."

The mountain of Wyvern meat Johan-ojisan presented me with was huge as you might expect. Even with Fer and Sui to cook for I'd not be short of meat for a long time, and there was the meat from another six Wyverns to add to the reserve after this, of course. I also received two mana stones and two Wyvern skins from this first batch with three more of each to come once Johan-ojisan had dismantled the second batch of monsters.

I examined one of the mana stones closely. It had an strange feel to it, a flattened round

stone about 20 cm in diameter with an odd dark colour. Mana stones are used to make magic tools and large ones like this trade for a very high price. I didn't really have an immediate use for it myself but I planned to keep it in reserve in case I got into financial trouble later. I was incredibly well-off right now but who knows what the future might hold?

The Wyvern skin was unbelievably thin like nothing I had ever felt before. It was dark grey in colour, very smooth and attractive. I could see why Wyvern skin was popularly used to make cloaks with and I was pleased I had already arranged for Lambert-san to make me just such a cloak.

"Regarding the purchase price," the Guild Master said, "I'd like to wait until Johan here has finished dismantling the rest of the Wyverns to summarise and pay you in one lump sum if that's fine with you?"

"That's fine." I agreed.

"Oh, that's right." the Guild Master said, remembering something. "I ought to give this to you now as a separate sum." He handed me 10 gold coins. "It's payment for that advanced potion from the injured Adventurer's party." The Guild Master laughed. "Well, since the party was a group of beginners it's actually a loan from the Guild which they'll pay back." He smiled and I suddenly thought of the payday loan sharks back home and I wondered what sort of interest rate he was charging them.

Potion? Oh, that was one of Sui's Deluxe High-grade Potions I had given him to treat the Adventurer poisoned by a Wyvern's sting. I completely forgotten about it. Was it really worth 10 gold coins?

"The potion you gave us was obviously much more effective than a regular advanced potion. The party are profoundly grateful to you for your assistance in saving their injured member. As for the price, I'm sorry I can't pay you what it's really worth but the party is, as I said, just beginners and I'd like to give them some help on this. They'd have to work for years to pay off such a big debt otherwise."

"No no, don't worry about it." I said. "I didn't pay anything for it myself after all."

"I'm intrigued as to where such potions can be got for free." the Guild Master said, frowning his brow. Oops, perhaps I shouldn't have said that. "But there is an absolute ban on prying into your affairs so I'll let matters rest there." I would appreciate it if

you did just that please. (Bitter smile). I can't tell you that Sui just makes those potions with no effort. I tried to change the subject.

"How much does each kind of potion cost?" I asked.

"A basic potion costs 5 silver coins, an intermediate level potion is 1 gold coin and a high-grade potion costs 10 gold coins. There's also a special-grade potion above that costing 50 gold coins." the Guild Master explained. "Most Adventurers carry intermediate level potions at best, some higher-ranking Adventurers on a dangerous quest might take one or two high-grade potions with them. We usually keep a couple of high-grade potions in stock here just in case but it just so happened that we were out of stock when the Wyverns appeared."

"Doesn't the Adventurer Guild store any special grade potions?" I enquired.

"They're too expensive." the guild Master said with a frown. "The Adventurers Guild in the Royal capital might keep one or two in stock but nowhere else could afford to do so." Well, certainly 50 gold coins is a lot of money which would have to be repaid by any Adventurer who used such a potion. Beginning Adventurers wouldn't be able to pay that much back and even experienced Adventurers would have difficulty. A special grade potion was very powerful, apparently they could even reconnect severed limbs if it was applied promptly.

"Right then, I'll get out the rest of the Wyverns to get dismantled." I took out the remaining 6 Wyverns from my Item Box. Talking about the potions I had almost forgotten why I had come here in the first place.

"Hoi." Fer interjected. "Don't forget to get them to disassemble my last capture as well."

"Oh, that's right." Fer was talking about the Earth Dragon. I had sort-of forgotten about it, for some reason. Like not wanting to remember, probably... I'd rather just leave it in my Item Box forever.

"Oh, has Fenrir-sama hunted something interesting?" The Guild Master inquired, obviously intrigued.

"Well, you see... the fact is... ummm, Fer captured an Earth Dragon..."

.....

.....

...

"I'm dreadfully sorry," the Guild Master said after a long interval. "but my ears just stopped working properly. I could have sworn you just said 'Earth Dragon' but you couldn't have, could you?"

"Ah, yes I did." I fired off a death glare at Fer but it bounced off him without effect, as usual. Another long silence ensued.

"...Is it really truly an, an, an Earth Dragon?"

"Oh, yeah. Please see for yourself." I reached into my Item Box and pulled out the Earth Dragon.

"....."

"....."

The Guild Master and Johan-ojisan both stared at the Earth Dragon, stunned. I waited and waited for them to say something, anything. Finally the Guild Master shook himself as if waking up from a dream.

"T-that's..." the Guild Master hesitated then his features firmed up. "Oh, my apologies, Mukouda-sama. I was shocked by seeing it." His voice was still a bit wavery though. I'm really sorry Guild Master, it's all Fer's fault really. The Guild master turned to his subordinate and smacked him on the shoulder. "Hey, Johan, are you OK?"

"...Oh, Oh, Guild Master, I'm dreaming, there's an Earth Dragon lying there in front of me ha ha ha." I should have expected a reaction like that. I'm really sorry, Guild Master and Johan-ojisan, really really sorry.

"Well you see, uhhh, Fer told me Dragon's meat is really delicious..."

"Umu, Dragon's meat is definitely delicious." Fer announced. "Wyvern's meat is tasty but Dragon's meat is even tastier than that."

"...Dragon's meat is delicious, of course..." the Guild Master said speculatively.

"Eh, I'd love to taste some Dragon's meat myself..." Johan-ojisan chimed in, his eyes fixed on the Earth Dragon lying before him.

Huh? Dragon steaks are that good?

"Anyway, the last time a Dragon was subjugated, lessee, it was over 200 years ago..." Johan-ojisan said, thinking hard.

"If you were a long-lived elf or dwarf, you might know about it from that time..." the Guild Master went on. From what I had been told before, the lifespan of High Elves seems to be about 1000 years while ordinary Elves live about 500 years to 600 years. Dwarves are also long lived, usually between 200 and 300 years. If the last Dragon subjugation did actually happen more than 200 years ago then no human alive now would have been around when it happened, just some Elves and Dwarves.

"Purchase of the materials from this is... ummm..." the Guild Master said, thinking hard. "It's too much for us to deal with, it's like your Orthros and Chimaera, this Dragon is even more valuable and we wouldn't be able to pay you for it."

Ah~ as expected. Well, that's it.

"I understand but if it's possible can you please just disassemble it for us?" I asked. Fer wanted to eat Dragon meat.

"Mmmm?" the Guild Master turned to Johan-ojisan. "Can you manage that, Johan?"

"Impossible." the old man retorted immediately. "There's nothing goes to waste when disassembling a Dragon, according to the records. Every part of the monster is valuable, from the blood to the internal organs, it can all be used. Not a single drop of blood can be lost." He shrugged, staring down at his hands. "I couldn't even start doing something like that by myself and besides, we don't have the necessary equipment." He gestured around the warehouse.

So they can't even disassemble this Dragon for us?

"If Johan says it is impossible for him to do it here then I have to agree with him." the Guild Master said. "However you might be able to get it done at the Adventurers Guild in the Royal capital or maybe the Adventurers Guild of a Dungeon City."

Johan-ojisan nodded. "There are a lot of experts specializing in dismantling in those

sortsa places who could do it, I'm sure." So my alternatives are the Royal capital or a Dungeon City? It's impossible for Johan-ojisan or anyone else in this city.

"Sorry Fer but they can't disassemble it here." I explained as I returned the Earth Dragon to my Item Box.

"That's disappointing." Fer grumbled. "But I understand."

"Sorry kiddo." I thought Johan-ojisan would have liked to attempt it but he didn't want to do a bad job being the sort of craftsman he was.

"No no, on the contrary I'm grateful you explained it all to me since I'm no expert." I bowed to him. "I thank you for all your hard work dismantling for me but I think we'll be leaving soon."

Getting the monsters Fer had hunted dismantled properly was why we had stayed in this town for such a long time but Fer had said he wanted to go to the sea, so it was almost time to leave. Once we received the meat from the Wyverns and payment for their materials then we'd take a short break before going travelling again. I wanted to see more of this country after all.

"Uh, are you leaving this city soon?" the Guild Master said, surprised.

"Yeah, we're thinking about going on a trip once we get payment for the materials and the meat from the Wyverns."

"Oh, I'm sorry to hear that but I understand." the Guild Master replied. "Before you leave could I have a little chat with you to discuss where you're going?"

"Oh, you've got some high-ranking requests that we might be able to carry out for the Guild on the way?" I remembered our previous conversation about such requests if we were travelling around the Kingdom.

"Precisely." the Guild Master said. "Would you consider such requests please?"

"I think that'll be fine but we've not decided precisely where we're going to go yet." A sudden thought struck me. "Oh, would the Guild have a map of this country?"

"Oh, yes we do, it's in my office. If you wish to see it then please accompany me and maybe we can discuss some future requests there as well." As I began to follow the

Guild Master to his office Johan-ojisan called me back for a moment. He gestured at the large pile of Wyverns I had left behind for him disassemble.

"Right then sonny, the rest of these Wyverns should take me no time to deal with since you drained the blood out. You can come round the day after tomorrow to pick 'em up."

"I understand. I'll come back again the day after tomorrow. Thanks for all your hard work."

とんてん  
女神一ズ。



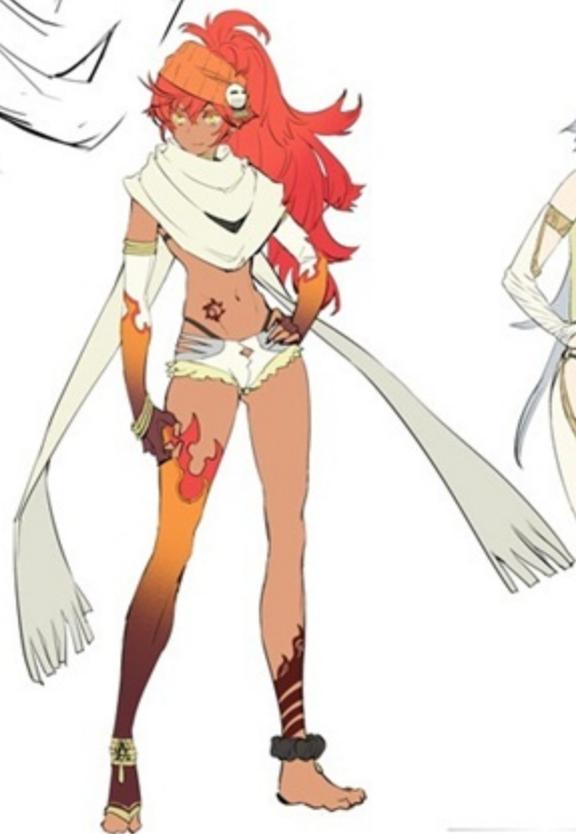
©Rusalka



©Kishar



©Agni



©Nirril



Saitou



◎ 年相応の若さ

◎ クセ毛ほっぺか

「自分ど」セッしてるカジ

◎ 生意氣さう

◎ 目はキラッキラ。



Kanon



Rio





PDF by: traitorAZEN