Author: Ren Eguchi
Illustration: Masa

Campfire Cooking in Another World with My Absurd Skill

Meat Soboro Rice Bowls and The Holy Seal

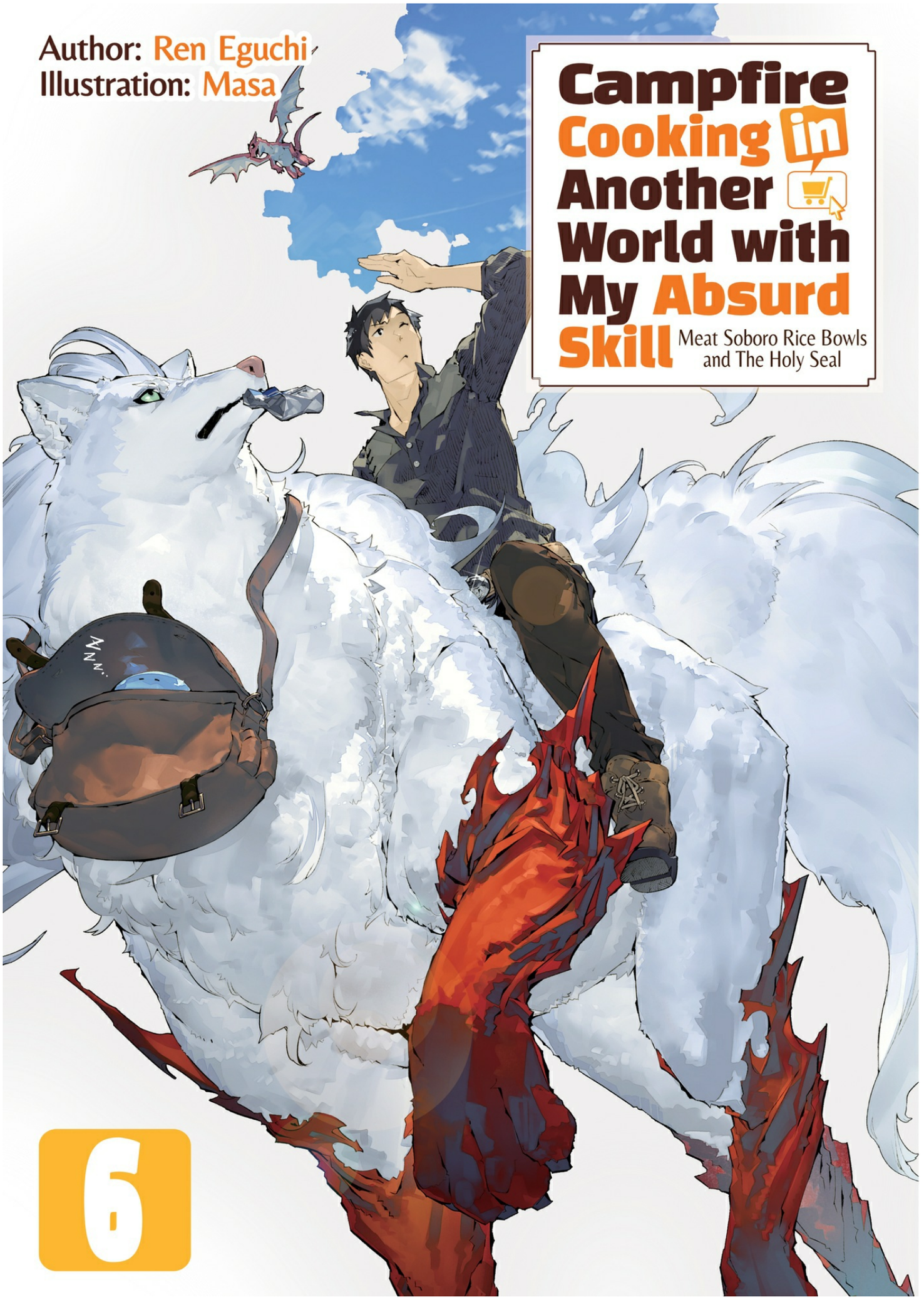


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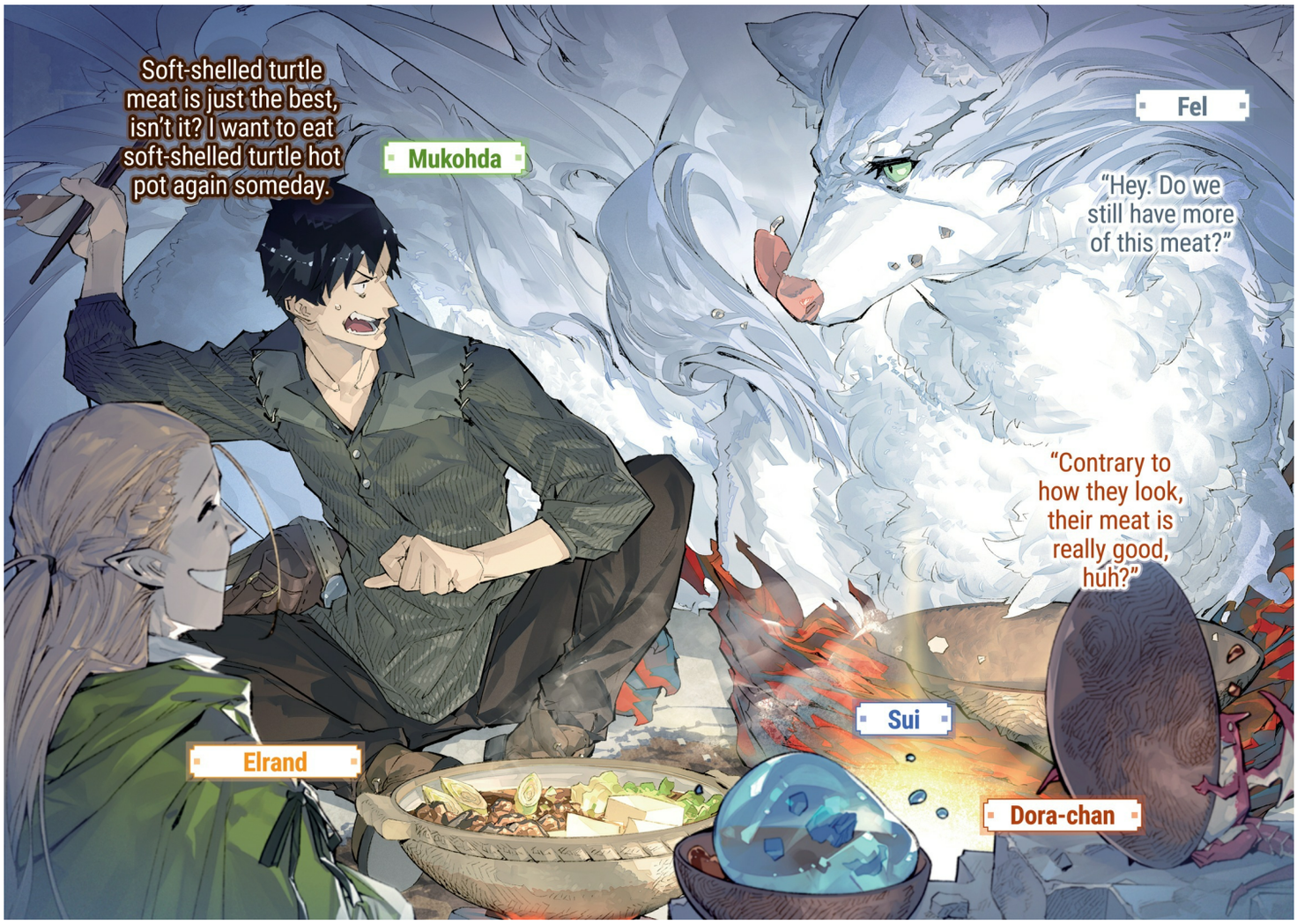
Campfire Cooking in Another World with My Absurd Skill

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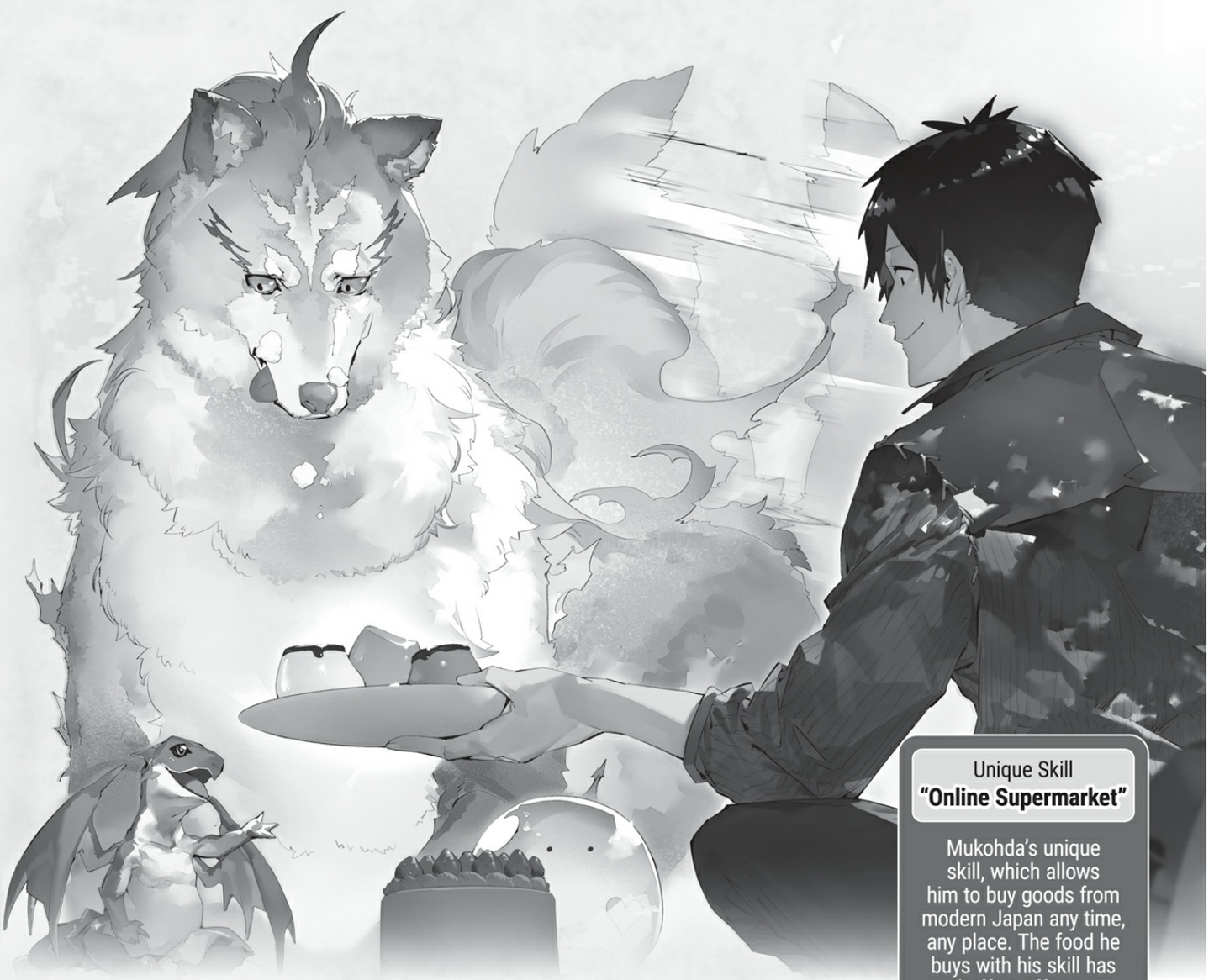
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Soft-shelled turtle meat is just the best, isn't it? I want to eat soft-shelled turtle hot pot again someday.
Mukohda
Fel
"Hey. Do we still have more of this meat?"
"Contrary to how they look, their meat is really good, huh?"
Sui
Elrand
Dora-chan


She was looking sadly at her empty wooden bowl.
“.....Do you want more?”
Feodora

The Story Up Till Now

Accidentally caught in a "Hero Summoning" by a shady kingdom, Tsuyoshi Mukouda (Mukohda), a salaryman in modern Japan was brought into another world of swords and magic. Somehow, Mukohda managed to leave the kingdom and go on a journey, but thanks to his unique skill, "Online Supermarket," which allows him to buy things from his world, he was beset by incredible beings like "Goddesses" and "Legendary Beasts" all giving him things like familiar contracts and blessings in order to get at his food and otherworld goods. Having conquered the dungeon, Mukohda rises in level, unlocking a new power, the "Tenant." Although Mukohda wants to choose a new Tenant to suit his own tastes, some of the gods are aiming for it like eagles. On the other hand, Mukohda's party, who have had their fill of "the bounty of the sea" in Berléand, seem like they're now preparing to face the next dungeon.....?



Unique Skill
"Online Supermarket"

Mukohda's unique skill, which allows him to buy goods from modern Japan any time, any place. The food he buys with his skill has buffing effects.

Character Introduction

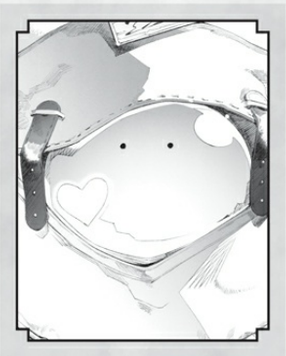
Mukohda's Party



Dora-chan

Familiar

A rare pixie dragon. He's small, but fully grown. Of course, he became Mukohda's familiar because he's after the man's cooking.



Sui

Familiar

A newly born slime. It grew attached to Mukohda, who fed it, and became his familiar. Cute.



Fel

Familiar

A legendary magic beast, the Fenrir. He formed a contract and became Mukohda's familiar in order to get at his food. Hates vegetables.



Mukohda

Human

A salaryman summoned from modern Japan. Has the unique skill, "Online Supermarket." Good at cooking. A coward.

The Divine Realm



Rusalka

God

The Goddess of Water. Gave Mukohda's familiar, Sui, her blessing so that she could receive offerings from Mukohda. Loves otherworld food.



Kisharle

God

The Goddess of Earth. Gave Mukohda her blessing so she could receive his offerings. She's entranced by the effect of otherworld beauty products.



Agni

God

The Goddess of Fire. Gave Mukohda her blessing so that she could get offerings from him. Likes otherworld alcohol, especially beer.



Ninrir

God

The Goddess of Wind. Gave Mukohda her blessing in order to extort offerings from him. She's weak to otherworld sweets, especially dorayaki.

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8 × Chapters

1 × Extra

Chapter 1: Goodbye, Berléand!

Today started with obtaining more seafood from Berléand's morning market. I bought up the tiger prawn-like vermillion shrimp, bronze king crabs, which were similar to red king crabs, mackero, which were like horse mackerel, yellow scallops, big hard clams, which looked like huge Asian clams, as well as the smaller version, small hard clams, one after the other.

They were all good when I tried them out, and everyone else liked them too, after all. This town was famous for its tyrant fish, but its second, hidden specialty was its shellfish, definitely.

I mean come on, all of them are amazingly delicious!

When I fried those oyster-like ooysters, they were really good, too. Of course, I also bought more of them.

This time, I found okktopus as well, which, just like its name, was basically an octopus. When I found them, they'd already been boiled and were being sold like that. I had my doubts, thinking, *Do they really eat octopus here, when they reject kraken?* But when I asked the guy selling it, he told me that they'd only started eating it recently. Apparently none of the locals would eat it, but people who moved here from out of the country would, so the trend spread slowly.

"It was pretty good when we tried it."

I already know how good octopus is, old man. I'm Japanese, after all.

It was already boiled so it could be used as-is, and I could think of other uses too, so I bought it on the spot.

After going around the market, I managed to secure quite the amount for a single day. Since it was the last time I planned to look around, and that thought was stuck in my mind, I ended up buying everything that was good; by the end, I had more than usual. But thanks to that I had enough to probably last around three whole months even if we ate seafood once a week.

After making my rounds through the morning market, we enjoyed the food

stalls as usual. When I told them that today would be the last day we ate at the stalls too, all three of them challenged the lineup of stalls as if their backs were to the wall. Of course, I was there too.

“As for the earnings from your sale, it comes out to 41 gold in total.”

According to the guild’s clerk, unfortunately the B-ranked giant horn rabbit and golden-backed bull didn’t have magic stones. But it seemed that they bought the giant horn rabbit’s fur and the golden-backed bull’s hide at a slightly higher price because of their rarity. Given that I got the meat back and they didn’t have any magic stones, I guess the price was pretty good?

Taking the 41 gold coins, we left the Adventurer’s guild behind.

Now then, let’s go full steam and prepare for the trip to Aveling.

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As soon as we got back home, Fel and the others took a nap.

They stuffed themselves full at the stalls, after all. It’s great for me since I won’t have to make lunch, too. Now then, I guess I’ll just be in the kitchen cooking for the trip.

The first thing I did was fry up a bunch of the kinds of food that got eaten yesterday: fried mackero, fried vermillion shrimp, fried yellow scallops, and fried big hard clams. I made a lot this time, just in case, since the fried stuff was really good.

After that, since I already had the oil, I made tempura as well. After all, tempura could be used in rice bowls too. I used vermillion shrimp and kraken to make tempura with. Shrimp and squid were like, the most standard out of standard things to make tempura out of, so I made a lot of this, too.

I also made tempura out of cuts of the sea bream-like brebream. I tried a little of it, and the breading was crisp, while the meat was fluffy and light. It was perfect. I also made vegetable tempura after getting some produce with my skill, using eggplant, onions, bell peppers, asparagus, sweet potato, as well as both shiitake and maitake mushrooms. I personally liked vegetable tempura, so I used all kinds of vegetables.

After that I wasn't sure what to make, but I remembered that I'd gotten the octopus-like okktopus from today's morning market. I had the frying oil out too, so I decided to make that: the staple of any izakaya menu: okktopus karaage. It'd be a side dish in a meal, so I wasn't sure if it would be a good fit...

But it's delicious, so I'm making it. It's the best snack for beer. I already have all the ingredients I need, so let's get started.

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First, cut the boiled okktopus' legs into slightly larger, bite-sized pieces. Then, take a vinyl bag and pour in sake, soy sauce, grated garlic and ginger (along with the kinds of each that come in tubes) before throwing in the okktopus leg pieces and massaging the flavor in, before letting it marinate for about 30 minutes.

...While I was waiting for that to finish, I had a small break with coffee.

"Should be about time..."

After wiping off any excess liquid with a paper towel, thoroughly coat the okktopus in potato starch. Then just fry it up until it's crisp, and then it's done.

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Let's see...

Munch

Hmmm, now I want beer.

"Whoops. It's about time to start on dinner. Everyone already had their fill of seafood at the stalls, huh? I bet they'll say they want meat."

What kind of meat should I make, though? Might be nice to use the giant horn rabbit today. But what does rabbit taste like? I've never had it before. Oh wait, technically this thing's a monster, so it's different from regular rabbits. I guess I should just grill it and see for now.

Cutting just a tiny piece of meat off, I seasoned it with salt and pepper before grilling it and had a taste test.

"Chicken? No, Pork? Hmm, it kinda tastes like a mix of both... There's no

gamey funk to it, so it's just good, though."

I wasn't really sure what to do with it, so I settled for just roasting it whole in the oven.

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After cutting the meat into slices a bit larger than your palm and about 2cm thick (as thick as a pork cutlet), randomly poke holes into the meat with a fork before covering with herb salt and letting it sit for about 10 minutes.

Spread a cooking sheet on an oven tray, and lay the herb-salted giant horn rabbit meat on top before pouring lots of olive oil all over it.

Then just roast in the preheated oven until it's nice and done.

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"Yep. Smells nice." The giant horn rabbit herb roast (*or should it be an "herb steak?"*) was done.

I peeked into the living room where everyone was sleeping, and found that they were all already awake, probably because of their stomachs.

"I made dinner. Want it?"

"Indeed."

《I'll eat.》

《Sui will eat—.》

I served out the giant horn rabbit herb roast to everyone.

"Hm. I was just thinking I wanted meat."

《You totally get us, don't you?》

《Meat~.》

Everyone chomped into their share. *In the end, they all just love meat, don't they?*

We thoroughly enjoyed the giant horn rabbit's meat.

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Now then, I'll be spending today making lots of food for our journey too.

Fel and the others went back to sleep again after eating breakfast. By the way, today's breakfast was Bolognese dogs, which was basically just the Bolognese I'd made before inside a hot dog bun. It was really good since the tomato sauce seeped into the bread.

Fel and the others'll probably just wake up around noon and complain that they're hungry, so I'll be holed up in the kitchen until then.

Today I planned to cook a bunch of soups. On the docket were tonjiru, beef stew, and clam chowder. I had already cleaned the mini clams I'd be using for clam chowder, so preparations were complete.

First was getting more ingredients through my Online Supermarket. *I'll need potatoes, carrots, and onions, as well as daikon, great burdock, and konnyaku, right? Then I need a can of demiglace, red and white wine, and lastly butter, bacon, and milk, I think.*

A lot of what I was making used the same vegetables, so I made sure to get a bunch. *I have all the seasonings I need, so I don't need any of that. I guess if anything comes up I can just buy it then.*

Right. Let's get cooking...

Chopchopchop

Chopchopchop

Sizzle

Sizzle

...

"Whew, it's done. I just need to let the tonjiru sit for a while, stew it again, and then I can shut it in my Item Box. The beef stew is gonna take a little while longer, though."

Next is the clam chowder. I already made beef stew and tonjiru for soups with meat, so maybe I should make another seafood soup on top of the clam chowder. I still have time, too... Okay, let's do it. What should it be, though?

For seafood soup..... Ah, let's just do white meat fish in tomato soup, since it's simple. But first is the clam chowder.

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Dice the potatoes, carrots, and onions, and cut the bacon into pieces about 1cm large. (I prepared extra portions of the vegetables because I'd be using them in the white meat fish in tomato soup afterwards.)

Next, wash the de-sanded clams, and steam in a deep frying pan with white wine. Once the mini-clams open, remove them. The juices from steaming will be used later, so save them.

Preheat a pot and melt some butter in it. Then, quickly sear the bacon before adding in the vegetables and continuing to cook. When the onions go clear, turn to low heat and add in some flour and mix. Then, add in water, consommé bouillon cubes, salt and pepper, and the juices from steaming the mini clams all together and continue simmering until the vegetables turn soft.

Once that happens, add in just the mini clam meat and milk, and simmer for a while more, and then finish it by adjusting the taste with salt and pepper.

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Let's try a bit.

There's lots of vegetables and mini clams, so the taste is well rounded and delicious. Good, good. Now let's start on the white meat fish in tomato soup..... I thought, but Fel and the others barged into the kitchen and complained about their hunger. Storing the finished tonjiru and beef stew, as well as the clam chowder into my Item Box, I started on lunch.

For lunch, I made tempura bowls using what I had made yesterday. I then made a sauce using mirin, soy sauce, granulated dashi, and sugar to flavor the bowl with.

Sweet sauces really go well with tempura bowls. Everyone looked like they loved it as they ate.

Once lunch was done, I started cooking again right away.

For the white meat fish in tomato soup, I chose to use tyrant fish. Unlike its

appearance, it had a light taste like cod, so it would be perfect for this soup. First, I bought the raw garlic and canned sliced tomatoes I'd need with my skill...

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...Then, mince the garlic. Use olive oil to grease a pot and add in the minced garlic to cook until you can smell it. Then, add in the potatoes, carrots, and onions prepared from the clam chowder to the pot.

When the onions become clear, add water, the canned sliced tomatoes, and consommé bouillon cubes, and continue to stew until the vegetables turn soft. When that happens, add in tyrant fish meat that has been cut into slightly large bite-sized pieces. Once the tyrant fish is cooked as well, adjust the taste with salt and pepper to finish the soup.

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It's a really good soup since there's lots of vegetables, and the white meat of the fish pairs real well with the umami of the tomatoes.

"I still have time, huh? Then let's keep cooking."

After that, I made some boiled pork, flavored soft-boiled eggs, and steamed some rice, all at the same time. I made several different rice balls for myself, and used the rest of the rice to make meat-wrapped rice balls using orc, bloody horn-bull, and wyvern meat. Fel and the others said they liked the meat-wrapped rice balls, so it seemed like a good snack for being on the road. After diligently shaping the rice and wrapping it in meat, I quickly grilled the whole thing.

"Whew~, this should be it." I stored the massive amount of meat-wrapped rice balls I'd made into my Item Box.

"It's about time to prepare dinner. Lunch was seafood, so dinner should be meat, right? I can't be bothered, so let's just do something easy."

So I went with cockatrice teriyaki bowls. *It's a super easy thing to do if you just use store-bought teriyaki sauce: cook the cockatrice, slather the teriyaki sauce on, and that's it. Pour some more sauce onto a bowl of rice, and throw some shredded cabbage on top. Cut the cockatrice into easy to eat pieces, and lay those on top, and it's done.*

It's easy, but it's also delicious. Fel and the others were singing its praises as they chowed down too.

At the end they asked for dessert too, so I got cakes and pudding from Fumiya as per usual. They were very satisfied.

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"Whoeeee~, that was a good bath."

《Baths really are great~.》

《The bath feels so good—.》

Dora-chan, Sui, and I had just gotten out of the bath. *Tomorrow will be the last day I'll get to enjoy that bath, huh?* This place used to be a noble's villa, so the bath was a nice, spacious one. I was kind of sad my time with it was almost up.

《Master —Sui wants something sweet to drink before bed.》

《Oh, that's a good idea. Give me some too.》

Something sweet out of the bath? It's gotta be fruit milk.

"Then let's go to the 2nd floor." Fel was already lazing around on his own futons in the master bedroom we used to sleep.

"Fel, Dora-chan and Sui want fruit milk, what about you?"

"Hm, I will have some."

I bought the fruit milk and poured it out for everyone.

"Once you're done, you can just leave your dishes alone and go to sleep. I'll be in the next room; I have something to do."

"Mm? What would that be?"

"You know, that... For the gods, you know?"

"Ohh, I see. Then do it properly."

I have no idea what he means by "properly," but okay I guess. Wait, oh yeah. The gods would.....

"Hey Fel, do the gods know everything about this world?"

“Of course they would. They are gods.”

Hrm, then they would know about Aveling, where we’re going to next? Let’s try asking for some information then.

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“Everyone, are you all here?” I asked, and the gods immediately answered.

＜We’ve been waiting!＞

＜I was waiting for you.＞

＜You kept us waiting man.＞

＜.....Cake.＞

＜Ho, finally. I was getting tired of sitting on my bum.＞

＜You’re finally here, huh?＞

.....It’s probably a mistake to point this out, but these gods sure are hooked on earth stuff.

＜There’s no helping it. The stuff from your world is just too good!＞

Don’t turn this on me. I guess I shouldn’t expect change from you. What reliable uselessness. Well, whatever. Let’s just get this over with... “Okay then, is Ninrir first like always?”

＜What do you mean, useless?! How rude~. I wish for the usual, cakes from Fumiya.＞

Whoops, right, the gods can hear what I’m thinking. I need to be careful. So Ninrir just wants cakes, as per usual, huh? Let’s just open up my Online Supermarket... Oh, there’s new stuff.

“Ninrir, they have new products.....” I showed her the new products, cakes that use mangoes.

＜Wooaahhh! How are they so colorful and delicious-looking?! I want all of them!＞

Sure, sure. All of the new stuff, right? One after the other, I added mango roll cake, a mango shortcake in a cool-looking glass container, and a rare

cheesecake with mango sauce on it, as well as an almond jelly that used mango jelly and mango fruits in it to the cart.

“What about the rest? From where we left off, on the whole cake menu..... Let’s see, there’s this tart with lots of fruit on it, and you haven’t had the mille crepe yet, have you?”

＜Muhhoohh! They all look so good. Indeed, I have yet to try either of these. Give me both.＞

The fruit tart and mille crepe went in the cart. *And what she can get with the rest of her allowance is.....* “As for what you can get with what you have left, how about this variety pack of mini-cakes? That’ll make it 1 gold on the dot.”

＜Ohh! A package with lots of different cakes inside? That sounds nice, give me that.＞

Okay then, a variety pack of mini-cakes it is. Great. This takes care of Ninrir.

“Next is Lady Kisharle, right?”

＜Yes, it’s me—. The lotion and cream from before were really good, you know~? My skin was so nice the next morning, I was so surprised. So I’d like more of the same series of products.＞

That thing wasn’t cheap after all. Thank goodness she liked it. So something in the same series...? Let’s see..... Ghk! Just 30ml of beauty lotion is 8 silver and 5 copper...

“U-Uhh, it’s pretty expensive at 8 silver and 5 copper... You sure?”

＜Yes. I’ve already experienced the facial lotion and cream, you see. The beauty lotion must be exceptional as well. I’d like that one, please.＞

Girls sure don’t hesitate for beauty, huh? You only get this much for 8 whole silver and 5 copper..... Men will never understand this world.

With those thoughts in mind, I added Kisharle’s order into the cart. “What will you do with the remaining silver and 5 copper?”

＜Ah, can you use the rest for soap?＞

Apparently, Kisharle shared hers with the lower-ranked goddesses that served

her, so she was running out. *I wonder whether that would get her in trouble with the creator god, her superior?*

I asked about it, but she just said that she made sure their mouths were shut tight. According to her, they swore not to tell when she threatened not to give them any more. And since it was a promise between gods, breaking it would be pretty disastrous, it seemed. *Is it really okay for the lower-ranked gods to make an oath just for soap? W-Well, it's not like I understand their world, I guess. A-Anyway, gotta get that soap.*

"Should I just get the rose scented soap I got before?"

＜Yes, I believe that would be best.＞

"What about the rest? There's a lot of variety in soap." I said, showing her the huge lineup of soap on display.

＜Oh my, you're right. Hmmm, then I'm fine what whatever you recommend, otherworlder boy.＞

So she's leaving it to me. Then..... I'll just get my favorite one with the cow brand. It smells nice, and it feels nice to use. By the way, I like the one that comes in the blue box. Also, that one soap that's famous for foaming up like cream might be nice too. There's enough for one more, but which one should it be..... Ah, I see this American one a lot. So that must mean it's popular, right? I'll just get that.

I added all four soaps into the cart. *Right, that's Lady Kisharle sorted.*

"Next is Agni, right?"

＜You got it! And of course I want beer! I'd like to ask for snacks too like before, but no, just beer this time. I can get snacks on my own, but I can only get good beer from the other world from you.＞

You say that, but I handed you quite a lot before... If I remember right, I gave her a case as well as three 6-packs, so that makes forty-two 350ml cans. Wait, she downed all that in a week?

＜Man, I mean, having beer after work is just the best feeling, ya know? And it's nice before you sleep, too. Before I knew it, I'd completely run out. Hahaha!

＞

Don’t “Hahaha me.” You really did drink too much, Agni.

＜*It’s fine, it’s fine. In fact, I’m doing better than usual, must be because I can drink good booze every day!*＞

Before, Kisharle said that in the divine realm gods were basically the same as humans, except they lived for a really long time and never got sick. *But doesn’t that just mean they’re different from humans?*

“Okay then, you sure you’re fine with just beer?”

＜*Yep. I’m countin’ on ya.*＞

Then let’s get to picking beer. I bought the case of premium beer for A-company before, so this time let’s go with S-company instead. Agni did say that S-company’s premium beer was good. Then it’s gotta be a 6-pack of A-company’s premium beer and Y-bisu beer, right? And another 6-pack of A-company’s black beer is there too, so let’s get that. Then let’s get K-company’s beer that’s said to bring out the taste of the wheat, and S-company’s long-lasting black labeled beer, both in 6-packs. This should be good.

I considered sparkling wine too, but I decided to stick with beer. *Okay, this should be all of Agni’s stuff.*

“Next is.....”

＜*Me, Ruka. The food you ate at Berléand looked good too. But, I saw what you got Ninrir and I really do want cakes. Give me the new ones too.*＞

I see, Ruka’s being pretty aggressive today, huh? “Okay then, would you like me to get you the same as Ninrir, just like last time?”

＜*The same is good, but I want to eat the ice cream you got for me last time too.*＞

“Ice cream too..... Then how about I just get you the new mango cakes, the fruit tarts, and mille crepes, and use the rest for the ice cream you want?” I asked Ruka while showing her the menu. “You can choose eight of these cups of ice cream with what you have left.”

＜*...!!!! Then for now give me all of them. You choose the rest.*＞

She can still get two more after trying all the flavors, huh? She said I can choose, so it's got to be the standard vanilla and chocolate here, right? This is it for Ruka's portion.

"Next is....."

＜Of course, it's us!＞

＜Yep! Us!＞

Sure, sure, the liquor lover's combo. Got it.

＜The stuff you chose for us last time was all great. Even though they're all whiskey, it's honestly impressive how often I was reminded how different they are. The alcohol from your world is really special, sonny.＞

＜Really. It makes me wonder what I've even been drinking this entire time. Now that I've tasted the good stuff, I can't even work up the will to bother with the others.＞

These two really are hooked on their whiskey. Well, the booze in this world would pretty much all be categorized under ale, after all. And the ale would probably be too weak for these two, too.

"So, what do you want?"

＜That's the problem, isn't it? It's hard to dismiss the stuff from before, no? But I also have the feeling of wanting to come across new flavors...＞

＜Right? Right? It's so hard to decide.＞

Looks like the two of them are really having a tough time of it.

＜I really think we should not cut out the world's best whiskey.＞

＜I agree with that one. And I really want that well-rounded whiskey in a bottle, too.＞

＜That one? That was good, too... Truly, it is hard to go without. Then let us make sure to grab those two.＞

So they want the world's best whiskey and... the "well-rounded whiskey in a bottle" would be that single malt whisky from the Japanese maker, right?

＜Hey Blacksmithing God, wouldn't it be fine to use the rest for new ones?

Finding new good ones is important.＞

＜*True. Hm, then let's do just that, War God.*＞

"Then I'll just use the rest to get new varieties?"

＜*Indeed.*＞

＜*Yeah.*＞

Something the two of them would appreciate..... How about this one? Even though I don't drink whiskey, I've actually heard of this one. It's described as the peak of single malt whiskeys, too. Let's see... looks like it's an unblended whiskey aged in a sherry cask for at least 12 years, and it has a fruity bouquet.

"It's a little expensive, but how about this one? I'm not too knowledgeable on whiskey, but I've heard of this one already. Also, it uses the words, "highest peak," in the description."

＜＜*Highest peak.....*＞＞

＜*Okay, go with that one.*＞

＜*Yep. That.*＞

Okay, that's decided. After that..... Oh, how about this? According to its description, it uses winter wheat instead of rye, for a more mellow flavor. "I don't think you've tried this one either, how about it?"

＜*It's not in my memory. How about you, War God?*＞

＜*I don't remember it either. Wouldn't it be fine to get?*＞

So this is in too. They can go for one more, huh? Oh, how about this one? The description says its origin story was a coincidence born of being hit by a massive cold wave. The price is just perfect too.

"For the last one, how about this? I don't think you two have tried this one either."

＜*Yeah, I haven't seen it.*＞

＜*Indeed. Neither have I. Then why not do it?*＞

Then that's the last one. All that's left is to line them up on the usual

cardboard altars.....

“Everyone, please take it.”

The items disappeared from on top of the cardboard altars, and I could hear the gods cheer. *Now I just need to ask about that.*

“Excuse me, I have something I want to ask you all.”

.....Huh? There’s no response.

“Uhhmmm, could I please ask you all something?”

.....Whaaaat? So they just left after getting all their stuff? That’s just... wow.

“Excuse me, hey!!”

＜Whoops. Sorry, sorry. I was just so excited about the alcohol.＞

＜Yeah, me too.＞

Wait, it’s just Hephaestos and Vahagn? What about the goddesses?

＜If you want them, they beat a quick retreat, carrying all their stuff in their arms, you know?＞

.....Heeeyyyyyyyy...

＜What did you want to ask?＞

Okay, let’s just leave those useless goddesses for now, and just ask Hephaestos and Vahagn. “Ah, you know how we’re heading for the dungeon in Aveling now? So I wanted to ask you for information about it.”

＜Ohh, that’s what you wanted. Then you’d be the person to ask, right War God?＞

＜Yeah. Aveling’s dungeon.....＞

According to Vahagn, Aveling’s dungeon was currently twenty-seven floors. From what he said, unlike Dolan’s dungeon, there were no field-type floors; it was a classic dungeon enclosed on all sides. Apparently it was cleared once around 200 years ago, but since then, progress hasn’t been looking good.

＜It’s a little easier than Dolan’s dungeon, and there’s a lot of drops and

treasure chests that turn up good magic items, but that place has a lot of those floors, you know?＞

What do you mean, saying ‘those floors’ all suggestively?

＜Ahh, that? That seems like a right pain to fight.＞

Hey, I’ve been asking what you mean already.

＜We’re talking about the undead. From my memory, Aveling’s dungeon should have three floors full of undead before you reach the lowest level.＞

Ghh..... Undead?

＜Physical attacks don’t work on the undead, and even magic doesn’t have much effect unless you use Fire magic with high attack power, or Holy magic.＞

Whaaaaat? Then what am I even supposed to do about that? I don’t think Fel has Holy magic; he has Divine magic, but that’s probably different.

＜Yeah, it’s different. For Holy magic, only those born with the talent have it, like saints or heroes summoned from another world. Other than that, at best, holy knights would have it. Those who can use Holy magic are invincible to the undead.＞

I-I see. Then for us, our only choice would be to use powerful Fire magic?

＜You iiidiot. Just try using Fire magic that powerful in a dungeon passage. You’ll light yourself on fire too.＞

Ghh, true.

＜So the method humans use now is to imbue their weapons by using a holy seal blessed by the church. Weapons marked by it utterly destroy the undead.＞

Ohh! A holy seal, huh? Then I’ll have to stop by the church in Aveling as soon as possible.

＜Now wait just a second. There’s a lot of problems with holy seals. First, anything marked with the seal loses its effect after about ten hits. And it’s pretty expensive to get them to mark anything, too. Those guys at the church saw the opportunity and ran with it. Their prices are high.＞

Whaaat the hell is with that? That’s why I hate religion.

“So who do those people that operate the church believe in?”

＜It’s not us. It’s some church that the humans made on their own, called the Church of Rubanov. They all say that it’s thanks to the strongest holy power of Rubanov church, but truthfully that holy seal is just something they dug up several hundred years before from a dungeon. Right, Blacksmithing God?＞

＜Indeed. It should have been a dungeon in what would now be the kingdom of Marveil. The real thing is left at the church headquarters, and what Aveling has now is just a replica. That’s why the effect is so half-assed.＞

I see. Wasn’t the Rubanov church the main religion of one of the human supremacist countries? I think it was called the Holy Kingdom of Rubanov, or something. They say that it’s the fate of all non-believers to fall to ruin, and they call all the races that believe in their own gods like the elves, dwarves, and beastmen heretics and ostracize them or something, right? What the hell is a religion like that doing in a relatively free and non-prejudiced country like this?

＜It’s exactly because it’s free. They came to your kingdom of Leonhardt to draw up sympathizers to expand their base of believers.＞

Well, that’s probably right, but I doubt they’ll be so easily accepted here. As if preaching human supremacy in this place where all sorts of races live free will work.

＜The people of the country you’re in aren’t stupid. There are precious few who would buy into their cheap sales pitch. Especially since the temples run by our believers can provide what the people need most just fine, which is healing.＞

＜Yeah. The only people who’d use that church are adventurers who need to get their weapons imbued. And they’re paying for it, too.＞

Thank goodness such a stupid religion isn’t getting any more followers. But from what I’m hearing now I really don’t want to go to that church... Just having to interact with anyone from the Rubanov church is giving me the creeps.

＜I know already. There’s no need for you to go to that place. We’re with you, after all.＞

Ohh! I always forget since the only impression you two give is that you love

alcohol, but the two of you are gods, huh?

＜You..... So, War God, what are you planning to do?＞

＜Wouldn't it all be solved if we just give this one the Holy magic skill?＞

＜No, that's no good. If we did that the creator god would definitely find out.＞

＜W-Would he?＞

＜Don't 'would he' me. The only ones with Holy magic would be saints or heroes from another world, that ilk. If you put something like that on him he'll be found out right away.＞

＜Then what should we do?＞

＜Do? Isn't this one just fine? He has the Goddesses blessings, and Perfect Defense. Isn't that enough? He won't be able to defeat the undead, but he won't die either, at least not right away.＞

＜That's no good. We need to have him beat Aveling's dungeon for him to rank up.＞

＜Mn, oh right. There was that.＞

＜Think about it, this is an investment. Just imagine, Blacksmithing God. Just how high will this guy's level be after beating Aveling's dungeon? Not only that, but after downing lots of undead?＞

＜We can hope for quite a bit... Of course the next Tenant, but we could even aim for the one after that.＞

＜There you have it.＞

.....They're kinda... saying whatever they want, though...

＜But I really don't think Holy magic is a good idea. Hmmm..... Wait a second, War God. How about this? I can just make this real quick——＞

＜Ohh! That's a great idea. We can make them easily, and since we're not giving him divine power, but just imbuing something with the power, nobody'll find out.＞

＜Gahahahaha! It's perfect, no?＞

＜Ahahahaha! It's perfect!＞

They're laughing... hey...

＜Right then, I'll just whip this up real quick.＞

I waited five minutes.

＜Right. How's this?＞

＜That looks just fine. Then I'll put in the power..... This should do it.＞

They've been shutting me out for a while now, huh...

＜Hey, otherworlder. We're going to send you something we made.＞

Right after Hephaestos said that, one of the cardboard altars I'd left out started to shine. Once that faded, there was a long, thin, silver thing there.

What's this.....? It just looked like a stamp with a long handle. *Uhhhh... It's* that, *right? What they do in the movies, when they seal a letter with wax. This is what they use to mark it. It looks just like one. But there's nothing on the stamp part.....*


THE END

＜That’s.....Oh right, we never decided on a name. Well, let’s just call it a ‘holy sealer.’ Just press the holy sealer on a weapon or whatever, and anything with that seal will exterminate the undead. It’s just like the one the church has that we talked about earlier.＞

＜It’s on a whole other level than that fake the church has. It’ll last an entire day on just one seal. You usually can’t see the seal part, but when you run your magic through it and press it, it’ll leave a holy mark imbued with magic. And unlike with that fake at the church, it won’t damage your weapons, either.＞

“I see, I see, that’s pretty awesome. Is it really okay for me to have this?”

＜We gave it to you already, it’s fine. More importantly, we went through a bit to get that to you, so do your best, got it?＞

＜Yeah. You told us not to bother you about your levels, but we gave that to you so at least get to level 40 and unlock your next Tenant.＞

Urgh..... the pressure... But with this, there’s no need to fear the undead. I feel like I can do it.

“I’ll take it gratefully. I won’t know until we actually go into Aveling’s dungeon, but I’ll do my best.”

＜Okay, that’s the spirit.＞

＜We’re expecting a lot from you.＞

＜Right then, it’s time for whiskey. War God?＞

＜You got it! We’re drinking until morning today, Blacksmithing God.＞

.....

“Whew, looks like they left. I’m so tired.”

Not only did I get to hear about Aveling’s dungeon, I even got this thing. I tried appraising it.

【Holy Sealer of the Gods】

A magic item made by the Blacksmithing God Hephaestos and the War God Vahagn. Any weapon marked with this will exterminate the undead.

It's a bit late, but isn't this really amazing, since it was made by gods? I just kinda took it... W-W-Well, I'm giving them alcohol all the time, so it's fine, right?

Yeah. Totally fine.

I'm actually hoping that there is a liquor store for the next Tenant. If there isn't, those two might riot. Sigh... I'm really feeling like I was put up to it, but at the very least I'm gonna have to try to get to level 40. I guess we should go leveling in Aveling's dungeon.

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After a late breakfast, we were all lazing around. Everyone else was having cider, and I was drinking a cafe au lait. It was the first in a long time, and it was really good. By the way, everyone wanted meat for breakfast, so I brought out some miso-fried orc bowls and tonjiru. This was the usual, but everyone ate really heavily right from the morning. I just made do with some tonjiru and a rice ball, though.

Last night, I stored the holy sealer that Hephaestos and Vahagn gave to me in my Item Box. *It'll prove really useful in Aveling's dungeon, after all. Still, for there to be a dungeon full of undead.....*

"You know, Fel, I asked the gods yesterday about Aveling's dungeon."

"Mn? Really? Then, what did they say?"

"You see....."

I told the three of them what I heard from Hephaestos and Vahagn yesterday.

"Mnn, undead, you say....."

《Ghhhk, I hate the undead. They just won't die!》 Fel and Dora-chan scrunched up their faces as far as they would go.

I guess even they're bad with the undead.

It seemed like Sui didn't know what was going on, as the slime just jiggled left and right.

Thinking about it, aren't undead just awful to deal with for anybody without

Holy magic? And most people don't have it, either. If it's a dungeon where there's just undead strutting around, it's understandable how it hasn't been conquered in 200 years, huh? From what I heard, there's a lot of decent drops and treasure chests with good magic items in them, so although I didn't know what floor the undead were in, we should still be able to make some good profits just from stopping on the floor before. But Fel and the others totally want to conquer Aveling's dungeon too, don't they?

"Hey, you guys say that, but don't you all plan to beat the dungeon in Aveling too?"

"Of course."

《That's the plan!》

《We're going down to the lowest part—.》

As I thought. "I'll ask just in case, what are you planning to do about the undead?"

"There is no plan. We will ignore them and pass through. If there are too many and that becomes impossible, we will just use high-powered Fire magic."

《Yep, that.》

《Sui doesn't really know, but why not just go pew-pew and beat them?》

So they just don't have one, basically? Sui might be able to melt away zombies and skeletons completely with its Acid Bullet, but it'll probably be useless against wraiths.

"Fel, Dora-chan, just like I told you, Aveling's dungeon is always going to be a maze surrounded by walls. If you use Fire magic in there, we'll get caught in it too."

"Mrr, I can just defend against it with a barrier."

《Yeah, we can just do that.》

Sure, that seems like it might work. But there's an even easier method. If what I'm thinking about works, then we should be able to turn the undead floors into a treasure trove of drop items and treasure chests.

“To tell you the truth, I got something from the Blacksmithing God Hephaestos and the War God Vahagn yesterday. It’s this.....”

I revealed the holy sealer from my Item Box, and I relayed to them what was explained to me by Hephaestos and Vahagn yesterday.

“I see. So if you let magic flow into that holy sealer or whatever and press it on a weapon, it will become able to exterminate undead? As expected of something made by the gods themselves.”

《That’s awesome, but pretty much only humans fight with weapons, you know?》

Yep, that’s exactly right. But.....

“No, the two of them said, ‘it can be a weapon or whatever, just press it.’ So that must mean it’s not limited to weapons... at least, I think so.”

“Not limited to weapons? So what’re you gonna use it on?”

Fuhahahaha! That’s where my genius comes in!

“All of you.”

《Us?》

“.....Hm, I see. If you apply the seal to us directly, then as long as we attack, the undead will perish.”

“Exactly. You got it right in one, Fel. If I just stamp this on you three, you’ll all be able to easily exterminate the undead, I’m pretty sure.”

《I get it! So that’s how it is!》

Well, it’s just a feeling, though. And there’s no way to test it here, either. But I think it’s possible. After all, it was made by the gods themselves.

“There’s no way to test it unless there’s any undead around, but the gods themselves made this, so it should be fine. I think it’s worth testing when we get to the dungeon in Aveling. If it works like I think it will, the undead floors’ll be no problem. In fact, since the undead floors have basically been untouched, all the drops and chests will be ours for the taking.”

“Hm, how interesting.”

《So we can just put down undead left and right? That sounds great.》

《Sui will beat lots too—.》

So it was decided that we would test that theory the first chance we got.

“I am looking forward to the dungeon more and more.”

《Yeah. Let’s blast ’em to smithereens and beat that dungeon.》

《The dungeon will be so fun~.》

Looks like everyone’s raring to go even harder, but I guess that’s fine. I need to level some too, after all. But there’s still stuff to do, so it’s not like we’ll be able to go in right away.

“We won’t be able to go in right away even when we get to Aveling, you know? First, we need to go to the Adventurer’s guild, check if there’s a dungeon map, and find out what kind of monsters there are. I never got to ask the gods about that, after all. Also, there’s the food that we’ll be eating in there too. This time I made a little extra for the stuff we’re going to eat on the road, but if there isn’t much left when we get to Aveling, I’ll have to make some more. Also, I want to stop by a weapon shop too.”

“Mmrrr, I would prefer us to go in earlier.”

“I’ll do my best on that front.”

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After having lunch, we went to the Adventurer’s guild. Since we were leaving town tomorrow, I went to say goodbye. When I got to the counter, it took almost no time at all for Marcus to come over.

“Sorry for being away last time. I was just about to send someone to get you.”

It seemed that the guild employee that dealt with me last time totally forgot to hand me my new guild card. Oh right, I was going to be promoted to S-rank. I forgot, too.

“We’ve got to exchange the A-rank guild card you have for this S-rank card.”

I handed over the A-rank guild card to Marcus, and took the S-rank card. It looked just as golden as the A-rank card, but there was a huge “S” on it instead.

“Now you’re an S-ranked adventurer. Keep doing your best for the Adventurer’s guild from now on!”

Those expectations are real heavy, Marcus.

“So, what did you want?”

“Uh, we’re planning to leave early tomorrow, so I just came to say goodbye.”

“Already? You can feel free to stay longer, you know. It’s great for us that a high-ranking adventurer is in town.” Marcus added, “You cleaned up that red dragon incident right away, too,” in a small voice.

This town had great seafood and a nice view, so personally, I’d be okay with staying a while longer, but Fel and the others had been even more excited about the dungeon ever since they’d heard about the holy sealer. If I kept them waiting any longer, they might just drag me by the neck and take me there by force.

“Well, it looks like Fel and the others want to hurry to the dungeon.....”

They already booed at an extension of just three days, too.

“Oh right, you’re planning on going to Aveling after this. I already told the guildmaster at Aveling about that, so make sure to go to the Adventurer’s guild first when you get there.”

Ohh, you talked to them already? It’s nice that you’re so quick.

“I hear that the boss of Aveling’s dungeon is a hydra, but that shouldn’t be a problem for you guys. If you manage to clear it, that’ll be the first in 200 years. Do your best!”

“I see, a hydra, huh? Interesting.”

Oh no, Fel’s motivation meter is rising even higher.

《A hydra, huh? I’ve heard of them, but I haven’t seen one yet. I’m looking forward to it!》

《Are hydras strong~? But Sui will try and beat it—.》

Neither Dora-chan nor Sui lost to Fel in terms of motivation.

Still, a hydra huh? Wasn’t that like a snake with nine heads or something? And

only one of those heads contains the monster's immortality, so if you don't cut that one off, the others will all just keep regenerating, if I'm remembering the story correctly. W-What do we do about that? If there's nine, we won't know which one is immortal. If we don't get real lucky and hit the immortal head right away, the battle will probably go on forever.

W-Well, I guess there's no point in thinking so far ahead right now. I have no idea what'll happen while we're making our way down there, either.

"I don't know if we'll be able to conquer it, but I'll do my best. It was short, Marcus, but thank you for taking care of me."

"Sure thing. Come back, you hear? And take care!"

With our goodbyes done, we left the Adventurer's guild.

"We are leaving early in the morning. I want to go to the dungeon quickly."

"I know already. We're leaving first thing in the morning."

Chapter 2: The Dungeon City of Aveling

The next morning, we had an early breakfast, returned the key to the Merchant's guild, and left Berléand.

By the way, breakfast was a meat soboro bowl, with the soy-marinated ground meat on top of a bed of finely cut lettuce along with a soft-boiled egg. Everyone ate heartily even though it was the morning, just as usual (I was a little more moderate, myself). Still, we were going on a trip, so if we didn't eat enough, it'd be easy to fall to exhaustion midway.

I'd already said my goodbyes to Marcus the day before, so we just left town right after the Merchant's guild and kept going. Fel must have been really burning for that dungeon since he was moving faster than usual. And of course, no one would come to challenge this group of veritable monsters, so we met no actual wild monsters during our journey.

"For something to challenge us, it'd have to be something on the level of that troll we met before we entered the last town. Those things are huge, but their heads are empty," was Dora-chan's explanation.

Oh yeah, there was a troll before we got into Berléand, wasn't there? They always end up killing lots of monsters even when I'm not paying attention, after all. I'm really grateful for the edible ones, but I keep forgetting the ones we can't eat. Honestly, they're of no use to us in that case..... I'll still totally sell them off for money, though. Yeah, let's make a sale once we get to Aveling.

Since Fel was moving so fast, we made good time. We passed several merchant caravans on our way there. The trip went so well that, on our fifth day since leaving Berléand, we could see the walls of Aveling in the distance.

"Looks like that is the dungeon city."

"Yeah. Looks like it's Aveling. As one might expect, it looks real lively."

There was a long line to pass through the gates and into town. *Oh yeah, Dolan was like that too, wasn't it? I guess that's just a dungeon city for you. That just*

means that if there's a dungeon, a city will thrive, huh?

"Looks like it'll take a while to get in like that... let's hurry and line up."

"Indeed."

We hurried up and got in the line at the end.

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"Whew... finally, we're in."

It took over an hour to get inside. Sui was fine since it was just sleeping in my bag, but it took a lot of effort to hold Fel and Dora-chan back. It only took them a few minutes to start saying that jumping over the wall would be faster... they were awful.

"This is taking too long. I have lost count of how many times I could have just jumped over this wall."

《Me too. I could just fly over and it'd be done.》

...Both of them said, scrunching their faces in frustration.

"You'll just be causing trouble by doing that. In the worst case, we won't be allowed into town, you know?"

Just going in like that was probably a crime. And they'd probably be really strict about that too.

"Hm. When you put it that way, I feel like I can stand it somehow, if it means we would be unable to enter the dungeon otherwise."

《Right, right. Being banned from here after coming all this way for the dungeon wouldn't be funny.》

Even though it took us so long to go through the line, as soon as it was our turn, we passed through quickly. *The power of the golden guild card really is amazing.*

Thanks to that, Fel and the others got let in easily as my companions, too. When I showed the soldiers at the gate my S-ranked guild card, never mind a double take, they did a *triple take*.

It's true that, no matter how you slice it, I don't look like an S-ranked

adventurer, though. I do think the triple take was bordering on rude, however.

After all that, we managed to get into Aveling, and of course our first destination was the Adventurer's guild. After hanging a left on the street right on the other side of the gate, I could see a large building: that was the Adventurer's guild.

It sure is an Adventurer's guild for a dungeon city. It's huge. It might be even bigger than the one in Dolan. Also, it looks new, like it was just finished recently.

When I showed my guild card to a receptionist, she left after saying, "Please wait." And she came back with.....

"Yo, so you're Mukohda? I heard about you from Marcus over in Berléand. I'm the guildmaster for the Adventurer's guild here in Aveling. You can call me Nadiya. Pleased to meet you."

I stared, wide-eyed, up at the girl who appeared. Nadiya, who looked to be in her mid-30's, had long, completely red hair, swarthy skin, and was muscular. She looked like a healthy-type beauty, but she was tall enough for me to have to look up at her.

.....H-Huge! Sh-She's definitely at least two meters tall. Over 2m-tall beauties sure have a sort of power to them.

"Gahhahaha! You're surprised at how big I am, aren't you? All the guys who meet me are like that. Here, we can't talk unless you come to, so shape up."

THWAP

Nadiya slapped me on the back.

It hurts...

"I've got a lot to talk to you about, so we're going to my room." Dragged along by Nadiya, we headed for the guildmaster's room. Fel and the others followed after me.

Hey, Fel and Dora-chan, why aren't you helping your master?

When we entered the guildmaster's room, Nadiya and I sat down with a table in between us.

“So you really do have a Fenrir as a familiar. I’d heard about it, but to be honest, I only half-believed it until it was staring me right in my face.”

Well, I totally get that. I end up forgetting since we’re always together, but to the world, he’s a legendary magic beast, isn’t he?

“I’ve heard from Marcus already, but is it true that you’ll take on high-ranking quests that’ve been sitting for a while?”

“Yes, kind of.....”

“Unfortunately, we’re a dungeon city, so we’re bursting at the seams with adventurers. That’s why we don’t have any requests for you at the moment.”

True, there’s a lot of adventurers around for the dungeon. So there probably wouldn’t be any high-ranking quests sitting around if the guild just picks out some adventurers to do it. Dolan was the same way too, wasn’t it?

“In the first place, you’re here for the dungeon, aren’t you? When are you going in?”

“Uhhh, we’re planning to go in once I’m finished preparing.”

“I see. I heard you beat Dolan’s dungeon already. This one hasn’t been beaten in 200 years either, so I’m expecting a lot outta you.”

That’d be nice. Oh wait, I have to ask her about the dungeon.

“Excuse me, but this will be my first time going into the dungeon here, so I’d like to ask about it.....”

“Oh, sure. The dungeon here has 27 floors. Right now, I hear that the team that’s furthest ahead is on the 17th.”

The 17th floor? That feels kinda shallow. Or rather, I would have expected them to be a bit lower since the dungeon’s been cleared once already.

“You just thought that we’re not as far as you expected, didn’t you? It’s true though, so there’s nothing to be done about it. You know that there’s undead floors in this dungeon too, right?”

“Yes, I’ve heard of it.”

“One of those floors is on the 18th. And no matter what anyone says, the

undead are hard to deal with. So people stop on the 17th floor and don't try to go further."

According to Nadiya, the floors in Aveling's dungeon were arranged as follows:

【Floors 1~3】Big rats and giant bats. These are full of rats and bats that even new adventurers can beat.

【Floors 4~8】Goblins, kobolds. When you get to the lower end of these floors, higher evolutions appear, but apparently, no kings have shown themselves yet.

【Floor 9】Undead floor. There are zombies and skeletons around. The boss room is three skeleton warriors, which are a higher form of skeletons. It's been confirmed that sometimes an even higher form appears.

【Floors 10~17】Insect zone. The lower down you go, the bigger the bugs and their swarms get. Not only that, but there are poisonous ones mixed in.

【Floor 18】Undead floor. This floor spawns zombies, the zombie's higher form, ghouls (apparently ghouls are faster), skeletons, skeleton warriors, skeleton mages, and wraiths. The boss room is once again higher forms of skeletons: five skeleton knights. It's been confirmed that sometimes an even higher form appears.

【Floors 19~25】Reptile zone. Just as its name suggests, there are lots of reptiles, from snakes to lizards to turtles. Just like the insect zone, going further down, they'll get bigger and more numerous, and there will be venomous forms mixed in. It seems the last two floors of this section were all venomous monsters.

【Floor 26】Undead floor. Ghouls, mummies (*moving mummies, right?*), skeleton warriors, skeleton mages, skeleton knights, wraiths, and liches (higher forms of wraiths that can use magic, apparently) have been confirmed on this floor. It's expected that the boss room contains their higher forms.

【Floor 27】The dungeon boss, a hydra.

"There're traps too starting from the 10th floor, so be careful."

From what I'm hearing, those undead floors seem really bad..... I get the 9th

floor, but the 18th and 26th floors seem really awful. Even though undead are already almost immune to attacks, there are even higher forms that appear. I totally get why no one wants to go to them. And since it's just speculation that higher forms come out on the 26th-floor boss room, we have no idea what kind of ridiculous thing might appear.

According to Nadiya, for anything past the 23rd floor, they only had the testimonies of the adventurers that beat it 200 years ago for reference, and truthfully those weren't very clear, it seemed.

"We know that the 18th floor is an undead floor, so even high-ranking adventurers don't go further than the 17th," said Nadiya, bitterly.

From what she said, there was plenty of profit to be made on floors 17 and above, so it was understandable why nobody would force themselves into the 18th floor, since it would all be a waste if you died. It looked like most adventurers were on the 8th floor, or on the 10-12th floors. Apparently, C-ranked adventurers and above could bust through the 9th floor. And for those adventurers who weren't confident about that, they would just stop at the 8th. It seemed that even just going to the 8th floor was pretty good for profit.

The first thought I had upon hearing of this dungeon was that we'd need to be even more careful in our preparations to dive than in Dolan. After all, with the types of monsters we'd find, there was no way to expect edible meat to drop. *Let's prepare lots of food.*

When I asked after a map, I was told that there were pretty accurate maps down to the 12th floor, and those were being sold down at the counter of the Adventurer's guild, and at the branch that was near the dungeon entrance.

Well, let's leave aside whether I actually want a map or not; right now, I need to get a place to sleep. It seemed like all my familiars were raring to go into the dungeon tomorrow, but personally, I wanted to spend at least a full day preparing food. So I was thinking of going in the day after tomorrow. Since that was the case, though, renting a house might be a waste. I'd be fine renting a house after we get back from the dungeon, but before we go in, it would probably be better to stay at an inn.

"Excuse me: is there an inn here that you'd recommend where I can stay with

my familiars?”

“If that’s what you want, just stay at the guild-operated inn right next door. We set it up to accommodate adventurers last year when we were renovating the place. There’s rooms for high-ranking adventurers like you, too, along with rooms you can stay in with familiars. It’s a little expensive, but it’s still cheaper than staying anywhere else that’ll offer you the same room.”

Ohh, is that so? Right, let’s go with that. “Then please, I’ll take you up on your offer.”

“I see. Okay then, I’ll take you there myself.”

“What? You don’t have to do all that by yourself, guildmaster. I can go by myself.”

“What’re you saying? I’m expecting a lot outta you, so I can do this at the very least. Follow me.”

Once again, I was dragged along by Nadiya.

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When we arrived at the Adventurer’s guild-operated inn next door, the receptionist was surprised, seeing Nadiya. I totally got it though — I mean, she was the guildmaster.

“I brought a promising S-ranked adventurer with me.”

You know you can afford to be a little more detailed, Nadiya.

For the moment, I greeted the receptionist with a “Pleased to meet you,” and asked her about a room where I could stay with my familiars. It was 3 gold a day. I paid for the two days we’d take until we went to the dungeon.

There was still something else I needed to ask Nadiya. When I asked her where I could get myself a spear, she recommended a store that was across the street diagonally from the Adventurer’s guild.

“That place stocks stuff for everyone from beginners to experts, so I recommend it. The owner’s a little gruff, though. Gahhaha!” said Nadiya, laughing grandly, as she returned to the Adventurer’s guild.

“I’ll show you to your room.” The room the employee led me to was on the first floor, since I’d be staying with my familiars. It was a spacious room, definitely worth the 3 gold. The room was plenty big enough for Fel and the others. Not only that, but since it was on the first floor, I could use my magic stove. That stove was pretty damn heavy, so if we were on the 2nd floor and above, I wouldn’t be able to bring it out unless the floors were particularly sturdy. The room even had its own bath and toilet.

I took a look at the bath, and of course there was no way it would be as big as the huge ones in the mansions I rented. In fact, it was slightly smaller than the one I had. But still, it was amazing that there even was a private bath. In the end, Dora-chan, Sui, and I would be the only ones to use it, anyway, and it might be a little cramped, but that could just be solved by going in separately, so it wasn’t a problem.

Now then, first, to the weapons shop.....

“I am hungry.”

《Me too.》

《Sui too.》

It took a while to get into town, so it’s actually past time for lunch, isn’t it? I guess we should eat first.

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For lunch, we had beef bowls made using wyvern meat. Everyone ate with gusto.

Now then, everyone’s eaten, so let’s go to the weapons shop. I need to get an easy-to-use one for beginners. If it’s really that straightforward, then I can use it as-is, or I could even get Sui to make one out of mithril.

The weapons shop was really close to the inn, so I just left my familiars in the room and went by myself. When I entered, I saw a sour-looking old dwarf with a scruffy beard.

This one looks real stubborn, too. “Uhm, excuse me.....”

“What is it?”

“Would you happen to have a spear that’s easy to use, even for beginners?”

“An easy-to-use spear for beginners?” The old dwarf looked me up and down. “You really are a beginner, aren’t you? Well, you’re way better than an idiot that tries to get something that doesn’t suit them. Okay, I’ll pick one for you. Just wait a second,” said the dwarf, as he moved towards where the spears were kept.

And he picked up.....

“This’d be it. It’s something my apprentice made, but it’s a pretty good price, and not that bad a make.”

The spear he handed me was a simple-looking one, and had a handle made of wood, while the straight, sharp metal tip just screamed, “this is a spear.” It was neither too light nor too heavy, and it did seem like it’d be perfect for a beginner. The price was 1 gold. From my memory, the short sword I bought when I first signed up at the Adventurer’s guild was 8 silver, so it wasn’t overly expensive or anything.

“But remember, you have to maintain it properly. Iron weapons need to be maintained regularly or they dull right away. This weapon is something you’ll be betting your life on. Make sure you remember this.”

True, leaving monster blood and stuff on iron will rust it. Wait, then what about mithril? I haven’t bothered doing any maintenance on the mithril short sword that Sui made for me. Its sharpness hasn’t changed at all, though.....

“By the way, what about ones made out of mithril?”

“Mithril? Mithril’s special. Even if you don’t maintain those, they won’t change. Mithril’s got real high affinity with magic, after all. The rarity and special effects of mithril are exactly why stuff made out of it is so expensive.”

*I see. Then having Sui make a spear out of mithril would probably be for the best, huh? I’m so glad I st-...*ahem*, “picked up” all the mithril that was on the ground at that mine.*

I had the old dwarf show me the mithril weapons he had on his shelves, but even the cheapest short sword was 230 gold.

“Well, you do your best so you can afford something like this.”

I mean I can, easily, but it’s not like I have to buy mithril weapons at a store.

While apologizing to the store owner in my heart, I paid him the 1 gold and left the store. Then I went back to the inn and immediately had Sui make a mithril spear for me.

“Sui, I have something to ask you. Can you make a spear just like this one?”

I showed Sui the spear I’d just bought.

《Okay—. You know, Sui’s getting really used to making things, so Sui can probably be faster now—.》

“Right then, please.” I handed the spear and mithril ore over to Sui.

Then, just like Sui claimed, it finished faster than ever before. It only took around ten minutes.

《It’s done—.》

“That really was fast. So you can make something like this in such a short time... That’s awesome, Sui!”

Sui made a spear that was so amazing, I could fall in love with it. “Thanks, Sui,” I said, and Sui bounced around happily.

I tried appraising the spear Sui made for me.

【Mithril Spear+】

Created by Sui. A well-made mithril spear. Amazingly sharp.

Ohhh, nice, Sui. It has a plus on it, just like the short sword. And it even says that it’s amazingly sharp.

Now I had a mithril spear on top of my mithril short sword. I just had to prepare food for the dungeon tomorrow, and we would be able to go to the dungeon the day after.

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After breakfast today, I left Fel and the others behind and went to the area where they sold foodstuffs, which was not far from the inn. I went around several bakeries and stocked up on black bread. I still had some left from when I bought them in Dolan, but it wouldn't be enough.

I peeked into other stores too, but there wasn't really anything I wanted. I went straight back to the inn, and then started diligently cooking food for our dungeon trip. I still had some premade food in stock, but with just what I had, I wouldn't feel comfortable.

Given everyone's preferences, especially for meat.....

And so, I focused on meat dishes. First was miso-cooked orc and bloody horn-bull. My stock had dwindled quite a bit, so I added more. All that really amounted to was marinating and cooking, but the result was excellent with rice and just delicious overall. This time, I also made it with golden-backed bull meat.

Then, I made ginger-fried orc meat, as well as beef bowls using wyvern and bloody horn-bull meat. Along with the miso-marinated meats, this was basically a staple in our menu now. It was all simple to make, but delicious, and everyone liked it.

I wonder if it could be described as a taste that never gets old, one that a person could eat endlessly?

Even if I made a lot, it'd still get used one way or another, so I made even more this time. I used golden-backed bull for this recipe too, just like with the miso-cooked meats.

After that, I made a stamina stir-fry using golden-backed bull meat, as well as two kinds of vegetable stir-fry using bloody horn-bull and orc meat. Of course, for flavoring, I used the all-powerful, all-purpose yakiniku sauce. This time I went with a salt flavor.

From there, I moved on to beef stew and hashed-beef rice using bloody horn-bull. Everyone always liked beef stew, and it worked well with bread, so I figured it would be better to prepare some as well. As for the hashed-beef rice, it was a simple dish that had gone over well before, so I made it again.

Most of the ground meat dishes were used up during our trip here, so I started cooking more. I made mixed minced meat with bloody horn-bull and orc meat, and used that for Hamburg steaks, meat soboro, and Bolognese. I considered keema curry as well, but given the enclosed space of the dungeon, I figured that the smell of curry would be horrible in a lot of ways, so I nixed that idea. So what I made instead was sweet and spicy Chinese-style miso stir-fry using ground meat. I added in a little water mixed with potato starch to thicken it up, too. It'd even go well as a rice bowl.

I also made teriyaki cockatrice, sautéed cockatrice with honey mustard, and poultry soboro after mincing down some more of the cockatrice meat.

"Whew~. What should I do next....." *I made a huge amount of fried stuff like karaage before the trip, so I should have enough of that. I also have enough stewed pork and tonjiru left, and I steamed extra rice, so I'm good on that front.*

"And we still have quite a lot of seafood that I cooked left." I had made just as much fried seafood as karaage and stuff before leaving Berléand, so there was still quite a bit left. And the stocks of tempura were fine, too. I even still had a lot of clam chowder. Fel and the others would eat it if I put it out, but they wouldn't ask for more. According to them, it wouldn't fill them up no matter how much they ate, even though I made sure there was a lot of stuff in it.

Well, leaving that aside, what should I make..... I made roast beef rice bowls for lunch, and that was it, so maybe I should cook more?

So I made roast beef using golden-backed bull meat, as well as roast pork with orc meat. With these, we could eat them as-is or even in a sandwich.

"So next, personally, I'd want more seafood..... Ah! What about seasoned rice?"

Although it seems like the three of them, especially Fel, would complain that it wasn't enough. This'd be basically just for me, because I want it, but that's fine once in a while, right?

I decided to make two kinds of seasoned rice. One with sea bream, and one with octopus. Still, it was me making it, so it was really simple.

I opened my Online Supermarket and bought raw ginger, granulated dashi,

and mentsuyu. Then, I washed some rice before soaking it in water...

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For the sea bream rice, first, season the bream with salt before cooking thoroughly. For the octopus rice, slice boiled octopus legs to around 3mm thickness, and cut the raw ginger into small strips.

Then, take the washed rice and put it in with the mentsuyu and granulated seaweed dashi and mix lightly.

After that step, for the sea bream rice, just steam the rice with the sea bream laid on top, and it's done. As for the octopus rice, mix the octopus and the stripped ginger in with the rice and steam that to finish.

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Mentsuyu's pretty all-purpose as far as Japanese cooking is concerned. If you're ever unsure of how to flavor something, just adding mentsuyu will be fine in most cases, I think. After all, there's dashi inside, and that's already delicious. Using white dashi to make seasoned rice is also a good idea.

Yep, I'm starting to want it. Let's eat this for dinner. But, if it's just this, Fel and the others might complain. Let's make a meuniere too; it's simple, after all.

I just coated the seafood in flour and cooked it in butter, making salmon, aspidochelone, and a shellfish meuniere using yellow scallops. And just by adding onion-flavored steak sauce on top, that completed a super easy Japanese-style meuniere.

"Now then, it's just about time for dinner, so let's go eat."

I ate both kinds of seasoned rice, and both were delicious. Fel also ate the rice, but was more interested in the meuniere, and kept eating that instead.

Unexpectedly, the octopus seasoned rice really caught Dora-chan's attention. "The texture is really interesting," he claimed, asking for more. Of course, he chowed down on the meuniere, too.

Sui said both types of seasoned rice were delicious.

Yeah, yeah, fish are awesome, right?

After finishing what I felt to be a very satisfying dinner, there was still one job left to do.

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After taking a bath with Dora-chan and Sui, I moved to a corner of the room to do my usual work.

By the way, the rest of them were all already asleep. After all, we'd be entering the dungeon tomorrow.

"Are you all there?" With Fel and the others asleep, I naturally slipped into a quieter tone of voice.

＜We were waiting!＞

＜You kept us waiting~.＞

＜Man that was a long wait!＞

＜.....Cake and ice cream.＞

＜Yo, you're here!＞

＜You sure kept us waiting!＞

I heard the god's voices. "Uhh, well, as you can see, tomorrow we will be entering a dungeon. And so, with the last time we went into a dungeon as reference, please place your orders for next week as well."

There was no doubt we'd be spending more than a week in the dungeon, after all. And with that being the case, I decided to just do next week's share now, as well.

＜W-Wait, what?!! D-D-Does that mean, we get 2 gold today?!!＞

This voice, is it Ninrir, the divine disappointment?

"That would be so, yes."

＜Yeessss!!! Alright!!!＞

The other gods cheered, too.

I'd rather you didn't get so excited. This is just next week's share, too. It's not like you're getting more or anything.

＜Okay! I'm first! Show me Fumiya's cakes immediately!! 2 gold worth of them!＞

Fine, fine, stop yelling just because you're excited. You're a goddess, at least kind of.

The first up is Ninrir, the divine disappointment, huh?

"With 2 gold, there's quite a lot you can buy..... That's right, how about this? It's pretty big, though," I said, showing her a rectangular cake made for a lot of people with a copious amount of fruit on top. And the price was 9 silver.

Maybe it really is too big, though?

＜Muhoo! Wonderful! Isn't that just dandy! It looks so good! Okay, I will take that one!!＞

"Wha-r-really? It's pretty, no, really big....." I'd meant it to be just a little joke, but Ninrir, that disappointment, took it seriously.

＜Indeed. It shall be fine. I will take that one!＞

I-If you're sure, I'll buy it. I put the huge cake into the cart.

"What else? I don't think you've tried these yet....." I said, showing her the variety packs meant for gifts.

＜Mm, this is...!! W-Why it's d-dorayaki!!!!＞

"Yes, seems that way."

＜W-Why didn't you tell me sooner?!＞

Hey, don't put that on me. You're the one that's been going on and on about cakes.

"Actually, are you really okay with dorayaki? How many do you want?"

＜I want ten!＞

Sure, sure, ten. "There's also dorayaki that uses ogura-an-style red bean paste and has chestnuts, and one that uses sweet potato paste instead....."

＜What?!! Give me 10 each of those too!!＞

Fine, fine, ten each. "What else? There's castellas too."

＜Castellas!! Of course I want castellas!＞

And one castella. “After that..... ah, how about this? They’re cakes with a little bit of alcohol in them, and they’re individually wrapped, so there’s lots of different flavors,” I said, showing her the pack of scotch cakes.

＜Ohhh! It’s nice that there’s a lot of them with a variety of flavors. Okay, I’ll take it.＞

Aaand the twenty-piece scotch cake set. “With what you have left..... how about this? It’s a type of pastry called a pie, and it’s crisp and delicious.”

＜Crisp, you say? Looks good. I’ll take it.＞

Lastly, I added a pack of pies to the cart. “Next is Lady Kisharle, right?”

＜Yes, it’s me~. 2 gold, huh? Ufufufufufufu.＞

S-Scary...

＜The facial lotion and cream you gave me last time were really good. Just like you said, my skin is in really nice condition! So I’d like some more. I definitely don’t want to run out.＞

So she wants to build up a stock. My sister did the same.

＜Also, is there a... do you call it “face-washing foam?” in the same series? I’d like it if there is. And I want facial masks, too. Using those moistens up my skin really nicely~.＞

So the facial lotion and cream from before, as well as a face-washing foam from the same series, and facial masks, too? Let’s see.....

I added the facial lotion, cream, and face-washing foam into the cart. *Oh, there’re facial mask packs from the same series too.*

“About the facial masks, there’s a pack of them from the same series. Would that be okay?”

＜Oh, from the same series? Then, please.＞

Sure, sure. With that, there’s about 5 silver left, huh? “There’s 5 silver left, what else would you like?”

＜Let’s see, what would you recommend?＞

You really shouldn't be asking me questions about beauty products..... Oh right, my sister used some massage cream, didn't she? Let's see..... oh, this might be good.

"How about some massage cream? It's really simple to use, too." Its product description said that the massage cream was a gel that didn't require wiping off. "It seems that you use this gel-state massage cream and massage it into your skin up and down for about a minute. It says that you don't need to wipe it off. As for its effects, it looks like it activates upon being massaged in, and helps your skin work better, allowing it to maintain its moisture and suppleness much better."

＜Moisture and suppleness..... yes, that sounds nice. Please, give it to me.＞

Beauty products really are expensive. Just getting roughly a complete set puts you to 2 gold immediately. Sis, just how much did you spend each month? Just thinking about it is scary.

"Next is Agni, right?"

＜Yeah! Like usual, I want beer! The beer you gave me last time in the box, that was great. I want another box full of that. Also, the golden one was good too, so another case of that. And that one with the black circle drawn on it, I liked that flavor so give me a case of that too.＞

The "box" from last time? That's the case of premium beer from S-company, right? Yeah, yeah, that was good. It's a little more expensive than the others, but I like that beer a lot. And for the gold beer, that'd be Y-bisu beer, I think. I've been sending her a lot of that lately. And, black circle... that'd be the black label beer that S-company's had for a while, right? Huh, she's really got the staples down, doesn't she? Last time I figured I'd just be sending her premium and black beer, so I sent her S-company's black label beer for the first time.

So this is what fits Agni's tastes. Well, given how long it's been on sale, that just means a lot of people enjoy it, so I guess it's good taste in a sense. Right, let's get these cases of S-company's premium and black label beer, and Y-bisu beer.

"What else?"

＜I'll leave the rest to you. Give me some snacks this time, too.＞

So the rest is up to me, along with snacks. So, what should I do then? I guess I'll make it stuff I haven't given her before. Might be nice to put in some low-malt beer, too. What should I get..... Oh, haven't sent this one yet. S-company's beer that uses 100% malt because they wanted to concentrate on flavor. Let's get a six-pack of this. Then, let's get some low-malt beers. What would be good..... right, I've decided.

I chose a six-pack of K-company's most popular low-malt beer, a six-pack of S-company's coolers that come in distinctive blue cans, a six-pack of K-company's coolers, known for how smoothly it slides down your throat, and a six-pack of A company's coolers, famous for its clear taste. I used the rest for snacks, and got her mostly things that went well with beer, like yakitori and fried foods.

"Next is Miss Ruka, right?"

＜.....I want cake and ice cream. But we get 2 gold today, so food, too.＞

Sure, sure — cake, ice cream, and food it is. "Then let's start with cake. What would you like?"

＜Ninrir's is too big. I want lots of flavors.＞

I see, a variety of flavors, huh? If that's the case.....

"If you want a variety of flavors, then how about having every one of these shortcakes?" I said, showing her Fumiya's shortcake menu.

＜All of this..... yes, that's good.＞

Right, that's all twenty-five cakes off the shortcakes menu. "Also, for the ice cream, would it be alright to get all the flavors as well?"

＜Yes. Also, I want lots of the vanilla flavor.＞

So Ruka likes vanilla, huh? "Ah, right. For ice cream there's this stuff, too."

I showed her the ice cream cakes. "These are cakes with ice cream inside."

＜I want it!!＞

Ruka, who is the very picture of a silent and quiet girl, is excited? She must really like Fumiya's ice cream.

I added the ice cream cups and ice cream cake that Ruka wanted into the cart. “Are you alright with the rest being food?”

＜Yes.＞

For the rest, I bought stuff like karaage and gyoza from the Online Supermarket, and added stuff I made like clam chowder and fried seafood at my own discretion.

Whew, that should be it.

“So Hephaestos and Vahagn are last.”

＜You got it! So we have 4 gold between the two of us!＞

＜Let’s take our time choosing 4 gold worth of whiskey!＞

Th-The two of them are really excited about this for some reason...

＜First, of course, is the world’s best whiskey.＞

One of these for each of them is the usual by now.

＜Also that “highest peak” whiskey from before. That one was good.＞

＜Indeed. Its mild taste, on top of its excellent nose, makes it a really fantastic drink. We want one each of these, too.＞

I see I see, so one each of the highest peak single malt whiskey from last time? “What else?”

＜You know, War God, what do you think of that red wax-sealed whiskey we got before?＞

＜Ohh, that was good, too.＞

＜However, let us only get one to share between the two of us, and use the rest for new ones — how about that?＞

＜That’s a good idea. I want some of that vodka stuff too, this time.＞

Whiskey sealed with red wax? That should have been the whiskey that used winter wheat, right?

...Hmmm, it’s just an Online Supermarket, so the stock is limited, so it looks like I really have run out of new things.

“I think the two of you can tell looking at this, but you’ve pretty much had everything on the whiskey menu. What do you want to do?” I asked, showing them the menu.

＜Hmm, these truly are all things I remember. A liquor store would be really nice right now.＞

＜Yeah. Hey, you get it, right otherworlder?＞

You’re sounding an awful lot like you’ve got a certain job that starts with a ‘Ya-’ there, Vahagn. But well, I did get something good earlier, too...

“Yes. I don’t know if the next one will be a liquor store or not, but I’ll do my best.”

At least until I unlock the next Tenant.

＜As long as you get it, it’s fine. That is, if you really do. Blacksmithing God, I think our only choice now is to pick what was good out of these.＞

＜You’re right.＞ Hephaestos sunk into thought, muttering ‘hmmm’ all the while. *＜I like that one in the black bottle. What about you, War God?＞*

＜Ahh, that one. I like that one too.＞

The one in the black bottle that Hephaestos said he liked..... is that the black-bottled whiskey from S-company? “Are you two talking about this one?”

＜Yes indeedy, that one.＞

“Yeah, okay.” I added the black bottled whiskey from S-company to the cart. “What else?”

＜Hey Blacksmithing God, I think that black labeled one is good too; how about you?＞

＜Ohh, that? That one was quite something as well. I approve.＞

Is this the black labeled one Vahagn was talking about? “Black label? You mean this one?”

＜Yeah, that one.＞

＜Indeed. That would be the one.＞

That black label is a famous American whiskey, isn't it? I added the black labeled American whiskey to the cart.

After several more interactions like that, much more whiskey was added to the cart.

"So would one each of this vodka be all right to finish this?"

＜*Indeed.*＞

＜*Yeah, that's fine.*＞

Two bottles of this vodka in the cart and we're done. Now just line this all up on these cardboard altars.....

"Please accept this, everyone," I said, and the offerings I'd placed on the cardboard altars all disappeared.

Right afterwards, I heard the cheer from the gods rise up, as well as the sound of feet.

Whew~, it's finally over. Tomorrow's the dungeon, so let's sleep.

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"Okay then, let's go."

"Indeed."

《All right! It's a dungeon!》

《Dungeon~.》

Right after breakfast, we left the inn and headed for the dungeon.

"Ah, before we go into the dungeon, I'm gonna go report to the Adventurer's guild."

The Adventurer's guild was just next door, so I decided to go talk to Nadiya before entering the dungeon, just in case. When I got to the receptionist, Nadiya was called down immediately.

"You said you were going down the dungeon today, so I was waiting."

"You were waiting? Did you need me for something?"

"No, you see....." Nadiya looked behind her with a slightly troubled face.

Huh? What is it?

"I came, Mukohda." The one who said that with a tongue-in-cheek tone appeared from behind Nadiya. He was an all-too-familiar elf in the prime of his life, wearing a full-face smile.



“.....Wha? W-W-Why are you here?!!”

That elf was someone I could never forget. It was Elrand, whose love for dragons was so intense it was sometimes off-putting.

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After reuniting with Elrand, we couldn’t just continue to talk right in front of the receptionist’s line, so we moved to the guildmaster’s room on the 2nd floor.

“Elrand, you.....” My exasperation was out in full force, listening to Elrand’s story.

According to him, he had left for the capital as planned after we left Dolan. There, he had made his reports of the conquering of Dolan’s dungeon to the guild headquarters and to the king. During that report, he had presented the necklace that I’d gotten out of a treasure chest to the king as well.

It seemed that the king was quite happy that he was gifted a necklace with anti-poison attributes. I’d offered it as a gesture to please keep treating me well, and it looked like I did good. *Let’s keep offering what I can to the king, and secure my freedom in this country... Wait, that’s not important right now.*

He’d finished reporting to the king, so apparently, Elrand had decided to stay in the capital for a while since it had been some time since he had last been there. Then, a couple days later, when Elrand had gone to the Adventurer’s guild to say his goodbyes before going back to Dolan.....

“The guildmaster of the main branch in the capital heard that you defeated a red dragon!! It’s a red dragon, you know?! A red dragon!! Not only that, but you were also coming here to Aveling! So I thought that if I took a fast horse, I could meet you here. With that idea in my head I just couldn’t sit still..... so I changed my destination and came to Aveling.”

Don’t just change your destination you ass. Even if you tell me that with your pretty-boy elf face, it’s still not cute, you old man.

“Geez, Dolan’s guildmaster showed up early this morning, and so suddenly, it threw me for a loop, and I wondered what was going on,” said Nadiya, smiling bitterly.

That would be the case if a guildmaster from another branch just came over suddenly, wouldn't it? And with no prior notice on top of that. I'm not at fault here, but I still feel sorry. I underestimated this fool's love of dragons.

"More importantly, Mukohda! The red dragon! Red dragon! Show it to me!"

Nonono, show you? No way, no can do. "You know, Elrand, we're going to go into the dungeon....."

All three of my familiars are on standby to go in. They've all started sending me telepathic messages asking me things like, "Are you still not done?" or "Let's hurry up and go," or "Can we still not go into the dungeon?" you know? I can't just tell them I'm delaying our trip now.

"What are you saying?! The red dragon is way more important than some dungeon!"

Oh my, this guy just claimed that red dragons are more important.

"Sorry, I can't let that one go."

Nadiya's totally mad. Totally. Elrand went and said, 'some dungeon,' so I totally get why she wouldn't take that lying down.

"Hey Elrand, guildmaster of Dolan, did you just say, 'some dungeon,' meaning that my dungeon doesn't matter?" Nadiya said, with a flat tone and low voice.

Her stare at Elrand was sharp. Elrand must have noticed his mistake as well, since he started to recoil and fumble over his words, saying, "N-No, I didn't mean it like that....."

An angry Nadiya is a force to be reckoned with. Let's make sure never to get her angry.

"Even if you didn't mean it that way, that's how I heard it. Thanks to Mukohda here beating Dolan's dungeon, I hear you've been showered with riches, haven't you, Elrand? And that same Mukohda's come to my city, so I'm expecting a lot from him. It might be the first time in 200 years that Aveling's dungeon gets defeated, you know?" Nadiya's eyes were something to behold.

"N-No, u-uhhh... M-My earlier slip was... it was just something I said on the spur of the moment, or something....." Elrand said, seemingly desperate with

his eyes swimming everywhere, doing their best to avoid Nadiya's gaze. He was soaked in cold sweat.

"'Spur of the moment,' huh? It sounded to me like you didn't care about anywhere else now that you've struck it rich, though."

*Well, it certainly wouldn't be strange to take Elrand's statement that way. Still, Elrand's treated me well all this time, and I plan to have him do the same for a while yet, so I guess I should throw him a bone here. I'd be count*ing *on Elrand to take care of the red dragon eventually anyway.*

"Either way, Nadiya, I'm not going to do anything with the red dragon right now, and I'm going to the dungeon right after this. My familiars are more than motivated enough for it, and I feel like we can conquer the whole thing, too. And Elrand, I'm going to go to Dolan after I'm done here to ask you to handle the red dragon, so just bear with it for now, please."

She breathed out slowly. "I'll let you off here, in deference to Mukohda. For me, the dungeon is clearly more important than *some red dragon*. But you know, Elrand, you're a guildmaster. You should watch what you say," Nadiya said, sheathing her anger.

That "some red dragon" line was probably payback for the earlier statement.

"S-Sorry. I'll be careful." Elrand was curled in on himself, like a housecat not inside its house.

I thought there was supposed to be some sort of dignity to guildmasters? This guy's always been like this though. Wait... oh, yeah, he's a guildmaster, isn't he? Is it really okay for him to stay here?

"By the way, Elrand, you sure you don't have to go back to Dolan? Won't Ugohl be mad?"

No matter how excellent Ugohl iss, I don't think there can be any good coming out of a guildmaster being absent for any length of time.

"It's fine, it's fine. Ugohl will take care of everything, I'm telling you. Rather than that, I've decided — I'll go to the dungeon with you, Mukohda!"

.....Wha? What did this person... just... say?

“Now that that’s decided, let’s hurry!”

“Nonono, don’t ‘let’s hurry’ me, Elrand! Why are you coming?! You’re a guildmaster, you’ve retired from adventuring!”

“Oh? That’s a good idea.”

Whoa?! Backup fire from an unexpected spot?! “But Nadiya, Elrand isn’t an adventurer.”

“Oh? You don’t know? Adventurer’s aren’t the only ones that can enter a dungeon. Knight orders sometimes go in for training, and those who’ve retired from being an adventurer will still go in to earn some change, too. As long as they apply, pretty much anyone can go in. Of course, they take responsibility for themselves, so it’s limited to those with a certain amount of ability. It’s not really strange for Elrand to go into the dungeon.”

Ghh, really? I didn’t know. It seems like at least, since they all have to take responsibility for themselves, only those with a certain amount of fighting ability will challenge dungeons, like retired adventurers or knights.

“Elrand’s a former S-ranked adventurer. With you, an active S-rank, and Elrand, a former S-rank, your chances of clearing the dungeon’ll go way up, won’t they?” Nadiya said, and Elrand nodded in agreement.

“That’s right. Just what I’d expect out of the former S-ranked ‘Giant Princess,’ you get it. Dungeons are something you progress through by teaming up with multiple parties.”

So Nadiya was also formerly S-ranked. Not only that, she had the incredibly obvious moniker, ‘Giant Princess.’ Wait, that’s not important right now; he said that, usually, multiple parties band together, but I have my familiars who are very reliable, so it’s not like I’m going solo.

“Excuse me... as you know, Elrand, I have my familiars with me, so I’m more than all right...”

“What are you saying, there’s a huge problem! I’m going to be blunt here, but I want to go on an adventure with Dora-chan! It’s a fun dungeon excursion with Dora-chan, you know?! I can’t just let that chance go! I’m going to follow you no matter what — got it?”

Woah, he finally let out his true colors. Don't just throw a tantrum like a child when you're a grown-ass adult, dude.

"N-No, you know, we won't be coming back up for a long while when we go in..... Even if you have Ugohl, there's no way you can be away for that long."

"As long as Ugohl is there, Dolan will have no problems."

No, there'll be huge problems, you just don't care. He'll get mad again, you know? He'll be super mad.

"No, see, what if something happened..... uhhh, like, if a high-ranking monster appeared or something?"

"That's no problem at all. Even if he looks like that, Ugohl used to be a B-ranked adventurer, and Dolan has a dungeon, so there are always high-ranking adventurers around."

That was a shocking truth. *Ugohl used to be B-ranked? He totally doesn't look that way. Wait no, Elrand's totally planning to follow us wherever we go. Even if I say 'no,' he'll just follow along anyway.....*

"*Sigh* ...Fine. Let's go."

"Okay!" Elrand was all smiles. He was giving Dora-chan hot stares, too.

"Looks like everything's settled. Alright then, I'll take care of the registration here. You can just go into the dungeon now. You two, I'm waiting for you to bring lots of drops or magic items back, you hear?"

Nadiya sent us off to the dungeon, saddling us with Elrand, who decided to invite himself for some reason.

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We were lined up in order to enter the dungeon. I was a little fed up with how noisy our surroundings were.

"Huh? That's Elrand, the guildmaster from Dolan's Adventurer's guild, right?"

"It's the former S-rank, Elrand."

"The adventurer next to him with the familiars is the one that's been the subject of all those rumors recently, right?"

“Why the hell is Dolan’s guildmaster here?”

“That guy next to Elrand, isn’t that Mukohda, that guy we keep hearing about?”

...Et cetera, et cetera. They went on and on. Everyone was whispering, but I could hear them. I didn’t know if it was because my level rose, but my hearing had gotten better. I could hear whispers now. Still, I guess we couldn’t help standing out. It’d happen even with just Fel and the others, but now we had Elrand, too. He’s the guildmaster of the Adventurer’s guild in the dungeon city of Dolan, after all... looks like there’d be a lot of people here who know him, too. And of course we’d totally stand out having Dolan’s guildmaster with us.

I guess it’d be safest to just pretend I didn’t hear anything. I can’t hear, I can’t hear... I kept telling myself that as I turned my gaze to my surroundings.

Aveling’s dungeon was a lot like Dolan’s. It was outside the walls of the city, and there were lots of enterprising merchants with stalls lined up. Closer to the entrance of the dungeon, there was also a sub-branch of the Adventurer’s guild.

“It looks like Dolan’s dungeon.”

“Most dungeon entrances look like this. This country has one more dungeon, and that place is just like this, too.”

Hmmm~, is that so? If there’s a dungeon, people will gather, so I guess there’s no way merchants would let that go either.

Hm? That’s.....

“Originating from Dolan, it’s fried potatoes~. They’re warm and fluffy and delicious~.”

...Aren’t those the fries I showed off at Dolan’s Merchant’s guild? So it’s already spread all the way here. That’s fast!

“Ahh, you’re the one who taught them how to make those fried potatoes, aren’t you? It’s really popular even in Dolan. It’s a good snack for children, and it’s perfect for drinking too. I’ve eaten it before, as well. It totally goes with ale~,” Elrand said, noticing that I was staring at the fried potatoes stall.

Elrand’s already eaten it too? So there’s that many stores selling fried

potatoes, huh? Well, it's easy and doesn't need that many ingredients. That's why I taught them that. It's good by itself, and perfect as a snack. There's no way beer wouldn't go with freshly done fries.....

Wait, no, now I'm starting to want some.

"Ah, right. Are you sure you don't need to ready any food?" Elrand asked, probably because the subject moved to food.

On the way here, Elrand said that he wanted to stock up on food since we'd be going into the dungeon, but I told him that I had lots ready and it was fine.

"It's fine already. I have lots ready in my Item Box." *I spent all day yesterday cooking, after all. We'll probably be fine even with Elrand here. And even if we run out, I still had my Online Supermarket, so there was no worry. Well, I'll still have to make sure Elrand never sees me use it, though.*

"Just spare me the fate of starving to death and joining the undead, please."

"Ahaha! I'm telling you that won't happen!"

I'm here with an Online Supermarket, so that'd never happen in a million years.

"No need to worry. I can't compromise our food with Fel and the others around, so I've prepared a large amount." I'd get beat up by Fel and the others if there was no food, or if the food was bad.

"If you're going to go that far, I'll leave the food to you, please." Elrand finally looked satisfied and backed off.

But he really did used to be S-ranked, didn't he? He knows just how important food is in a dungeon.

"Oh right, did you go into this dungeon back when you were an adventurer?"

"Yes. Still, only to the 17th floor."

Only until the 17th, huh? I guess he stopped because the 18th floor is undead? It'd have to be. "The 17th? Is that because the 18th floor is undead?"

"That's right. Undead really are annoying. We discussed it within the party, and decided we didn't have to push ourselves that far, and we stopped at the

17th floor."

Well, survival comes first, after all. But would an S-rank party have trouble with the undead? "So even S-rank parties don't like to deal with the undead?"

"Well, of course not. Physical and magic attacks basically don't work on them. The basic way of dealing with an undead floor is just to deal damage to them and move on when you create an opening. To be honest, it's pretty hard. And on top of that, if you get surrounded, a war of attrition becomes inevitable," Elrand said with a disgusted face.

Surrounded by undead...... if that ever happens, I think I'd probably die.

"At the very least you can ask the church for a holy seal to counter the undead, but honestly, it's not that effective."

The church's seal, huh? I heard that it runs out after about ten swings, so for the amount of money you pay, the effect totally isn't worth it.

"But this time you're all here, so we'll totally be able to bust through."

I'd rather you didn't just declare that, though. But with Fel and the others, as well as an anti-undead item given to me from the gods, I think we'll be fine, at least. I'm really lucky that I got that holy sealer from Hephaestos and Vahagn.

*At any rate, we'll have to test it on the undead o*n *the 9th floor.*

"Ah, we're next. It's my first time in a dungeon in a while, so I'm excited. Not only that, but this time I'm with Dora-chan...... Mmheheheheheheheh."

Elrand, that's creepy.

Now then, it's finally time for the dungeon. Let's go get 'em.

Chapter 3: Into the Dungeon

I showed my guild card to the soldiers at the entrance and was let inside.

Strictly speaking, Elrand wasn't an adventurer, so he showed them a dungeon card that was given to him when he registered. Whenever someone that wasn't an adventurer wanted to go into a dungeon, they'd be issued a dungeon card when they registered to go in, and could get into the dungeon by showing that card.

The interior was just as I'd heard about: a classic dungeon surrounded by rock walls. I had no idea how it worked, but the stone-sealed passages were filled with a constant comfortable light that was neither too dark nor too bright.

"Sui, we're inside the dungeon," I said, and Sui hopped out of my bag.

《Dungeon, dungeon!》 Sui was excitedly bouncing around.

《**It looks like there are only weaklings at the beginning. Let us hurry forward. Get on,**》 Fel, who could tell by sensing presences, said. Since Elrand was with us, Fel used telepathy. Elrand knew that Fel could speak, but there were other adventurers around in the dungeon, too.

"Wait a second. Elrand, it looks like most adventurers are in the 8th, 11th, and 12th floors, but is that because those are the floors with the best drops and most treasure chests?"

"Let's see. The 6th and 7th floors are pretty good for that, but I think it would be better to leave those for beginner adventurers. You're an S-rank, Mukohda, and I'm a former S-rank, so we should start getting serious around the 13th floor, I'd say."

13th floor, huh? That should be the insect zone, right? The 9th floor before that is an undead floor, so I want to test what I got from Hephaestos and Vahagn there. Also, before I test that out, I want to get used to my new spear. I felt like I could scrape by just by doing a couple test thrusts of it, but you really don't know these kinds of things until you actually use them.

“To tell you the truth, it’s my first time with undead. So I want to get used to it on the 9th floor. Also, I got a spear to use this time, so I want to test it out on the floor before the undead, so can we explore the 8th floor, too?”

“Of course, if that’s the case.”

“Fel, are you alright with that too?”

《**The 8th? I can only sense weaklings, but well, fine. We will head straight there. Get on.**》

Get on? But I’m not the only one here this time, Elrand is too. In times like this.....

“Sui, can you give Elrand a ride?”

《Yeah, okay—.》

Sui became about as big as Fel. Elrand raised a cry of surprise.

“We’re going straight to the 8th floor, so please get on Sui, Elrand.”

“Huh? Huh? Really? Can I?”

“Yes, it’s fine. Sui evolved, and it can now change its size freely to a certain extent. So it became able to give people a ride,” I said, and Elrand let out an impressed noise.

“So slimes evolve like that when you make them a familiar, huh?”

“No, Sui’s just special, I think. There’s no guarantee that just making a slime a familiar will make them evolve the same way, too.”

“True. In the first place, I haven’t heard of a tamer who would make a slime their familiar other than you, Mukohda. Hahaha.”

That would be true, wouldn’t it? Slimes are treated as the weakest of the weak. My Sui is special, though.

《**Hey, hurry and get on.**》 Fel, anxious to get moving, hurried me along.

“Okay then, Elrand, please get on Sui,” I said, and Elrand slowly climbed on top of Sui, seeming hesitant.

“Oh, it feels better than I thought it would.” *Sui’s squishy, after all. It feels*

pretty close to getting on a waterbed.

Making sure that Elrand was secure on top of Sui, I also got on Fel's back.

《**I will put a barrier over everyone. Now then, let us go.**》

"Sure, thanks. Make sure you two keep up, Dora-chan, Sui."

《You got it.》

《Okay—.》

We set off through the dungeon with Fel in the lead. We moved further and further along the passages closed in by stone walls.

Just as I'd heard, the 1st through 3rd floors were filled with big rats and giant bats, and from the 4th floor onwards, goblins started appearing. But, thanks to Fel's barrier, we busted through so easily it'd be more understandable to say something like, "Huh? They were there?"

Every once in a while there were some young adventurers that seemed like newbies, and when we ran past them, they all stared at us with dumbfounded faces. *Well, I get how you feel, but you shouldn't be letting your guard down in a dungeon.*

Just kidding.

After about an hour of smooth sailing——

《**It will be the 8th floor after going down these stairs,**》 Fel said, so I got off his back.

"Wow, that was surprising. To think we'd go through the dungeon this fast," Elrand remarked while getting off of Sui.

"It's thanks to Fel. Being able to sense presences is his specialty. Right, Fel?" I said.

Fel's reaction was a little shy and awkward as he replied with, 《**It is nothing for one such as me.**》

"So it's as one should expect from a Fenrir, huh?" Elrand was impressed with that too.

Fel's ability to sense presences comes in handy pretty much all the time, after

all.

"Well then, I'm sorry but we'll be exploring from the 8th floor on, so I'll be in your care."

"Okay."

It was time to test my spear. I took the mithril one I had Sui make for me out of my Item Box.

"Oh? A mithril spear? You said this is the first time you're using one, but you sure splurged quite a bit. Well, with the money you earn, it's totally understandable though, Mukohda. Hahaha."

I just gave a vague hedge in reply. *I guess that's inevitable when a beginner has a mithril spear. But the truth was that it cost basically nothing. It's really well made, though. After all, I remodeled the spear a little after having Sui make it for me.* This spear's haft was also made of mithril, and it was smooth and likely to slip out of my grip, so I had Sui change it. I had Sui emboss a pattern on it, so it was harder to lose hold of it.

It had been pretty hard to explain to Sui, and I'd been wondering what I should do, but I'd remembered that there was a knife that had the same embossing done on its handle. So after a little searching on my Online Supermarket, I had found the knife. I'd showed that knife to Sui and asked it to do the same thing. The spear with the embossed pattern on it was much easier to grip and use.

"By the way, this is my weapon." Elrand showed off the slim longsword made of mithril that he had hanging at his waist. "It's been my partner since my adventuring days. But, Mukohda, I'm planning to make that dragon sword made from the earth dragon's fang I bought off of you into my partner too~. Mmhehehehehehe."

You just casually said something really bad there, didn't you, Elrand? The sword made from the earth dragon should belong to the guild, and wasn't the plan to decorate the guild with it? You even said it'd attract adventurers.

"Hey, doesn't that belong to the guild....."

"*Ahem* O-Of course. I'm just thinking of borrowing it once in a while, for just a

little bit.”

No, even if you try to erase all of your true intentions that you’ve been leaking all over the place... W-Well, it’s Elrand, after all. I’ll just leave the rest to Dolan’s guild.

“Well then, let’s go.”

“Yes.”

《I want to train with my spear, everyone, so let me have some too,》 I said to my familiars over telepathy, and all of us headed down the stairs to the 8th floor.

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《**There are nothing but small fries on this floor. None of them is worthy of my attention. Dora, Sui, you do it,**》 Fel said through telepathy, throwing all of the responsibility and action to them.

《There’s just goblins and kobolds here, right? I don’t want to bother fighting those either. Sui, I’m leaving it to you.》

Dora-chan must also have hated the idea of having to fight goblins and kobolds, and passed the hot potato to Sui.

《Is it really okay for Sui to beat them all?》 Sui was happily bouncing in circles.

It seems like no matter who the opponent is, Sui’s always happy to take them on. But you know, taking them all yourself isn’t good. Didn’t I just say to let me have some too, Sui?

“Sui, you can’t beat them all yourself. Didn’t I say that I wanted to practice with my spear?”

《Oh, that’s right. So not all of them? Then Sui can just leave a few for master?》

“Hmmm, for now just let me have one.”

Since I don’t know how well I can use a spear yet. I’ll start carefully, with just one for now.

《Got it.》

We moved forward with Sui at the front, then Elrand and I, and Fel and Dora-chan bringing up the rear.

“Ggyahh! Gehgyah!” Ahead of us in the passage, a group of goblins had noticed us and were approaching.

《It’s goblins! Sui will get them!》

Pew-pew-pew

Sui shot them through with Acid Bullets and the goblins fell one after the other. It looked like Sui remembered what I said, and left one alive.

“Hahh!” I stabbed my spear at that goblin.

The spear tip slid into the goblin’s chest so smoothly it was like it was being sucked in. When I pulled the spear out, the goblin fell lifelessly.

Hm, it’s scarily sharp, just like the mithril short sword I see. Just as I expected of mithril. And Sui’s awesome for making this too.

“I’m surprised. I’d heard that it was special from you, Mukohda, but for there to be a slime that can attack like this.....” Elrand said, having seen how Sui fought.

Ahh, so he didn’t believe me because Sui’s a slime. Well, I guess that’s only natural, though. In the end, slimes are basically the poster child for weaklings, after all. But, just as you can see, my Sui is strong.

“That’s just the beginning. We’re gonna keep going. Sui, let’s move on.”

Sui replied through telepathy, and we kept moving forward through the 8th level’s passageways. We didn’t bother going into any rooms, and stuck to moving through the passageways until we got to the boss room. When I peeked inside, there were young adventurers in their mid-teens fighting with a mixed company of goblins.

“I wonder if they’re a new party.”

“Looks like it. Hm, they’re pretty good. So Aveling is raising some good adventurers as well.”

Oh, Elrand just said something guildmaster-like.

“What? Why are you looking at me like that? I am a guildmaster, you know? Even I’ll be interested in adventurers.”

I eyed him with equal parts suspicion and disbelief, so Elrand spoke in a hurry.

I mean, he totally just seems like a kinda sad guy who loves dragons way too much.

“I’m telling the truth.”

“Well, let’s leave it at that.”

“No, don’t just ‘leave it at that’.....”

“Ah, looks like they’re done.”

The young adventurers finished their fight, and came back this way. And when they passed us, one of them said, “We’re finished, so please go ahead,” before returning to the passageway.

“Huh? Aren’t those kids moving on?”

“The next floor is the first gate, remember? The 9th floor is undead.”

Oh right, the next floor is undead. I guess that’d be too much for some new adventurers.

“Oh right, why not leave this to me?”

“Huh? That’s fine, but wouldn’t that be too boring for you, Elrand?”

Unlike me, who leaves everything to Fel and the others, this guy’s a real S-rank.

“Haha, that’s true, but this is my first dungeon dive in a while. I want to show my stuff, and warm up while I’m at it.”

Ohh, so I’ll be able to witness Elrand’s swordsmanship? I probably won’t be able to mimic it, but I hope I can at least use it as a reference when I swing my own sword.

With that settled, that means I’ll have to convince Sui, who’s totally set on charging in.

“Sui, this elf here will beat them, so can you hold back just a little?”

《Whaaaat? But Sui wants to do it—.》

“Sorry. But there’ll be new monsters on the next floor. I’d like it if you beat lots of those.”

《New ones? Wowww! That’s exciting! Sui will try hard on the next floor!》

That’s good, I’ll have Sui do its best on the next floor. I was planning to put in some effort too, but I could see my legs giving out from under me just by seeing zombies and skeletons.

“Well then, please, Elrand.”

“Yes. Okay, I’ll be going,” Elrand said, before charging into the boss room.

Schwing! Schwing! Schwschwschwscwhinggg! Thud

After cutting through the goblins and kobolds like a flowing river, Elrand sheathed his sword.

“It’s done,” Elrand said, smiling wide.

All I could do was watch from beginning to end, open-mouthed and dumbfounded. “That’s awesome! Wow, Elrand! You really were S-ranked, weren’t you?!”

Elrand’s swordplay was as graceful as dancing.

“Really? Did you doubt that? I told you several times, didn’t I?”

No, uhhh, sorry. I mean, all I ever see is your weird side. I didn’t doubt you, but I just felt, juuuust a little bit, like, ‘really?’

Really, I’m sorry.

Wait, that doesn’t matter. “What’s with that swordsmanship? Did you master some sort of really awesome sword style or something?”

From how that looked, that’s definitely what happened. He was cutting them down super-fast like a flowing river.

“No, it’s nothing that amazing. It’s just something I figured out for myself. It’s how I bring out the physical abilities of an elf while using my experience.”

“.....That’s... something you taught yourself?”

“Yes. Elves have always been light, you see. I basically just adjusted my sword movements to fit me better, and it just gradually stuck. Once that happened, my skills only sharpened as I gained experience. Elves live longer than humans, so I’ve got several times more experience, you see. I’m lucky that I’m an elf, hahaha.”

Woah, elves. No, actually, that’s just cheating. The advantages of having a long lifespan are just ridiculous, huh? Well, nothing’ll happen just by me being jealous, though.

I thought I’d be able to learn something from watching Elrand, but that was totally useless to me. “Well then, let’s move on to the 9th floor.”

We descended the stairs on the other side of the boss room. It was finally time for the undead floor... and time to test what I got from Hephaestos and Vahagn.

“The most important thing on the next floor is to focus on speed, and pass through. Everyone, please be careful not to fall behind,” Elrand said, unusually serious.

“No, we’ll be fighting the undead as well. Actually, I have this.....” I showed Elrand the holy sealer. “This is a holy sealer, a stronger version of what the church has.”

At that, Elrand’s eyes went wide. “W-W-Where did you get such a thing?!!”

Of course Elrand would be surprised — the one the church has is just a copy, and the real one is at the headquarters of the Rubanov church; it’s probably being treated like a national treasure. And I just said this one was a stronger version.

“Uhhh, that’s a secret.” There was no way I could just tell him that I got it from the gods. “Anyway, I have this, so I want to try using it. The effect is, as I said earlier, a stronger version of the church’s. As long as I use this on a weapon or something, attacks with it will destroy the undead. And the effect lasts an entire day, it seems.” I explained what I’d heard from Hephaestos and Vahagn to Elrand.

“No way, no way. W-Wait a second here. W-W-What the heck is with that

effect?! It's true that it's a stronger version of the church's, but it's way too different!"

It was understandable that Elrand would be surprised, but it was made by the gods, after all. Really, good job, liquor lovers!

"By 'weapon or something,' do you mean that it'll work on things other than weapons? For example, if you attack with magic, and you put a seal on the caster, will the magic also exterminate the undead? Not only that, but the effect lasts for a whole day?!"

W-Wait a second, please don't get so close Elrand. Your face! Your face is so close!

"C-Calm down!" I pushed Elrand by the shoulders and tried to get him to calm down.

"As if I could be calm!! Mukohda, you have something that can harm the undead that's not holy magic! Not only that, but the effect is enormous and all you have to do is mark something with it! This is national-treasure-level — no, it's even more than that!"

That's true, but there's nothing I can do about it; the gods made this. "Ahhh, well, please keep this a secret."

"Of course! I'm way too scared to tell anyone that a single person owns something that's more valuable than any national treasure!"

S-Sorry.

"Still, you made a Fenrir your familiar, found the magic sword Caladbolg on top of that, and now this holy sealer, something that no individual should ever own? Just what kind of person are you, Mukohda?"

"What kind? I'm just a regular adventurer....."

I do have the title of an ex-salaryman who got caught up in a summoning to another world, though.

"A normal adventurer, you say? As if that could be true, geez....." Elrand said, exasperated.

Elrand's exasperated at me..... I'm a little upset, but whatever.

“Okay then. Let’s mark ourselves and go defeat the 9th floor. I’ll put the seal directly on your bodies, Fel, Dora-chan, Sui. And for Elrand and I, it’ll go on our weapons.....”

“J-Just wait a second. There’s so much happening, let me calm down first,” Elrand said, looking straight at Dora-chan. “Let me hug Dora-chan. Then I think my heart will become calm.” He opened both his arms and gestured.

《W-What the hell is this..... Stay away! Hey, I’m not cheap enough that I’ll just let anyone touch me!》 Dora-chan said, putting some distance between him and Elrand.

“Ahhhh! Dora-chaaaaan!” Elrand extended his arms towards Dora-chan, who was running away. “I’ve been holding it in all this time since I thought you’d hate me for being so clingy, but wouldn’t just a little be fiiiinnnee?!”

Is that why you were so well behaved even while giving Dora-chan all those hot stares?!

《This-! Staring at me like that after every single thing is the creepiest thing ever! I completely refuse ever touching this freak, got it!》

Dora-chan..... He’s really not liking it, is he? If Elrand heard that, he’d be bawling.

《I won’t let him hug you, Dora-chan, so could you let him touch you a little? Just a liiiitttllee bit?》 I told Dora-chan through telepathy. He responded rather unhappily. 《He’s going to be taking care of us a lot from now on. Just a little is fine, please. I’ll treat you to lots of the pudding you like once we get out of the dungeon.》

I have to leave the red dragon in Elrand’s care, so I don’t really want to offend him too much.

《Tch! Fine. Don’t forget about the pudding!》

I somehow managed to negotiate Dora-chan into Elrand touching him, and he reluctantly balled up into my arms.

“Elrand, he won’t let you hug him, but I got permission for you to touch him.”

“Ohh! OOOOHHHHH!!!” Elrand quickly made his way over.

I’m not Dora-chan, but that’s just creepy, Elrand.

“Well then.....” Elrand touched Dora-chan’s back.

Strokestroke Strokestroke

He must have been really happy, because Elrand’s beautiful face dissolved into a creepy grin. And as his hand moved to Dora-chan’s head.....

《Not my head.》 Dora-chan rejected him firmly.

“Ahhh, Elrand, Dora-chan’s head is off limits.”

“Whaaaat?!” Elrand didn’t seem satisfied, but he obeyed and stuck to Dora-chan’s back. Of course, he was grinning the whole time.

“You said that hugging was off the table, but you’re doing it, aren’t you Mukohda?”

“Ahh, well, you know, he’s my familiar and all...”

“Gnnnrrrr, so it really was the familiar contract.....” Elrand muttered, “I’ll need to form a familiar contract with a dragon someday, too,” with a frustrated face.

Form a contract? That’s probably impossible, though.

《Hey, are we done?》

Looks like Dora-chan’s nearing his limit.

“Elrand, you’re finished, right?”

“Whaaat? Just a little more. A little more!”

“If you’re too clingy, he’ll really hate you.”

“Ghh.....” Elrand withdrew his hand, very obviously unwillingly.

“Okay then, now let’s mark ourselves. I’ll start off with my spear.”

I tried letting my magic flow into the item while pushing it onto my spear. For just a moment, a hieroglyphic-like character from a language that didn’t exist in this world glowed faintly before being absorbed into the weapon.

Next, I was going to use it on Fel and the others, but then I suddenly wondered if it would hurt. *Hmmm, then let’s try it on myself, first. If something*

happens, I'll have Sui's potions, and I even have three of Sui's elixirs on hand, so it'll probably be fine.

I tried marking the back of my hand. It felt a little hot, but nothing else, really.

"It feels a little hot where you're marked, but there's nothing wrong other than that. Fel, Dora-chan, Sui, I'll mark you."

《**Indeed.**》

I parted Fel's fluffy coat and planted the mark somewhere near his neck.

《**Just as you said, that really was nothing. So now I will be able to exterminate the undead? They have been nothing but annoyances, and I have avoided them many a time, but... Heheheh, now I can end as many of them as I please.**》

Wow Fel, that sure is dark. Even though he's Fel, I guess even he's been having trouble with the undead up until now.

《I'm next.》

I marked near Dora-chan's neck.

《So now my attacks will work against the undead, huh? I'm gonna go wild amongst the undead too!》

Dora-chan was also raring to go.

《Sui too—.》

Sure, sure. I marked the top of Sui's smooth and bouncy surface.

《Sui will also go pew-pew and get lots!》 Sui was also highly motivated.

Well, Sui's always that way, though.

"I'm last. I'm good at magic too, so please mark the back of my hand."

Just as Elrand wanted, I marked both his sword and the back of his hand.

"Great, now we're prepared. It's an undead floor, so I don't think it's been looted too much. We might find something good, so let's get exploring."

We all stepped into the 9th floor, teeming with undead.

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The first enemies we encountered on the 9th floor were a group of three zombies.

“Aaahhh...” A chorus of moans echoed. The sight of the zombies, with their lifeless eyes and bodies blackened by rot, walking towards us was straight out of a horror movie.

“Ghh, that’s disgusting.”

Not just the looks, the smell was also.....

“Mnn, I do not think I will ever get used to the smell of zombies. The stench is so strong I cannot stand it.”

《What the hell?! It smells so bad!》

《Urrgghh, it’s stinky—.》

Yeah, it smells awful.

“The smell of zombies is a weapon unto itself. When zombies are around, the iron rule is to breathe through your mouth,” Elrand told us. “Now, let’s hurry and get rid of the source of this unpleasantness.”

Elrand readied his sword, and as he prepared to swing at the zombie.....

《Sui will do it.》

Pew-pew-pew

Sui’s Acid Bullet hit rotting flesh and opened a huge hole from the zombie’s chest to its stomach. The zombies stopped and flopped to the floor... and, after a moment, it disappeared, like it was being sucked into the dungeon itself.

“Ohh! It really works!” I exclaimed.

“To be honest, I half doubted it, but what a spectacular effect. With this, there’s no reason to be scared of the undead,” Elrand remarked.

“Yes, let’s keep going.”

As we moved along the hallway, the next foe we met was a skeleton. *Yep... it’s just bones.*

“I am next,” Fel said, charging towards the skeleton.

Fel tackled it. He did not cloak himself in magic like Dora-chan, so it was just a regular tackle, but since it was Fel, with his big body, it turned into a proper attack.

With stupendous speed, the skeleton was flung into the air like it was hit by a truck. It bounced off the walls and ceiling, each time pounding its body more and more into dust.

Even though it was just Fel's physical attack, the skeleton still got crushed this completely. Could it be that skeletons are just really brittle?

"Are skeletons just really brittle, Elrand?"

"No, not really. That's probably just a combination between the seal's effect and Fel's natural attacking power." Elrand gave a troubled laugh in response to seeing the skeleton get pulverized so brilliantly by neither magic nor a "real" attack, but a simple tackle.

The next enemies we encountered were more zombies. This time, there were four of them.

《It's my turn next!》 Dora-chan said as he flew forward, skewering the hunched over zombies with pillars of ice.

Thud Thud Thud Thud

《Hah! Easy! Hm? There's something here. Hey! There's something here!》

It looked like the zombies dropped something. Dora-chan handed over a small bottle.

"What is this....."

There was a pitch black liquid in the bottle. *Appraisal is perfect for situations like this.*

【Corrosive Solution】

Corrodes living things.

Corrosive solution..... What would I even use it for?

“That’s corrosive solution, a drop from a zombie, I see. The undead don’t really drop too much, so you’ll be able to sell it for a decent amount.” Elrand told me after having seen the bottle.

“But is there even a use for this stuff?” *It’s fine that I can sell it, but does it even have a use? That’s the question.*

“There’s actually a lot. You can use it as an attack in a pinch, for example. This stuff’s in pretty high demand.”

According to Elrand, the corrosive solution took effect quickly, and that was why it would work just fine as an attack when the chips were down. For example, if we were to encounter a monster we could do nothing about, we could throw the solution at it to buy time. The corrosion would start immediately, and while it would not kill a high-ranking monster, it would be more than enough to stop it for a while.

I see, there is a use for this. I have Fel and the others, so I don’t think I’d ever see that situation, but it might be good to keep one with me just in case, for moments when I’m alone.

“Thanks for the lesson.”

“I’d like as much of these undead drops to be sold at Dolan as possible, so let’s keep taking them down.”

As long as I can put on these marks, it’ll be fine, and even though Aveling will get first dibs, selling the rest at Dolan would be fine, wouldn’t it?

After that, we confirmed that Elrand could destroy undead with his magic, as well. I also defeated a skeleton with my mithril spear, so everything was proceeding swimmingly.

At one point, I’d seen through a mimic, and Elrand gave me strange looks, wondering how I could tell, since having the Appraisal skill is something only a hero summoned from another world (something straight out of a fairy tale here) would have. I smoothed things over by saying that Fel told me.

That was close.

Just like that, we reached the boss room of the 9th floor. There were several

tens of zombies and skeletons, as well as a skeleton warrior, but with my three familiars in the mix, the whole thing was over in an instant. The skeleton warrior was melted, sword and all, by Sui. I even beat a skeleton and a zombie each by myself.

There was a trapped treasure chest amongst the drops, and we got a “poison knife.”

Just... Just once, I wish there was a treasure chest that would just open.

Like that, we busted through the 9th floor of undead, and greeted the 10th.

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Once we were out on the 10th floor, everyone started complaining that they were hungry.

I guess this is a fine spot for a break.

“Elrand, we’ve cleared the first gate that is the 9th floor, so how about a meal now?”

“Then if I recall, the first safe area should be right around here. Please follow me.” Elrand said, and we obeyed.

“There’s a white caterpillar, I see. I’ll take care of it.”

I followed Elrand’s line of sight down the passage, and saw a white caterpillar around a meter and a half in length crawling towards us.

A huge caterpillar?! Gross!

“White caterpillars move slowly, but they spit out an extremely sticky string. Not only will touching that string hinder your movement, but removing it is a job-and-a-half, so attacking from a distance is the best way.”

I see, I see, that’s good to know.

Ah, it just spat its string. It goes pretty far, doesn’t it? That one flew about 2 meters. Just like Elrand said, it seems like attacking from a distance would be safest.

“Well then, I’ll be going. Wind Cutter!”

Whoosh Whoosh

Blades of wind cut the white caterpillar apart.

“Ppghiiii!” After some high-pitched death throes, the white caterpillar disappeared.

“There are also monsters called gray caterpillars that appear on this floor, and you must be particularly careful with those. Gray caterpillars are covered in hair, and if you touch the hair, you will be paralyzed. Not only that, if you are far enough away, it will launch its hair at you.”

So it’s a hairy caterpillar? A huge hairy caterpillar... that sounds creepy and awful. From what Elrand said, the paralysis would last at most thirty minutes, but even that length of time could lead to death in a dungeon filled with monsters.

And since in this insect zone that stretched on until the 17th floor, poisonous monsters started to show up the lower you went, I was feeling particularly grateful for being able to nullify status ailments.

Gotta be grateful to those gods.

After all that, we reached the safe area. The inside was quite spacious, and though, like the one I stayed in before in Dolan’s dungeon, there was no water source, this space was about twice as big.

This dungeon was supposed to be the most crowded on the 8th and then the 10th through 12th floors, and this place only reinforced that with how many people there were. But still, with how spacious the area was, it looked to be easy to secure a spot large enough for us to rest.

Ah, a spot by the wall just opened up.

“Whew, well then, let’s eat.”

《Food, food~!》

《**Hm, prepare it quickly.**》

《Food! Food, food!》

My hunger brigade was already demanding satisfaction.

Sure, sure, just wait a second. Uhhhh, what should it be..... ah, how about

this?

I chose the meat-wrapped rice balls and tonjiru that I'd made before leaving Berléand. I was about to serve them in the usual dishes I'd bought in Nijhoff, but I stopped myself. This place was a dungeon, so its floors were made of stone. With how Fel and the others ate, serving them on the usual dinnerware might just break the dishes. Not only that, but Elrand and other adventurers were around, so if they saw Fel and the others eating out of ceramic dishes, they'd probably faint. My dishes that I'd spared no expense on... it'd be obvious to anyone watching that they were pretty expensive.

So I changed to the wooden dishes I was using before to be safe. After plating the rice balls, I also poured some tonjiru in deeper wooden dishes.

"Here."

I served the food to my familiars.

《**Mm? What happened to the usual plates?**》

"Those are ceramics, so they might break if I used them here."

《**I see, that is certainly true. I liked those, but I suppose there is nothing for it.**》

So he liked it. He never said anything, so I thought he didn't care.

All three of them were hungry, so they chowed down with gusto.

Now then, if I don't eat too, my share'll be gone.

I divided the portions for Elrand and myself onto a wooden plate a size smaller. Then, I produced a pitcher full of cold water I'd bought with my skill and poured it out into wooden cups.

I bought the pitcher in Nijhoff. I saw the pitcher in the house I'd rented there, and decided I wanted one. I searched around, confident I would find one since I was in the town of pottery, and bought one in a hurry right before we left. Up until then, I'd just been using the water I bought in the PET bottles they came in, but now I had both pet bottles and a pitcher full of water in storage.

"Here you go, Elrand."

“Ohh! It smells good, doesn’t it~. It looks really delicious, too.”

I used a fork for the rice balls, and a spoon for the tonjiru. Normally I’d want to eat these rice balls with my hands, but they were dirty at the moment and it seemed like there was resistance to doing so in this world. It was a little hard to do, but I used a fork. Stabbing through a meat-wrapped rice ball, I brought it to my mouth and bit into it.

Hm, it’s good. The salty-sweet sauce is mixed in well with the rice, and the flavor is delicious anytime, anywhere.

Elrand imitated me and ate the food the same way.

“Hahh, this is quite amazing~. I can’t get enough of this sweet and salty flavor. I never thought I’d be able to taste something this good while in a dungeon.”

It looked like the meat-wrapped rice balls suited Elrand’s palate too, as he ate one after the other.

“More.” 《More.》《More.》

And then came my familiar’s demands for more.

“Give me more of this one with the meat-wrapped around it.”

Fel’s avoiding the tonjiru since it’s got lots of vegetables, I see. He ate what I gave him, though. But tonjiru is delicious...

《I want both. I want extra of this one with the meat around it, and only about half as much soup as last time.》

So Dora-chan wants extra meat-wrapped rice balls and half tonjiru? Actually, you’re being really specific!

《Master—, Sui wants both too. Give Sui lots!》

So Sui also wants both. Alright, let’s give Sui an extra-large portion.

After serving out everyone’s extra helpings, I went back to eating myself.

Ahh, tonjiru’s so gooood. The mix of the rice balls and the tonjiru flavors in my mouth is the best.

“This soup is really nice, and it’s got a lot of filling in it.”

It looked like Elrand really enjoyed the tonjiru. I was really proud of it, so that made me feel a little happy.

“Do you want more?”

“Ohh, well then, please.”

I served Elrand some more tonjiru as well.

Gulp.....

I heard someone swallowing their spit. And I’d been feeling the stares of other adventurers in the safe area for a while now.

I’m not giving you guys any. Food’s precious in a dungeon. I’m protecting it with my life.

Letting the stares of the adventurers wash over me like a passing breeze, I kept serving several more helpings to Fel and Sui, as usual.

After a small break once we were finished with our meal, we set off exploring the 10th floor.

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According to Elrand, the 10th floor was just white and gray caterpillars, and the string they dropped was apparently popular. As I’d expect out of Elrand, the former S-ranked adventurer, I had a lot to learn from his knowledge of various facts.

It was just that, every time Dora-chan did something, Elrand would go all, “Awesome!” or “Wow!” and send such hot looks over at him... He was praising Dora-chan so much that Sui started sulking, saying, 《Awww, even though Sui’s beating lots too—.》

Sui felt better after I praised it though. And I told Sui, “You know, that elf over there, he loves dragons a lot. That’s why he’s always cheering for Dora-chan. But I know how awesome you are, Sui, so don’t mind it.”

Sui went, 《Oh, really?》 So I wasn’t sure if it understood or not.

Fel said, 《**I’m leaving the weaklings to you,**》 and threw all the responsibility over to Dora-chan and Sui. But he was still on alert for traps, so I was grateful

though.

With all that business happening, we reached the 10th-floor boss room. In the boss room, there were so many white and gray caterpillars wriggling around, about half the room was buried in them.

Dora-chan and Sui charged in and finished them all in a flash, though. After retrieving the not-insignificant amount of drops, we moved to the 11th floor.

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The first monster we encountered on the 11th floor was an ant. It was a huge black ant that was almost a meter in length.

“That’s a killer ant. This floor houses killer ants and their higher forms.”

That ant’s mouth is clacking pretty loudly...

“Killer ants are D-ranked monsters. At any rate, they aren’t that strong individually, but their swarms are massive, so be careful not to get surrounded.”

It seemed like if they surrounded you and started biting, you’d be turned to bones in an instant. I was told that they had exceptionally powerful jaws, and depending on the situation, if they managed to bite into you, you could lose an arm or a leg.

S-Scary... Anyway, I need to be careful I don’t get surrounded... Woah! Just now over ten of them have gathered around and are coming at us!

“The normal strategy here is to kill each one quickly and one by one before they surround you. Of course, that’s while conserving enough magic and energy to run away.”

I get it... it seems like it’d be hard to move forward while avoiding them when there’s this many around.

《Basically, just do what we always do, right? Leave it to us!》 Dora-chan said, before flying close to a killer ant and making it eat lightning magic.

Cracklecracklecrackleeeee

Lightning spread to the killer ant’s surroundings, and the killer ant that was hit with the magic flipped over, dead.

《Heh! Easy-peasy!》

“That’s so cool! Dora-chan!!”

《I see you get what’s important, Elf.》

It seemed that Dora-chan didn’t hate the attention, and replied with telepathy.

Man, Elrand’s really putting Dora-chan on a pedestal...

Right, let’s get moving.

Apparently, the jaws dropped by these killer ants were hard and tough and prized as a good material to make a knife out of. It would be sharper and tougher than an iron knife, and wouldn’t rust either, so maintenance was easy, making the knife even more popular.

Might be nice to have Sui make a knife out of this. The mithril knife really stands out, after all.

After clearing out several groups of killer ants.....

“Stop. Ahead of us and around the bend there is a group of killer ants that includes a higher form.”

It was Fel’s voice. Probably because there were no adventurers around us, Fel used his actual voice instead of telepathy.

“I will go,” Fel said, before he took off.

Even though he said he’d leave the weaklings to us, I guess he couldn’t sit still anymore. After catching up to Fel, I noticed there were no killer ants to be seen; instead, there were drops.

“This is..... I see there was a killer ant knight,” Elrand said, having spotted a shell that was shining with a black luster amongst the drops. It seemed that killer ant knights were a size larger than killer ants and armored in a hard shell. They dropped that shell, and the material was both light and tough, so it seemed it was popular as an armor material.

“Nadiya was complaining, you know? About not getting as many insect shells recently. Since they’re getting rarer here, you’ll be able to sell it for more than

usual. My guild wants it too.”

Huh, Elrand’s guild too? I guess it’s because there’s lots of adventurers hanging around dungeon cities, so there’s enough demand for weapons and armor to always make these worth it?

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Now that Fel joined in on the fights, our exploration proceeded smoothly, and we were now at this floor’s boss room. It looked like the previous party here just finished, and I saw a group of five adventurers downing potions and walking slowly, since they were covered in wounds and basically ripped apart. It seemed like they weren’t going to continue. Wordlessly, they passed by us.

“Well then, let’s go,” I said, and as we entered the boss room, the inside was crawling with a mountain of killer ants.

“Th-There’s really a lot of them.....”

“Yes. There’s quite a few killer ant knights, too. There might even be a killer ant queen.”

According to Elrand, the killer ant queen was the highest form of a killer ant, and appeared rarely in this boss room.

“If there’s a killer ant queen, *that* might appear too.”

“That?” I asked Elrand.....

《Whooaahh! There’s so many! Sui’s gonna go pew-pew and get so much!》

《Hahhhahhhh! I’m not gonna lose either!》

Sui and Dora-chan enthused as they headed for the mountain of killer ants. Not even a few minutes passed before the mountain of ants was cleaned up, leaving behind a couple killer ant knights, which were incredibly huge ants.

“There were so many killer ants that I couldn’t see, but there really was one. That big one in the back is a killer ant queen.”

“B-Big!” The killer ant queen was so big I couldn’t stop the words from coming out of my mouth; it was about three times larger than a normal killer ant. It had basically no battle ability, but it would endlessly produce killer ants, so it

seemed it was designated as a B-rank.

"The fact that a rare queen showed up means that if your luck is even better, you might get a good drop."

A good drop? So a queen has a rare drop item? Anyway, I guess I won't know until we beat the queen.

《Sui will take that big one!》

《That's not fair. I'll do it!》

《Sui will do it!》

《No I will!》

Neither Sui nor Dora-chan were backing down. *Geez, they're way too gung-ho about this.*

《**Wait. You all fought all those black ants before, no? I will take this last one. I will not allow any objections,**》 Fel said telepathically. He immediately adopted a posture to start attacking, before swinging his right front paw twice.

Zzsshh Zzsshhh

Fel's Rending Claws instantly cut the queen along with her knights to ribbons.

.....This always happens, but that's really anticlimactic.

"Ah, there it is. You were lucky~. I was talking about this," Elrand said, showing me the item he picked up.

Elrand was holding an opal-like gem slightly bigger than my fist that shone the colors of the rainbow. "It's a killer ant queen's eye. The name says 'eye,' but it's treated as a gemstone. It's been a while since I've seen one this big, too."

The killer ant queen's eye was popular in jewelry for its beauty, and apparently would often be worked into rings, necklaces, or broaches, among other things. With its rainbow luster, it was popular with nobles too, and I was told that, at this size, a buyer would pop up immediately. It seemed like this only showed up rarely, so I was lucky.

After retrieving the other drop items too, we moved on to the 12th floor.

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The 12th floor played host to the over 2-meter-tall praying mantis monster that was in Dolan's dungeon as well, the giant killer mantis, as well as its smaller cousin, the killer mantis. But here too, they were killed wholesale by Dora-chan and Sui. I had them leave me several so I could level up, and the mithril spear that Sui made for me was so powerful I managed to do it without much trouble.

Other than that, Elrand and I worked diligently on collecting drops, and thanks to Fel's navigation, our exploration went smoothly.

The boss room was also full of mantises, and once again Dora-chan and Sui quickly polished the fight off.

Thanks to all that, we were now on the 13th floor. The 13th floor was full of killer hornets. These ones appeared in Dolan's dungeon, too.

Fel made a disgusted face, and Dora-chan even outright said, 《Ghh, killer hornets?!》

Even so, I thought we'd be fine since they beat the ones in Dolan's dungeon, but Elrand told me that this dungeon's killer hornets had an especially vicious poison.

So that's why we haven't seen any other adventurers since we arrived on this floor...

《Heeey, you can stop talking about that stuff. Basically we just have to kill them, right? They're pretty annoying, and it's depressing how they buzz around, though.》

While Elrand and I were talking, Dora-chan, with his work ethic riled up, called out to us.

《**Indeed, it is as Dora says. We can just destroy them.**》

《Destrooooyyy!》

Fel and Sui were in agreement, too.

《Right then, let's go!》

Boooooooommm!

Right after Dora-chan opened his mouth, fire shot out of it.

“D-Dora-chan?!!”

“D-Dragon breath?!!” I was surprised too, but Elrand was astonished to the point that his eyes were popping out of his head.

“There’s never been records of a pixie dragon being able to use a breath attack! This is a new discovery!” Elrand was extremely excited over seeing a dragon breathe fire.

Completely unconcerned, Dora-chan continued to breathe fire, burning all the killer hornets as if he was a flamethrower.



“So you have a breath attack, Dora-chan.....” I said, but Dora-chan shot back a ‘no’ with telepathy.

《You know, only large dragon species can use breath attacks. I’m just using fire magic. Well, I’m making it look like a breath attack though.》 He said, before resuming his burning of the killer hornets.

Elrand was looking at Dora-chan spewing fire with sparkling eyes. It was more than a little gross.

“Is it okay? With all this fire magic flying around.....”

“You are worrying that it will become harder to breathe with so much fire magic around, yes?”

“Yeah. So you know about it, Fel.”

“Indeed. A long time ago, I was fighting in a dungeon.....”

So he must have done something before.

“From past experience, this much should be completely fine.”

“Huh? Really?”

“I am saying this, with all my experience of going through many dungeons. Do not worry. In the first place, are you feeling short of breath?”

Oh yeah, I’m actually not, even with all that fire flying around.

“That is your answer.”

Hmmm, I don’t really get it, but it might just be that not all of earth’s physics are the same in this fantasy world. Fel’s saying it’s fine, so I guess I don’t need to worry that much.

Thanks to Dora-chan, we painlessly continued on after that and reached the 13th floor boss room.

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“.....Well, well, we’ve been hit by some really bad timing.”

The boss room was buzzing with the sounds of wings from all the killer hornets that had filled up all the free space.

“The last time I was here, the boss room had not even half this number..... And while there was a killer hornet hive in the back, this time the hive is bigger than anything I’ve ever seen.”

There’s a nest.....

“For killer hornets, it’s best to finish off the hive first, right?”

“Indeed. However, with this many it will be impossible to even attack the hive. We will have to thin their numbers first before even thinking of that,” Fel said out loud, since there were no adventurers around us.

“With this many, it really would come to that, wouldn’t it?”

“Yes. If we don’t do something about all these killer hornets first, there’s nothing to be done,” Elrand agreed.

《I’ll go ahead, since all I have to do is burn these things to the ground, just like always.》 Dora-chan said before attempting to move into the boss room. I hurried to stop him.

“Wait a second. Fel, put some barriers around us please.”

“Okay. Understood..... It is done.”

《Well then, I’m going!》 Dora-chan said, moving into the boss room. As soon as he did that, he started throwing fire around posthaste, burning the killer hornets.

“W-W-W-Wait a second please. Barriers? D-Does that mean, the legendary Barrier magic?!!”

Huh? Legendary? “What’s he talking about, Fel?”

“There have been humans in the past that could use it, but right now I am probably the only one that can.”

W-What the hell?! I’ve never heard anything like that?! He’s been using them like it was normal since we met, right?

“Of course. Why would I not use what I have?” Fel said, as if it was obvious.

I mean, well, that’s true, but...

《Hey, I’m almost done here. Can I burn up this stupid huge hive, too?》 Dora-

chan asked with telepathy.

《No! Sui will do it!》 Sui threw a tantrum because it wanted to take over that part.

《Huh? But it'd be easiest to just burn it up along the way.》

《It's not fair that Dora-chan is doing all of it! Sui wants to do something too!》

Sui didn't get much of a chance to shine on this floor, after all.

《Sui hasn't had much of a chance to do anything on this floor. Sorry, but could you let Sui do this?》 I said, and Dora-chan withdrew with a, 《Tch! Oh fine.》

"It's fine, Sui. Make sure you say your thanks to Dora-chan, got it?"

《Yeah. Thanks, Dora-chan!》 Sui said, causing Dora-chan to look away, seemingly embarrassed.

"So, how are you going to attack it? You gonna drown it like you did in Dolan?"

《Yeah! Sui is gonna trap it inside a big huge ball of water!》 Sui said, happily bouncing up and down.

《Okay then, Sui will start.》 Sui entrapped the hive that was over twice the size of the one in Dolan's dungeon, which was already the size of a wagon, in a ball of water.

All that's left is to leave it until the hive disappears, huh? It'll probably take a while.

Dora-chan cleaned up the rest of the killer hornets, so there were a dizzying number of drops lying around the boss room.

"Now then, let's start picking up these drops," I called out to Elrand, who was still in shock over the Barrier magic.

Getting back on subject, the drop items were killer hornet's poison stingers, killer hornet (special individual) poison stingers, killer hornet wings, and killer hornet (special individual) wings. With the number of hornets defeated, there were quite a lot of them. It seemed that the wings, which didn't appear in Dolan, were ingredients for medicine.

Just about when we finished picking up all the drops, Sui messaged me with telepathy.

《Master, it's dead.》

Looks like the hive is finished too. Having Sui unmake the water, I checked the drop items.

"Ah, there's some royal jelly."

"Ohh, that's great. Royal jelly is rare and very popular. I wanted to buy it back at Dolan too, but the hides ended up being prioritized, so I had to give up on it."

It seemed that royal jelly was prized by nobles who watched their health; it was said that it would fill you with energy just by licking some.

"Oh! There's a killer hornet queen's poison stinger too," Elrand said, showing me a long, thin, and pointed cone-shaped needle that was over a meter long. "Lance users would go absolutely crazy for this."

With durability as a given, lances made out of these were considered first-class products it seemed, especially since they could also poison their enemies.

We continued diligently collecting dropped items after that, before we moved down to the 14th floor.

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The 14th floor played host to poison spiders, as well as venom tarantulas that had also appeared in Dolan's dungeon.

There really were a lot of special individuals showing up, so I asked Elrand about it, but—《Man, humans really do love to talk, don't they? Before you go and talk about it, just beat them, you know? Beat them right up,》said Dora-chan, before proceeding to breathe fire out of his mouth just like on the 13th floor, burning the venom tarantulas and poison spiders.

The several monsters that managed to get through Dora-chan's fire were beaten by Sui. I took down a venom tarantula myself, as well.

"Still, we've managed to get a lot of drops on this floor, haven't we? My Item Box is already near full," Elrand said.

It looked like Dora-chan and Sui were competing with each other, and they chased down all the monsters we saw, so we ended up with quite a lot of drops. *At this rate we'll probably have to keep picking up huge amounts of drops won't we? .....Oh, right.*

"Then I'll give this to you, so put them in there." I handed my magic bag over to Elrand.

"A magic bag? Okay, I'll borrow it."

《Hey, I'm hungry.》

《Sui is also hungry—.》

"Just like Dora and Sui say, I certainly am hungry."

While I was talking to Elrand, everyone started complaining about their hunger. *It's already time for dinner?*

"It looks like they're all hungry, Elrand, so let's stop here for the day."

"Is it already time for that? It was going so well that my sense of time is all messed up. Hahaha!"

While we were talking, Fel led us to a safe area. After taking a pause at the entrance, I found that there were already people inside. It was my first time meeting other adventurers on this floor. There were two human men, a bearded dwarf, and a female elf for a party of four. The adventurers seemed to be curious since we had Fel with us, and were glancing at us every now and again.

".....Could it be, Dolan's guildmaster?" The whispered sentence sounded very loud as it reverberated through this quiet, spacious safe area.

"Oh? I recognize you. Let's see..... The A-ranked adventurer party, Ark?"

"You really were Dolan's guildmaster. I'm happy you remembered us."

It seemed that the party, "Ark," that we met here were acquaintances of Elrand's.

Chapter 4: The Elves of This World Were All Gourmands

Apparently the A-ranked party we met, Ark, had been living in Dolan until about half a year ago while challenging their dungeon.

“I’m a guildmaster, so I would know about any Adventurers over B-rank in my city,” said Elrand, sounding really proud for some reason.

True, guildmasters should know what high-ranking adventurers are staying in their area. Elrand still just leaves everything up to Ugohl, but I’ve changed my opinion of him a little.

“Ugohl was lecturing me about it looking all sour, you see. He was all, like, ‘you need to know this stuff in case something happens!’”

Ahhh, so it was because of Ugohl. I guess that’s like Elrand, though.

“So, what’s Dolan’s guildmaster doing here?” asked the man who seemed to be their leader. He was a short-haired blonde in his early 30’s with a macho build and a scar on his cheek. Rather than an adventurer, he looked far more like a mercenary.

“Well, just going with the flow of things, I guess?”

No, that’s totally not true.

“Elrand.....”

Seeing my exasperated face, Elrand made a sound and started panicking.

“Uh, you know, like, I had something to do at the capital, and on the way back I heard that an adventurer that I was friends with was going to challenge Aveling’s dungeon. So when I came here to see, the rumors were true... So, you know... together.....”

The truth was that he was just after Dora-chan, so I felt like that explanation was a little off too. But I figured it was better than his first one.

“So this would be the adventurer in question?”

“That’s right. This is the S-ranked adventurer, Mukohda.”

“I’m Mukohda. Pleased to meet you.”

After some light greetings, the mercenary-like leader started staring at me.

W-What?

“Mukohda the tamer? Could you be the one that defeated Dolan’s dungeon?”

“*Sigh* Well, kinda.....”

It was basically all my familiars, though.

“Thought so. I had heard that you had a Fenrir as a familiar, so it’s true,” said the leader, while watching Fel freely let out a yawn.

So A-ranks really can tell that Fel’s a Fenrir just at a glance.

“So it really was a rumor among adventurers. I’m glad it’s advertising Dolan.”

According to Elrand, after I left Dolan after conquering its dungeon, the number of adventurers visiting Dolan rose. It seemed that they all thought, “Me too!” when they heard of the dungeon being conquered.

“Oh, sorry, I haven’t introduced myself yet. I’m the leader of Ark. Call me Gaudino.”

It looked like Gaudino was a swordsman, as he was equipped with a bastard sword. His mercenary look fit him well.

“And, this one is.....” Gaudino proceeded to introduce his party members.

There was Gideon, a spearman slightly younger than Gaudino, in his mid-20’s. He was a Hollywood-level hot guy with a slim-yet-macho build, short brown hair, and finely chiseled features.

Next was the dwarf, a warhammer-wielder named Sigvard. He was an older guy sporting the dwarven specialty: a bearded face and a short and stocky muscular build.

Lastly was the elf with a bow, named Feodora. Her golden threads of hair reached down to her shoulders, and she had green eyes set in a sharp face. She

was an incredible beauty who looked like the very picture of an elf. She had a bow, but I heard that elves have a lot of magic, so she might also be a mage.

"I want to ask, how was it getting down to this floor?"

My only answer to that would be 'it's as usual?' I mean, with everyone here it was nothing but easy.

"It seems like special individuals appear in this dungeon, but even so it seems like there's a lot of them," Elrand replied.

"As I thought....."

This was the second time attacking this dungeon for Gaudino and the other members of Ark, and it seemed that they felt like there were more special individuals this time.

"I heard that it was something that happened from time to time, so it seems like we just managed to hit that wave."

According to Gaudino, this dungeon would get a wave of special individuals every five to ten years.

"Oh yes, I remember that as well. I totally forgot about it since it was so easy coming here."

Apparently Elrand knew about it as well.

"Easy, huh? I guess that's to be expected. S-ranks are different," Gaudino said, giving a self-deprecating laugh.

That's so manly, Gaudino.

"No, no, even when I was active, it'd be impossible for me to get down here so quickly. It's all thanks to Mukohda," Elrand said, prompting Gaudino and the others to look my way.

They were probably gauging my strength, as I definitely did not look strong enough to be S-ranked. *Yeah, I'm not the one that's strong; it's Fel and the others.*

"Uhhhh, no it's my familiars that are strong," I said, and everyone looked over at Fel and understood.

Fel's not the only one who's strong, though. "Of course Fel the Fenrir is strong, but so is Dora-chan the pixie dragon, and Sui the slime is also strong as a special individual."

"I get the dragon, but even the slime?" Gaudino said in disbelief.

The other members seemed to feel the same.

"I thought that way about the slime too, but this one really is special. If you don't see it fight, it's pretty unbelievable though. In the end, all of Mukohda's familiars are strong. Thanks to them, we made it this far our first day in the dungeon," Elrand said, surprising all the members of Ark.

"Hey, I really am getting hungry. Make food." I heard Fel from behind me. It seemed he was finally fed up, as he actually spoke instead of using telepathy. The members of Ark were all in shock with their mouths open after hearing Fel speak. Even though fairy tales have Fenrirs speaking human language, pretty much everyone still reacted that way after hearing Fel speak. Seeing all the hot guys and girl (not including the dwarf) looking so dumbstruck with their mouths all open was a funny sight.

《Yeah. Get the food out first before you talk.》

《Master, Sui is so hungry—.》

It seemed that Dora-chan and Sui were both the same way.

"Sorry, sorry. I'll get food ready now..... Ah, would you all like to eat with us?"

This must be some kind of fate, so it should be fine to eat with everyone here. There aren't any other adventurers around, either. And I'll probably be able to learn a lot from the members of Ark, since it seems like they've been adventurers a long while.

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The dinner menu was fried seafood. I put out a pile of fried mackero, fried vermillion shrimp, fried yellow scallop, fried big hard clams, and fried aspidochelone. My familiars got a veritable mountain of the stuff, along with plenty of tartar sauce. It seemed a little unpopular with them, but I also served up some clam chowder just in case. We were eating the same variety of fried

food, along with clam chowder and black bread. Of course, the fried stuff came with tartar sauce.

As soon as I served the food, Fel and the others dug in, but Elrand and the members of Ark seemed hesitant.

“Uhhh, should we just eat this as is?”

Ahhh, right. This was probably their first time with this, so they have no idea what to do with the tartar sauce.

“This is seafood that I bought in Berléand, covered in breadcrumbs and fried in oil. Please eat with this white sauce that I served with it, like this.” I stabbed through one with a fork, covered it in tartar sauce, and put it in my mouth.

Yeah, the fried vermillion shrimp is delicious. Ah, I just put out fried seafood without thinking. They might not be good with seafood.

I remembered Alonzo of Shadow Warrior, an adventurer who hated seafood who I had met at Nijhoff. *Didn’t they say they were going to Aveling too? We might just run into them when we get out of the dungeon.*

...Yeah, as if. This place is pretty big, so that probably won’t happen.

“If this doesn’t suit your tastes, I have other food too, so don’t hold back,” I said, but it seemed I didn’t need to worry.

Starting with Elrand and Gaudino, they all started to chow down silently. *Thank goodness, it looks like they like it.*

Now then, I should eat too.

Ahhh, fried mackero is so good. I put it in my Item Box right after it was fried so it was still crispy. I just love it with some tartar sauce.

“It’s really gotta be tartar sauce to go with fried mackerel.”

Worcestershire sauce is nice sometimes, but this has gotta be top choice. And if I were to tie this all up with some cold beer..... Oh no, no, we’re inside a dungeon. Still, I wonder why you just really want some beer when you eat fried seafood like this.

“This is my first time eating this “fry” or whatever you call it, but it’s quite

good. Seems like it'd be perfect with some ale," said the dwarf, Sigvard, while eating.

Just what I'd expect from a dwarf.

"You're right. Not just this stuff, all fried foods are perfect with bee-... I mean, ale."

"Hohh, I see. Now that you mention it, what was that thing that recently became popular in Dolan? Fried potatoes? Those were perfect as snacks with ale, too."

So he tried fried potatoes, huh?

"Mukohda here was the one that spread those fried potatoes in Dolan."

"What? Really? Amazing, so you're a first-class cook as well as a first-class adventurer."

Nawww, you're making me blush. It's just really easy bachelor food, though. And it's all thanks to my Online Supermarket, too. If this wasn't a dungeon, I'd have brought out some whiskey right now.

"Hey, I want more. Put some Worcestershire sauce on this fish and this shellfish. And the usual white sauce for the rest."

It was Fel who ordered more.

So Worcestershire sauce on that fried mackero and big hard clams, and tartar sauce on the fried vermillion shrimp, yellow scallops, and aspidochelone? Oh yeah, he did say that the Worcestershire sauce went well with the mackero and the big hard clams, didn't he?

《Me too. I want the brown sauce on this fish and this shellfish.》

Dora-chan wanted the Worcestershire sauce on the fried mackero, yellow scallops, and big hard clams.

《Sui wants more too. And, Sui likes the white dip!》

And Sui wants it all with tartar sauce I see — with a heaping portion of all the food, of course.

When I fulfilled all their orders, they started chowing down with gusto once

again.

“What’s that brown sauce?” Elrand asked, seemingly full of interest.

“This? This is Worcestershire sauce. Would you like to try some?” I asked, seeing that Elrand’s plate was empty.

“Of course.”

I guess he wouldn’t have enough room to try it with all of them? Then I guess the mackero would fit Worcestershire best?

For the moment, I gave him some fried mackero along with the Worcestershire sauce. “I think the Worcestershire sauce goes best with this one. Here you go.”

“Ohh, thanks.” Elrand immediately bit into the food. “Ohh! It’s not just salty, the sauce has a complicated taste and compliments this light-tasting fish well. The other sauce with its acidity and mellow taste was extremely delicious, but this one is quite good as well,” Elrand evaluated, while continuing to chomp down on the food.

“”””Gulp.....”””””

The members of Ark were all staring at Elrand. I figured none of the guys would be satisfied with just that, given their builds. Even the slender Feodora still looked hungry.

“Ahh, would you like some more?”

“Sorry, can we?”

“Please.”

“I’d like some more too.”

“.....” *Nod nod nod*

Looks like they can all take a full helping of all the fried foods.

And it seemed like Elrand was still hungry too. “Do you want more too, Elrand?” I asked.

He happily said yes and handed me his empty plate. I served up a complete serving of all the fried stuff to Elrand and the members of Ark with some

Worcestershire sauce.

“This brown sauce is good, too.”

“Om, nom, mmm..... good.”

“This is delicious. Tonight’d be perfect if I had some ale.”

“.....” *Nomnomnomnom*

“It’s like a dream though, to be able to eat good food like this in a dungeon: if you ask anyone what the worst part of going into a dungeon is, it’d be the terrible rations. Since even Item Boxes have a limit, with all the other stuff there is to carry, there’s only ever room for preserved rations, you know? At least normally.”

The members of Ark all nodded in agreement to Elrand’s statement.

“I see. Thank goodness I have a large Item Box, then,” I said, hoping to deceive them; rather than large, my box was closer to infinite.

“This soup is superb, too. All the food you make is so good, Mukohda. It’s even better than a first-class restaurant in the capital.” Elrand enthused about my cooking while slurping on some clam chowder.

Getting praised this much is making me feel kind of itchy.

“I thought it was delicious too, but if an elf like you is saying it, there’s no doubt. Even Feodora, who’s really picky, has her head in the clouds.”

Elrand replied, saying, “This taste is more than enough to drive even elves to ecstasy,” and Feodora silently nodded in agreement.

Hm? This taste? What does that have to do with elves? I questioned in my mind, and Elrand kindly explained.

“We elves are long-lived, right? Thanks to that, we eat a lot of different things, and those who end up really enjoying food are common. That’s why a lot of elves become picky about taste. It’s well known enough for there to be a saying, ‘If you want to eat something good, just ask an elf.’ And among those, elves who are adventurers travel around the world tasting what’s best of each region, so they’d be the most knowledgeable.”

Ohh, is that how it is? That's pretty unexpected, so this world's elves are all gourmands. The main impression of elves I had were as vegetarians who don't eat much, but this world's elves are perfectly fine with meat, and both Elrand and Feodora are chowing down on seafood like this, so they aren't much different from me.

"Give me more."

《Sui wants more too.》

While I was talking with Elrand and the members of Ark, Fel and Sui asked for more, so I served them another mountain of fried food. Dora-chan must have been stuffed, as he was laid out on the floor stroking his belly.

I asked Elrand and everyone else if they wanted more, but it seemed that they really couldn't fit in another bite... except for one.

Feodora was looking down sadly at her wooden bowl that had been emptied of clam chowder.

Even though, at first glance, she seemed to be an aloof beauty...

While fighting down my urge to laugh, I asked her, "Would you like more of the clam chowder? I mean, the soup?" And Feodora pushed her bowl at me while nodding.

I served her up some more clam chowder; she was all smiles as she ate.

"Thank you for treating us to such good food. And..... sorry. Feodora doesn't talk, but she's a skilled adventurer. Even we can't really match up to her, but when it comes to food....." Gaudino shot Feodora another look before bowing his head to me.

"No, no, I'm happy that she's enjoying it so much."

Also, it was pretty interesting, seeing Feodora, who looked like a beautiful woman who was aloof to the world, turn into a huge glutton.

After another helping of clam chowder, Feodora looked satisfied.

Fel and Sui had another two helpings after that before finally calming down, thus finishing that night's dinner.

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Of course, the next morning, we also had breakfast with the members of Ark. And once again, naturally, I was the one cooking.

I mean, they were looking at me so expectantly. Especially Feodora; her eyes were something to behold. Nobody could refuse when they're being looked at like that by such a beautiful person.

The menu was meat soboro rice bowls. *It's probably perfect, since it's light yet still hearty enough to prepare everyone for a day's adventuring in the dungeon.*

I filled everyone's bowls with freshly steamed rice from my Item Box, covered the rice with shredded cabbage, and poured lots of meat soboro on top. It'd be good just like that, but I figured it'd be better with some sort of topping, so I rummaged around in my Item Box and found some eggs that I still had and dropped a yolk in the center of each bowl.

I broke the yolks for Fel and the others, and they happily dug in with gusto. I also served the food to Elrand and the members of Ark.

"Here, you see, break the yolk like this and mix so it coats the meat, then, eat it with the rice." I figured they hadn't seen this food before, so I showed them how to eat it.

Elrand and Feodora, the picky elves, sniffed at the food a bit before imitating me and taking a bite of the food. Then.....

For an instant both their eyes almost exploded out of their heads, and they started shoveling the food down their throats.

The other three, seeing that, started eating hesitantly.

"I doubted your senses since you used a raw egg, but this is good....." Guadino said.

Gideon, mouth full of food, nodded deeply in agreement.

"I thought stuff like raw eggs would just make you sick, but I never considered something as delicious as this to be possible. That's amazing, kid," Sigvard said, stuffing his cheeks with food.

"Ah, that's because these are fresh eggs. I wouldn't recommend it for those

eggs you see being sold just anywhere, when you don't know when they were laid. Please properly cook those."

This was something only I could do with these Japanese quality eggs. I've seen eggs being sold in this world, but there was no way to tell quality with those. Eating that stuff raw would definitely make you sick.

"Give me more."

《Me too.》

《Sui too.》

Everyone eats so fast...

I served up another helping for each of them. *I should start eating too.*

Yeah, this stuff's as good as always. The combination of the crunchy cabbage, the salty-sweet meat, and the mellow taste of the egg, along with the rice, is so good I feel like I could go on eating forever.

"This is my first time eating an egg raw. It's really good~. Combined with this well marinated meat, the mellow taste spreads and really whets the appetite," Elrand said, holding his now empty bowl.

Feodora, ever silent, was also nodding along with what Elrand said. Then, she looked to me, as if she was trying to beg me for something.

Right, right — seconds, I presume? You don't have to look at me like that; I'll give you more if you want it.

"Do you two want more?"

"Please."

"...!!" She nodded emphatically.

I took their empty bowls and refilled them. "Here you go."

Elrand and Feodora happily took their portions and started eating.

"How about all of you? Want more?" I asked Gaudino, Gideon, and Sigvard, since they'd just finished their bowls; and so they did.

Everyone eats so much right from the start of the day. They really are

adventurers.

...Wait, I'm an adventurer, too.

And especially Feodora. She's had three bowls — where is she putting all that food in her slender body?

Well, Fel and Sui still had about five times that. Even Dora-chan, who, compared to Fel and Sui, didn't eat much, had more than we did. And the dishes the three of them used were already quite a bit bigger than the ones we humans used.

After breakfast, everyone took a small break.

"Oh, it pains me to ask when you've been so good to us already, but may I ask you something?" Gaudino asked, as though the subject was very difficult. *I wonder what it could be...*

It turned out that Gaudino and the other members of Ark knew about the insect zone and its poisonous monsters, so they had prepared several people's worth of antidotes ahead of time. However, this time there were more special individuals than usual, so they'd already used three bottles of it. And the last bottle they had was most likely not enough now with all the special individuals floating about. After talking it over with the other members, they agreed to call it a day here and go back.

"So if possible, we'd appreciate it if you let us come with you until the boss room..."

Even though they were A-ranked, given their lack of potions, they probably wanted to have as much combat power as they could for safety.

Without hesitation, I answered yes. "Are you okay with that too, Elrand?"

"Of course I am. After all, there's basically no need for battle at all if you leave it to Mukohda here."

It's more Fel and the others than me though.

Hearing Elrand say, "basically no need for battle at all," the members of Ark all seemed confused.

Well, just look forward to it, I guess. More importantly.....

“So you want to go back to the surface, but are you sure it’s okay to keep going onward instead of heading back a floor?”

Don’t you have to go back the same way you came.....?

“That’s how it normally is, but once you pass the 11th floor, there’s a way to get back to the surface immediately. We all talked it over and decided to use that method this time,” Gaudino said.

I guess that means there’s an alternate exit ahead other than retracing your steps.

“Ah, this place has *that*, doesn’t it? It’s such a waste that I don’t use it that much, though.”

It looks like Elrand knows about it.

“What is it? What’s the method?”

According to Gaudino and Elrand, past the 11th floor, every boss room has a magic circle set up in the back on the landing before the stairs. Using that circle will apparently teleport you back to the surface.

“However, using that magic circle uses a lot of magic power. Depending on the size, you could end up having to use four B-rank magic stones, or two A-rank stones to start it.”

Ahh, so that’s what it is. But, if it requires magic stones, I can see that it’d be unusable if you didn’t have any on hand.

“We prepared magic stones just for this, so we want to use them.”

I see; preparation really is important.

“It really was a good idea to make Gaudino our leader. I can’t count how many times his caution’s saved our lives.”

“Yeah, this time’s the same. If we were to go back the way we came, honestly, we’d be cutting it really close with the antidote we have left.”

Sigvard and Gideon chimed in respectively. Feodora silently gave a big nod. Gaudino, slightly embarrassed by the praise, said, “I wonder if I’m not being too cautious. But if it saves us, it makes all that careful preparation worth it.”

Gaudino was right. One's life was the most important treasure of all.

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After fitting in a break to let breakfast settle, we left the safe area.

When I brought my mithril spear out from my Item Box, Gideon the spearman was fixated. "It's all mithril....."

Yeah, since my spear's specially made by Sui, even the haft is mithril. But I think Gideon's spear is mithril, too?

"Isn't your spear mithril too, Gideon?"

"It is, but only the spear's tip. One day I want a spear made entirely of mithril like yours."

Well I cheated in a lot of ways for mine..... Sorry about that.

"You really are S-ranked. That's amazing," Sigvard said, also impressed.

"Why do you sound so jealous? Isn't your warhammer made out of magic iron? I hear it's very hard to refine that. To make a chunk of magic iron the size of a warhammer, it must be quite the masterpiece," Elrand countered.

Ohhh, magic iron? So that exists, too.

"Hehahahaha! So you can tell just by looking? My brother made this for me with all his effort to celebrate my promotion to A-rank. It might not be as much as a human or an elf, but I have more magic than the average dwarf, you see. He made it for me out of magic iron since I can use Fire magic. And there's weight to think of too. The power of wreathing this thing in fire and slamming it into someone at full force is something else, you know?" Sigvard said, holding up his warhammer proudly.

Wreathing that hard and heavy-looking warhammer in magic and slamming it into something..... That sounds real dangerous.

"Hey hey, leave the lecture on magic iron there. We have customers," Gaudino said. I followed his line of sight and..... *Ohhh.*

There were even more venom tarantulas and poison spiders coming our way than yesterday.

“Hey, aren’t there more here than yesterday?”

“Looks like it.” Elrand said. The former-S-ranked adventurer’s face was twisted into a frown.

Yeah, this number of them together is just creepy.

《Oh, there’re more of them today, aren’t there? That just makes them worth killing. Right on, I’m going!》

《Aww, no fair! Sui wants to fight too!》

Both Dora-chan and Sui made for the huge crowd of venom tarantulas and poison spiders.

“H-Hey! Is that okay?!” Gaudino asked, panicked after seeing Dora-chan and Sui take off like that. He was probably worried since they were both so small.

“It’s totally fine. They’re both strong.”

I’m pretty sure it’ll be fine to just leave this entire floor to Dora-chan and Sui.

“That’s right. They’re much stronger than us. Especially Dora-chan, with his gallant figure..... It’s mesmerizing how he bravely flies in and attacks.”

I think you’re about the only one who’d be mesmerized by that, Elrand.

BOOOOOOOOMMM

Pew-pew-pew

Dora-chan’s Fire magic and Sui’s Acid Bullets ended the venom tarantulas and poison spiders.

Ah, I had them leave just one for me so I could level up. The one I killed didn’t drop anything, but there were lots of drops from Dora-chan and Sui’s prey.

“Now then, let’s get to picking them up,” I called out to Elrand, and found the members of Ark standing stock still in shock.

“They’re all surprised to see Dora-chan and Sui fight. Anybody’d get like this after seeing that for the first time.”

That’s true, isn’t it? It’s just the usual for me, though.

Once we were done picking up the dropped items, the people of Ark finally

recovered.

“W-What the hell? That strength.....” Their faces were scrunched in disbelief.

“Even if you ask me why they’re so strong, I don’t know, but it’s not like I made them my familiars because I wanted to.....”

“W-Well, with familiars this strong, you probably have more than a few secrets,” Gaudino said, and the members of Ark behind him all made their own connections.

It’s not really a secret, though. Ah, well it is a secret that we can converse with telepathy, I guess.

“Dora-chan is a dragon that’s got both strength and cuteness in spades, so it’ll be alright if you just leave everything to him.”

Why the hell are you acting so proud of that?

“I’m not Elrand, but I do agree that it’ll be all right if you just leave it to them, so let’s move on,” I said to the adventurers of Ark, and we all made for the boss room.

Mid-way through, the members of Ark started helping me pick up drops, so I handed them around ten percent of what we got. They refused at first, but I pushed and pushed until they gave in. We had too many of them in the first place, after all.

Just like that, while completely cleaning out all the rooms we came across, we eventually made it to the boss room.

“To think we’d get there this quick.....”

“We basically did nothing.”

“All we did was pick up drops...”

“.....” More silent nodding.

I understood what they wanted to say, but it was always like this for us.

“I was also surprised when I came with Mukohda. But now I understand how he managed to clear Dolan’s dungeon. Most likely he’ll do that here, too.”

“Tamers really are strong. It wouldn’t be too far to say they’re the strongest,

as long as they have strong familiars like you, Mukohda. It's only been a short time, but just by traveling with you, I can totally understand how you got to S-rank so quickly."

I was just lucky... Really, it was all thanks to my skill.

"Alright then, let's hurry up and clean out the inside."

"Let me see. I shall do it," Fel said out loud.

"What? You're going, Fel?"

《Whaaaat? You're gonna swoop in and steal the spotlight at the very end?》

《That's so not fair, Uncle Fel!》

"Hmph, you have been free to rampage about as much as you wanted to until now. Times like this are when you defer to your elders."

《Tch!》

《Bawww...》

Pulling age only in cases like this is unfair, you know? Well, it's all the same to me as long as they die.

"So we'll be able to see a Fenrir fight."

"This'll be a rare sight. I'll be watching from a front row seat."

The members of Ark were totally interested in seeing Fel fight.

Fel leisurely entered the boss room. And then.....

BOOM!

A bright light flashed, and all the venom tarantulas and poison spiders that had threatened to spill out of the room were killed by the Lightning magic coursing through them.

"It is done," Fel turned around and said, looking smug.

Ahh, that's how it is. He wanted to show off how powerful he was, just like Dora-chan and Sui have been doing.

"Yeah. There's gonna be a ton of drops here too, huh.....? Sorry, but can you all help me pick this stuff up, too?"

Ah, no good. Everyone's stiff as a board with their mouths wide open. Fel's plan was too big a success.

"Elrand, can you help?"

"Sure sure. It doesn't look like they'll be of any help right now, after all." Elrand and I silently picked up the enormous amount of dropped items.

The members of Ark still hadn't recovered even after we'd finished collecting the drops, so I tried calling their names out and waving my arms in front of them, finally getting them to come to.

I guess seeing one spell killing that many was far too strong a shock.

"What the hell was that....." It looked like they couldn't believe it, but I could only reply by saying, "It's Fel, so..."

It seemed like they finally worked through it by justifying their experience with the fact that it was a Fenrir.

We all moved to the back of the boss room.

"So, where's the magic circle that'll take you back to the surface?"

I'd heard it was on the landing in front of the stairs down, but I didn't see anything like that.

"Yeah, it's only rarely used, after all. Counting on you, Feodora," Gaudino said, and Feodora nodded before whispering out an incantation.

Then..... a gust suddenly rose with a whoosh, cleaning up all the dust and dirt all at once. It revealed a large circular pattern drawn so that it covered the entire landing, looking fairly cramped.

"Ohh! So this is the magic circle."

"Apparently it's on every floor from the 11th onwards. It's only rarely used, though."

No, but, isn't this really convenient if you think about it? You can just go straight to the surface as long as you have magic stones.

"Dolan's dungeon didn't have this, right?"

"That's what's so interesting about dungeons. Each one is so completely

different.....”

Although Aveling’s dungeon has a magic circle every floor starting from the 11th, there’s also a dungeon with one every 10 floors that takes only a little magic to activate. Apparently, there was even a dungeon that gave you a convenient item called a “teleportation stone” every set number of floors, which allowed everybody to teleport around.

Of course, each dungeon had its own set of monsters, and the traps were different as well. Dungeons differed in form as well, from dungeons with field-type floors like Dolan, dungeons that were only walled with stone like Aveling, and there were even apparently dungeons shaped like towers.

“Huh, so there’s a lot of different dungeons.”

“Since you’re an adventurer, it might be a good idea to travel the world and see each dungeon,” Elrand suggested.

Personally, though, I was already sick of dungeons. Even though I didn’t plan to go into any dungeons this trip, not only was I forced into Dolan’s, I had to go to Aveling’s right after that. I was totally done with dungeons for a while.

“Hmm, that is some good information. It seems like I will not be bored for a while.”

《Huh, so there’s a lot of dungeons where humans are. Sounds fun.》

《Whaaat? There’s more different dungeons to go to?》

Creeeeaaaaakkk

I slowly turned around, my bones creaking with a complex mixture of negative emotions as my gaze rested on my three familiars.


Mukohda's head

No, no, no... It looks like you're already looking forward to the next dungeon once we're done here, but I'm not going.

《*You know, we're going to Dolan next, right? We have to go and butcher the red dragon you all killed, and then we're going back to Karelina,*》 I telepathically messaged them, trying to get this nipped in the bud now.

I have to go get the mantle I ordered from Lambert, after all.

《**Hey, ask that elf there about what kinds of dungeons humans have in their towns.**》

No no, Fel, my friend, don't tell me to ask him. I'm not going to some dungeon.

《Oh, that's a great idea. Then we can decide where to go.》

《Yayyy! We can go to another dungeon~! Dungeons are fun, Sui loves them!》

Hey hey, stop saying whatever you like, Dora-chan, Sui. I'm not going to a dungeon. Actually, we're already in a dungeon, so now's not the time for that.

"We're in a dungeon right now, so concentrate on what we're doing instead."

"Indeed. You are right. We can talk after we beat this."

《Yeah, that's right.》

《Sui will try hard.》

Great, I've managed to derail the subject for now. It would be nice if they just forget about it. Anyway, I have to deal with this dungeon right now.

While all that fuss was going on, Gaudino and the others finished their preparations. "Now all we need to do is put down this last magic stone and the circle will activate."

There were three small magic stones placed in small circles scattered around the magic circle.

"You see, for this magic circle, the placement of your magic stones is different depending on how big they are."

"What? Isn't that really annoying?"

"Well, yeah. But, it's easy to figure it out if you just do some research."

You did that much research, Gaudino? I'll have to learn from you, too.

"You've really taken good care of us. We're planning to stay in town for a while, so once you come back up send us a message. I'll treat you guys to some food."

Everybody else nodded in agreement to Gaudino's offer.

"I'll treat you to some good booze."

The 'good booze' part was a little scary when spoken by Sigvard the dwarf, though.

"No, it was my pleasure. I learned a lot. Let's meet again on the surface."

".....Hey, Feodora, where are you trying to go?"

For some reason, Feodora was moving along with us. "............Good food."

"Hahh, I get that Mukohda's food is really good, but don't try to follow him just because of that."

Huh? W-What? Are you trying to follow me because you're after food, Feodora? That's kinda the same thought process as Fel and the others.....

Chided by Gaudino, a sad-looking Feodora muttered, "Food....."

You know, Gaudino heard that. Look, he's hanging his head back and facing the heavens in exasperation. Gideon and Sigvard are busting a gut, too. This is no time to laugh, but it's really hard to resist the urge. It's taking all I have to stay silent here.

Feodora's pretty disappointing as an elf isn't she? Even though she's so beautiful. I'm happy she likes my cooking, though.

Considering Elrand and Feodora, do all elves in this world have personalities that are full of holes?

"I'll treat you again once we meet back up on the surface, Feodora," I said, and her face lit up again all at once.

"Well then, let's meet again on the surface."

"Yes, let's meet again."

Gaudino placed the last magic stone, causing the magic circle to light up, enveloping them. Once the light died down, all the members of Ark who had been standing on top of the circle were gone.

“Looks like they got back safely.”

“Yes. Let’s keep going.”

After seeing the members of Ark off, we moved down to the 15th floor.

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After reaching the 15th floor and moving onward a little, Fel called out. **“Stop. Enemies are coming.”**

As soon as he said that, something brown jumped out from the end of the hall. It was bouncing around.

“What the hell is that.....? A huge toilet cricket?”

Toilet cricket... I believe the actual name of it was cave cricket?

They were huge toilet-that is, cave crickets. It seemed like they might be over a meter tall. They were jumping towards us in a group.

“Those are..... right! Those monsters do appear on this floor! This is bad — attack them immediately!!” Elrand screamed, having panicked after seeing the monsters approaching us.

Huh? Fel was talking like it wasn’t that bad... Are those cave crickets actually dangerous?

《Attack, right? Right on, I got it!》

《Sui will do it too!》

Dora-chan and Sui, reacting to Elrand’s scream, attacked the cave crickets.

Thud-thud-thud-thud

Pew-pew-pew-pew

However, the cave crickets must have been particularly tough, as it seemed to take more Ice Pillars and Acid Bullets than usual.

“Looks like they’re all dead.....”

“Yes.” I looked over at Elrand, and saw him looking relieved.

“What are those monsters?”

“Those are.....”

“They will eat anything. They are scavenger monsters.”

“Looks like Fel knows about them. Those monsters are named, ‘killer camel crickets,’ and they eat anything they can get their jaws on. They say that if you meet your end because of a killer camel cricket, there’ll be nothing left of you,” Elrand explained.

It seems that they live in dark forests or deep in caves, so they’re rarely seen, but if you do see them they’ll eat you down to your bones, and even eat your possessions. Apparently they’ll even eat iron weapons and armor.

“What’s even worse about them is, killer camel crickets implant their eggs in living things.”

Urk! .....Wait, could that mean.....

“So that means, adventurers they catch will get eggs implanted in them?”

“Yes. If that happens, you’re basically dead.”

Thought so. I don’t think anything’d survive getting eggs put in them. Why are there so many really awful bug monsters?

“The iron rule is to kill them before they get anywhere near you.”

Of course. Hard pass on getting eaten or being used as a nest for their eggs.

“It’s as you heard, you three. Exterminate them before they get close.”

“Indeed. I will attack on this floor as well.”

《Of course, I’ll keep killing them as I have been!》

《Sui will beat looooots too!》

Just as they declared, after that conversation all three of them continued to exterminate the killer camel crickets over and over as soon as they were spotted. And thus, we reached the boss room in no time at all.

Taking a peek inside the boss room, I saw it was filled to overflowing with the

higher form of killer camel crickets, giant killer camel crickets. And there was an even bigger one in the middle — bigger by far than even the giant killer camel crickets. Not only that, it was eating the killer camel crickets around it.

“Ghh, cannibalism?”

When I tried using Appraisal on it.....

【King Killer Camel Cricket】

A-ranked monster. Will eat anything using its steel-like jaws.

A-rank, huh? Seeing it eat its own kind like that is just offensive.

“Dora, Sui, we are going.”

《Yeah.》

《Yeah!》

“Ah, I’ll be shooting magic from the back, too.”

I need to attack to level up, even if it’s only a little. As long as I don’t get too close, I should be fine... maybe.....

“Heh, make sure not to hit us.”

“I-I know already.”

My three familiars entered the boss room.

Zzsshhh-zzsshhh-zzsshhh

Thud-thud-thud-thud

Pew-pew-pew-pew

Everyone started attacking. It was a one-sided massacre. It didn’t even take ten minutes to make it so that the only things remaining in the boss room other than us were dropped items. Even the A-ranked boss could do nothing before their triple attack.

After everyone finished picking up the items, we moved on to the 16th floor.

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There were centipede monsters on the 16th floor: giant centipedes like those I saw in the Ishtam forest, and venom centipedes that were about half the size of the giant centipedes. It seemed that venom centipedes were extremely poisonous, but that posed no problem for my three familiars and their all-out attack policy. Thanks to that, the 16th floor went smoothly from start to finish, and I even got in some fighting in the middle.

In the boss room that came last, there were so many giant and venom centipedes crawling around and all over each other that it was honestly pretty gross, but the room was cleaned up in a flash.

Elrand was staring at Dora-chan the whole time in a trance. His expression was... not good.

With this and that happening, we safely cleared the 16th floor and earned a huge amount of dropped items, before entering the 17th floor, the final floor in the insect zone.

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“Huh? This floor’s kinda... spacious.”

Having stepped into the passages of the 17th floor, I noticed that the halls were about twice as big as before.

“Yes, they start getting bigger starting from this floor. Still, we only know about this floor though.”

Elrand had gotten down to the 17th floor when he was still active, right? He said that he didn’t go to the 18th because it was an undead floor if memory serves.

“The insect monsters here are the most dangerous of their kind. Please be careful,” Elrand said, seeming more serious than ever. “Dora-chan’s here though, so I suppose there’s no real need to be worried,” he added, but his eyes were still sharp as ever as they took in his surroundings.

“They are here,” Fel said. He must have sensed their presence.

Ksk...

Kskskskskskskskssk...

A thick mass of monsters giving off a black luster carpeted the floor, walls, and even ceiling of the dungeon.

Hm? That's... no way.....

"NNWWWOOOAAAHHHHH!!!!"

"Wah?!! W-What is it all of a sudden? Why did you scream so loudly? I know giant cockroaches are dangerous, but Dora-chan is here. Please hold it together!"

Cockroaches..... they really are cockroaches. And they're somehow even fucking bigger!

"WHY DID THERE HAVE TO BE ROACHES———?!! THERE'S NO WAY — ROACHES THAT BIG ARE UNREAL!! NO! NO WAY! I CAN'T DO THIS! CAN'TDOTHIS CAN'TDOTHIS CAN'TDOTHIIIIIIIIIIISSSS!!"

The super extra-large cockroaches that looked to be over a meter and a half in length scuttled our way with their unique, disgusting shuffle.

"NOOOO! ATTACK! KILL THEM ALL! DESTROY! EXTERMINATE!!!!!"

"You are being too loud. Even if you didn't tell me to, I would crush these things under my foot."

《Oh, for some reason he's getting really into it. Of course I'll go! Yahhooooo!!》

《Sui will do as master says! Sui will go pew-pew and kill lots!》

All three of them mercilessly attacked the cockroaches, taking only a couple minutes to clean them all up.

"Hey. It is done."

"You don't look too good, Mukohda. Are you okay?"

"Yes....." I said, nodding, but it was all a lie.

Why are they even here, in a whole other world..... Those goddamn roaches, I'll exterminate them all! Roaches are no good; they can't be allowed to live!

It had happened back when I was in college and had just started living on my own. Summer was too hot, but it was starting to cool down for the beginning of

fall. At night, when I was sleeping, I felt an itchiness on my cheek. Thinking it was a mosquito or something, I reflexively just swatted at my cheek. And in response, I felt something squish underneath my palm with a disconcerting sound.

I had opened my eyes sleepily, wondering what it was, and turned on the light next to my bed. And, when I opened my hand under the light..... There was a half-crushed black cockroach in it.

Not only that, the crushed part was still twitching. Seeing that, it didn't matter that it was the middle of the night, I screamed at the top of my lungs.

Ever since then, I've been traumatized.....

So that I'd never see one again, I made sure to close anything that might be food for them in airtight containers, and always kept my room clean. And even then... they'd come anyway, seemingly out of nowhere.

Whenever that happened, I'd immediately don full protective gear: gloves, goggles, and a mask, and kill it as soon as possible with insecticide. I always had cockroach insecticide and black vinyl bags to get rid of their bodies on hand.

They're so fecund, it's said that if you see one, there's actually one hundred. Although there was no way for them to breed in my room, where I was always on guard, there was more than enough space for them to breed and come in from the outside. All I could do was remain on permanent watch with my permanent stock of cockroach insecticide and black vinyl bags. *Being well prepared gets rid of trouble down the line, after all.*

.....Hah!

"Could it be, Elrand, these monsters multiply very fast?"

"So you knew. Normally there's not very many of them, but it seems they have a mating season, and during that time their numbers explode. Thanks to that, there was said to be an incident some hundred and thirty years ago known as 'The Tragedy of Rackham.'"

".....What was 'The Tragedy of Rackham'?"

"Ahh, it's well known among us long-lived races, but I guess there would be

people that don’t know about it. The tragedy of Rackham was.....”

According to Elrand, 130 years ago, there was a modestly-sized town named Rackham in the kingdom of Klarsen that got destroyed in a single night by a swarm of giant cockroaches. The population of that town was of a decent size, but it was emptied in a single night. Not even a single person, nor any horses, nor any other living things were left.

After that, there was a huge influx of extermination requests for giant cockroaches to the Adventurer’s guild and the kingdom’s army, and they were finally killed after an enormous number of sacrifices.

“Giant cockroaches by themselves are on the higher end of B-ranked. They have powerful jaws and their legs end in talons. Not only that, but they can spray a paralyzing mist, so they can force you into a very hard fight. I’d only heard about it from someone I know, but it was a pretty harsh battle.”

Jaws, claws, and even paralyzing mist? The roaches in this world are way too evil.....

“I read about this in a book before; it seems that the giant cockroaches in this dungeon definitely lay eggs, although the details of their mating season are unknown. The killer camel crickets on the 15th floor lay eggs, but don’t multiply from them. However, the giant cockroaches here sometimes come up from the dungeon, so it looks like they actually multiply on their own. Apparently the author of that book heard from an adventurer who had actually cleared this dungeon that he saw giant cockroaches hatching.”

W-What the hell..... They come up from the dungeon, and even hatch from eggs. So they just multiply and multiply? Just how many roaches are on this floor? Shiver Just thinking about it is scaring me.

“Let’s stop talking for now, we need to pick up the drops and move on.”

.....Drops? From those roaches?

“U-Uhhh, we have more than enough drops, so I’m thinking we don’t need any from this floor, maybe.....”

I know they’d be worth something, but I don’t want to touch anything that comes out of a roach.

“Why would you say that? Just like I said, giant cockroaches are rare in the first place. These materials will become good weapons and armor, and not only will they be worth a lot, but it’ll be good for other adventurers that need the equipment too. We have to take these with us. If you leave them here you’ll get an earful from Nadiya, you know?”

Khh..... he’s right. Nadiya’s really scary when she’s angry.

“Now now, don’t dawdle. Let’s just get this over with. It looks like they’re really getting impatient.”

After that, Elrand started diligently picking up the drops, which consisted of feelers, abdominal shells, claws, small bottles of paralyzing poison, and — though there were few of them — small magic stones.

“Okay. Hurry up. Go.”

《Yeah. This is taking too long, so I’ll help too.》

《Sui will help too.》

Everyone diligently picked up the items and brought them to me.

Fuck... I don’t want to have to touch this crap with my bare hands... but they’re helping me and everything... Oh god no! Aauugghh! FINE!

I took out the gloves I used back when we had a BBQ. But even though I had gloves, I still didn’t really want to touch the roach’s drops. I pinched them as lightly as I could with my index finger and thumb and dropped them into my Item Box.

“Whew~, it’s finally over.” I muttered reflexively once I managed to pack in all the drops.

This floor is extremely bad for me. Those huge roaches (who I will now refer to as bigroaches), shave off my sanity, in a lot of ways.

“Now then, let’s move on,” Elrand said, seeming just fine.

“.....We’re really going...”

“Hm? What’s wrong?”

“No, I was just thinking... We have so many dropped items already, it’d

probably be fine to just go back up.....”

“Hmph! As if we would leave after coming this far. Stop spouting stupid things. We are going,” Fel spat, as if he was shocked at my stupidity. He started walking, and the rest of my familiars and Elrand followed him.

Yeah, that’s it, isn’t it... Hahhh~, there’s no way they’d go back now given how much they love dungeons.

Just thinking about how I’m going to have to face these bigroaches from now on makes me so depressed I can’t stand it, but there’s nothing I can do.

I followed after everyone else.

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While moving through the 17th floor, we met swarms of bigroaches, one after another. It was fine that everyone else was happily fighting them and quickly killing all of them, but I was completely freaked out just trying to pick up drops.

I had to quickly pick everything up, driving my mind into the depths of nothingness until I acted like a machine. But as we got closer and closer to the boss room, they came in bigger and bigger swarms, and there were now some that got past Fel and the other’s attacks and tried to get to Elrand and I. They still managed to defend us, but it was feeling like it’d just be a matter of time until they broke through.

If even one or two get through, it’ll be a very grave matter for me. I have to prepare some kind of countermeasure.

First: cockroach insecticide. The herbicides I used in Nijhoff on those evil plants worked well. And I think the roach spray I can buy using my skill works well, too. However, that would mean having to use my skill in front of Elrand.

Well, even if Elrand learns about the Online Supermarket, he probably wouldn’t tell it to just anyone. He’s a little, or rather, really strange, but I think he’s trustworthy.

There was something I was more worried about. And that was Elrand himself. For some reason, anything I bought with my skill was much stronger in this world. I thought the roach spray would definitely work. But then that brought

up the question of whether or not it would be safe to use in a dungeon or any other enclosed space. It probably wasn't a good idea to be stuck in a dungeon breathing in a lot of strong insecticide, even if it would kill the bigroaches. Elrand was from this world too, so I had no idea what kind of effect it would have on him, either. There was no way I'd be able to get over it if I started using the roach spray with no thought and something happened to Elrand.

*With that in mind, although the spray will probably work, there's no way I can use it. So if that's the case, hmmmm..... If I remember right, a mixture of dish soap or some hard liquor like vodka can stop the roaches from breathing and kill them, right? If I'm gonna do it that way, maybe I should throw it bottle-*and-*all? It probably wouldn't work with the plastic bottles soap comes in, but glass liquor bottles* will *break, so I can throw those without question.*

Ah, that *might work, too: freezing insect spray. It doesn't use any dangerous pesticides, so it's safe around food. That's why I've tried it several times. But, it takes time to kill roaches, so I ended up throwing it into storage. That'll be stronger in this world too, so even if it doesn't kill them, it should still slow them down a lot. And in the meantime Elrand can kill them for me. Okay — I'll buy alcohol and the spray while we're in the next safe area.*

After that, Fel and the others continued to fight full force, and we managed to reach the nearest safe area to stop and eat. Of course, after coming this far, no one else was in the safe area. According to Nadiya, there were other adventurers that had made it this far, but Elrand said, "There's a lot of special individuals around right now, so, realizing that, they probably retreated."

To be honest... I really want to go back, too.

Fel and the others requested meat for lunch, and Elrand said, "I'd like to eat *that* once again. You know, what you fed me once before," so lunch was beef bowls.

I used the golden-backed bull meat. I served my three familiars an extra-large serving of rice with lots of beef on top. I'd learned that Elrand ate quite a bit, so I gave him a larger serving as well, with a proportionate amount of meat. All three of my familiars were chowing down, and Elrand also said, "Yes, yes! This flavor! It's so good!" He was eating heartily as well.

As for me..... I really couldn't work up an appetite.

But when I consider that I'm gonna have to face those bigroaches again, having at least a little bit of food in me is necessary. I think something light and refreshing would be best.

I was planning to explain things to Elrand when I bought the alcohol and freezing spray anyway, so using it a bit earlier would be fine, I think? I opened up my Online Supermarket.

《**Hey, is it alright if this one finds out?**》 Fel asked, having seen me use my skill.

"Yeah. I need to buy something to beat these monsters on this floor. Also, when we go lower, I probably won't have enough food, so I'll most likely have to use it anyway. It's only a difference of when it happens. More importantly, I think we can trust Elrand."

《**I see. If you say so, then that is fine. If that is the case, give me something to drink. I want that black one.**》

Fel said that he wanted cola. Seeing that, Dora-chan and Sui didn't stay quiet either.

《Ah, what?! Then I want that black stuff too! Also pudding.》

《Sui wants the black fizzy stuff too. Also, Sui wants to eat ca—ke.》

Ahh, fine fine. Everyone's been doing their best on this floor, so I guess I should reward them.

"M-Mukohda, what's that?!" Elrand said, eyes wide in surprise, seeing me with a huge window in front of me.

"This? This is my unique skill. It lets me buy food or other useful items from another world."

".....Another world?"

I guess he wouldn't get it if I just said that. "Yeah, just think of it as a skill that lets me buy delicious and convenient things."

"I, I see..... But it's the first time I've ever heard of such a skill."

I bet. I'm probably the only one with this unique skill. I mean, it's a skill even this world's gods have never heard of.

"I'm probably the only one with this skill."

"Probably. I consider myself pretty knowledgeable about skills, but I've never heard of it. Well, there are cases where the owners of skills hide them, so it's not like all skills have been made public. It's not unusual for a rare skill to not be known."

"I want to keep it as secret as possible too, so please don't tell anyone."

"Yes, of course. The fact that you showed me your skill means that I'm being trusted. I'll never do anything to betray that trust. If I ever did anything to betray you, Mukohda, I'd never be able to meet Dora-chan again, and I'd never get another dragon either, after all. That's like asking me to die! Hahaha."

That's heavy. Really heavy. Just how much do you love dragons? It's nice that he'll probably keep my secret though.

For my lunch, I bought yogurt and a cafe au lait with lots of milk in it, and I also got cola for my three familiars. Also, I got fifty bottles of vodka and twenty bottles of freezing spray to use as anti-bigroach weapons. They say that preparation now gets rid of trouble in the future, so I bought more than I thought I needed. And, as a reward for Fel and the others, I bought the usual cakes and pudding from Fumiya.

I took the items out of the usual cardboard box they came in. Then, I served out the cola in wooden dishes to Fel and the others, who had eaten their fill of the beef bowls.

"What is that black stuff? They're all drinking it so quickly... is it a beverage?" Elrand was frowning, seeing cola for the first time. It's pitch black, after all.

"Never mind the color. It's sweet, fizzy, and delicious. Want to try some?"

My recommendation must have sparked some interest, as Elrand replied with, "Just a little." So I took his cup and filled it about halfway with cola.

"Well then....." Elrand said, slowly lifting the cup up to his mouth and taking a sip. After that first one, he immediately started chugging it down.

“Hwhhooo~, I was wondering what kind of taste black water could have, but this is delicious! It’s a flavor I’ve never tried, but it’s so much sweeter than any fruit juice that it can’t be compared, and the fizziness as it passes through your throat is to die for. .....Burp. Oh my, excuse me.”

“Haha! That’s thanks to the carbonation. Drinking it makes you belch.” I poured Elrand another cup, and did the same for Fel and the others as well. Then, I served out the cakes and puddings for dessert.

Fel had two of his favorite strawberry shortcakes. Dora-chan the pudding lover had a custard pudding and something new: a baked pudding shortcake. Sui had new products as well: a new fruit shortcake with seasonal fruits, including Kyoho grapes, and an improved chestnut mont blanc.

Of course, I put out a cake for Elrand’s dessert too. I gave him the standard strawberry shortcake with lots of fresh cream on top, something you couldn’t miss with.

Elrand was first moved by how beautiful it was. “Th-This is.....”

“It’s something I got using the skill I just told you about. I can get something delicious like this that you’ll never see around here.”

“A-Amazing.....hah! Then, your cooking...?!”

“I’ve actually been cooking all of that, but I do use spices and ingredients I get with my skill. I can get good spices, after all.”

“I see. So that means I’ll get to eat good food naturally just by staying near you.”

“That is correct. His food is delicious. And the cakes he gives us are good as well.”

Fel, that’s not something you should act proud of. Well, I’m happy he thinks it’s good though.

“Now, I think this cake is a sweet you can’t get around here, so please try it,” I said, prompting Elrand to put his fork into the white cream.

Elrand was greatly moved by the taste of the strawberry shortcake. In this world without any decent sweets, it seemed that the taste of the strawberry

shortcake was pretty shocking. Elrand was literally crying while saying how delicious it was. As for me, I was having the yogurt that would replace my lunch next to everyone else and their cakes.



The first yogurt I've had in a long while refreshed my taste buds and was really good. Then, I relaxed with some sweet cafe au lait.

However, we were still in the dungeon. And my fight with the bigroaches on this floor was yet to be over. According to Fel, we were about 75% done with this floor. But even though we've gone quite far, the closer we get to the boss room, the more of those bigroaches would come at us, so we still couldn't let down our guard.

I've fully prepared with my anti-bigroach weapons, the vodka and freezing spray. I'm done with preparations. I'm gonna do it. As if I'll lose to some bigroaches! They're the ones that're gonna get destroyed! Goddammit, I'll kill them all!

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"Take that! Hah!"

Clank! Clatter!

"Okay! Take another one!"

Cracckk!

All three bottles hit home.

"I'll go!" Elrand said. He closed in quickly and beheaded the bigroach with his favorite sword.

Having come from the safe area and with the boss room in our sights, we kept moving forward as we dealt with the endless masses of bigroaches that came from everywhere and nowhere at once.

Just as I'd worried about, they started to be too numerous for Fel and the others to handle, reaching Elrand. I took the vodka I'd prepared from my Item Box and threw it at them.

At first I was panicked and missed several times, but after a while I'd gotten used to it and my accuracy got better. However, just one bottle of vodka did nothing to a bigroach. It took three or four bottles just to slow them down a little. They were just as annoyingly tenacious as Japanese roaches.

I threw a fireball at one of the bigroaches that had slowed down due to my vodka, and it lit up like a firework. *This is bad...*

Seeing the bigroach utterly immolated, I thought to myself, *serves you right!* But the fire was so intense it was actually dangerous for me, so I stopped using Fire magic after throwing the vodka.

In the end, we went with a strategy where I just backed up Elrand as he killed the roaches. I'd use the vodka and freezing spray I bought with my skill to slow them down, and Elrand would cut them in twain. Even though there were only a few bigroaches that could get past Fel and the others, I think our strategy worked well. Elrand and I had already exterminated ten of the things.

"Mukohda! Another one's coming!"

"Okay!"

I'd gone through most of my vodka, so this time I used freezing spray.

Psshhh Psshhhh Psshhhh Psshshhhh

White mist clung to their black bodies. The fact that it was from another world must have come into play, as I could actually feel the cold from where I was. The bigroaches' movements gradually got slower, probably because their body heat was being rapidly stolen away. With no hesitation, I pulled the trigger on the spray again.

Psshhh Psshhhh Psshhhh Psshshhhh

"Elrand!"

"Okay, I'm going!" Elrand swung his beloved sword, and halved their blackly shining bodies while they were slowed.

I picked up the abdominal shell left behind by the roach with gloved hands and threw it into my Item Box.

To think I'd get this used to it, when at first I couldn't stand how much I hated the very idea of it.

I picked up the huge amount of drops left behind by Fel and the others as well, throwing them into my Item Box one after the other. I couldn't hesitate, since I knew that if I did, we'd never move on.

At any rate, the most important thing is to get out of here as soon as possible.

We moved forward while exterminating the bigroaches. And.....

“That is the last room.”

Finally. It hadn’t actually been that long since we’d left the safe area, but to me it was almost an eternity.

Once this is over, I’ll finally be able to say goodbye to these damned bigroaches. But the last boss room’s gonna have even more bigroaches than before, won’t it.....

Already feeling fed up, I peeked into the boss room anyway.

I was at a loss for words. There was an enormous number of bigroaches, but there was an even larger super-sized bigroach in there too.

“Ahhh, so it really appeared. That’s a gigant cockroach. As you can see, it’s even bigger than a giant cockroach, and proportionately more ferocious. There should be only two or three at most when they appear, but it must be because it’s the season for special individuals.....”

The gigant cockroaches, as Elrand explained, didn’t have the courtesy to come at us in such small numbers as two or three.

“There’s almost ten of them.....”

“Yes. For some reason. I-Is that mountain there eggs?”

That’s right. Just as Elrand said, there were eggs — a huge number of them, too. The burnt-brown colored, roughly 50cm long, capsule-shaped eggs — *if I remember right, they’re egg casings*— piled up to form a mountain. That meant that the entire mountain consisted of about thirty eggs.

Urrghh, that’s so disgusting. Actually, why are there so many eggs? I’d heard that the bigroaches on this floor multiplied through eggs, but that’s way too many, right? If all of those hatch... Urgh my goosebumps.....

“With that many eggs, we can definitely look forward to the drop items.”

“What? The eggs drop things too?”

“Apparently, giant cockroach eggs drop gold.”

Why would something unclean and disgusting like that drop gold? I don't get dungeons. It's not like I'm after the drops or anything, but I can't leave those eggs alone. If they hatch, just how much will those bigroaches swell in number? We'll have to destroy each and every last one of them.

"Eggs? If they all hatch, they might overflow out of the dungeon, huh?"

"Huh? Really?"

Overflow? Isn't that really, incredibly bad?

"A stampede, huh? It hasn't happened recently, but certainly, as things stand....."

According to Elrand, stampedes happened when monsters grew too large in number in dungeons and overflowed into the world. Right now, adventurers actively delved into dungeons, so it hadn't happened in a hundred years.

Though, if a dungeon near a town happened to overflow..... the thought alone is so frightening, I don't want to imagine it.

"However, although it's just a coincidence, you're here right now Mukohda. What luck! Fel, Dora-chan, and Sui will definitely be able to crush those eggs."

"Indeed, you are correct to say so. We will carefully crush each and every one of those eggs in the end," Fel declared, and he dragged Dora-chan and Sui into the boss room.

...Seeing the massacre that followed was actually refreshing in how one-sided it was.

Do it more! Exterminate all the roaches!

With Fel and the others on the job, the bigroaches and the super bigroaches combined didn't even take ten minutes to exterminate. And lastly, Dora-chan set fire to the mountainous pile of eggs, before Sui melted what was left with acid just in case. Once the eggs disappeared, a bunch of flat circles of gold around 2cm in diameter dropped.

"Huh. Somehow we end up spending longer picking up drops than actually fighting," Elrand said, looking around the boss room.

Even so, it wasn't conceivable to *not* bring the items back, so Elrand and I diligently worked on picking up the spoils. Thanks to Fel and the others helping too, we finished faster than usual.

Next was the 18th floor — the second undead level.

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"Mukohda! There's a ghoul behind you!"

"Yeah!" With the warning from Elrand, I turned around and readied my mithril spear. It looked exactly like one of the zombies from the 9th floor, and ran this way while throwing rotting pieces of itself everywhere.

That's right, ghouls can run. The first time I saw it happen I got really scared.

Even though it ran, it wasn't all that fast, but it was still like the difference between heaven and earth when compared to zombies, which could only walk slowly.

I had a light panic when I saw the ghouls, but I calmed down when Fel said, "I have a barrier around you; it is fine." And, thinking more clearly, I also had the Perfect Defense skill.

When I calmed down and stabbed it with my mithril spear, it went down easily. I wasn't sure if it was because of the holy seal effect though. That thing really worked wonders.

Wait, no. Right now I have to concentrate on the ghoul that's coming at me.

"Hahh!" I stabbed my spear into its chest, and the ghoul collapsed as I pulled it back out. Meanwhile, Elrand took care of two of them himself.

"Oh, it dropped some black claws."

Ghoul claws were sharp and poisonous, and they dropped those claws when they died.

"I hear that these claws can turn into some pretty bad poisons... Is this really all right? We're getting a lot of them....."

According to Elrand, who heard it from another experienced adventurer, these poison claws turned into a really nasty special poison. If you were to get

poisoned by it, supposedly, your whole chest would slough off and you'd die in three or four days.

Most likely, it's a slow acting poison that causes heart attacks. Your cause of death would be treated as illness, so it seems like the poison is perfect for assassinations.

"Don't worry about it — the Adventurer's guild will be the one deciding who to sell it to, you know? It seems to be something certain parties would pay an arm and a leg for, but....."

You mean among the world of assassins, right? Or, say, nobles who'd want to use it to get rid of a competitor or something like that.

"It wouldn't be good to have too many, so maybe we should just sell some of it, and burn the rest or something later."

"Th-That's probably a good idea."

We were racking our brains over the problem of having too many poison claws from ghouls.

"Hey, hurry and pick them up."

《Yeah! We want to move on.》

《Master, I picked them up for you—.》

There was a heap of drops from the ones Fel and the others dealt with, and seeing the huge amount of poison claws from ghouls, both Elrand and I laughed bitterly.

"Well, we can think about what to do with them later. Let's just pick them up for now."

"Yeah."

Elrand and I continued to pick up the scattered drops from the undead.

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We moved through the 18th floor smoothly, and were currently in the 4th room of the floor. Thanks to Fel and the others rampaging through the undead, the room that had been swamped with them was thoroughly cleansed of their

filth, although the floor was now littered with drops. This was the same every time, and it looked like it would take a while this time as well.

“Let’s pick up the drops, Mukohda.”

“Yeah. Ah, there’s quite a lot of dark balls, aren’t there?”

There were many small black marble-like objects around 2cm in diameter littered around the room. The black marbles, or, the dark balls, were drops from wraiths.

“There were quite a lot of wraiths, after all.” In fact, their numbers were increasing the closer we got to the boss room.

“With this many, it might be a good idea to try *that* on the next floor.”

“Yes. It seems like the dark ball doesn’t have much of an effect on the undead, but there is value in testing how it does against monsters that aren’t undead. We have so many, too... Let’s try it on the next floor like you suggested, Mukohda. If it works, then it’ll be quite useful.”

If you touch a wraith — which was like a white blurry mass — it’s said that you’ll get affected with a status condition that halves your stats, and it seems that the items wraiths drop have the same effect. From what Elrand said, hitting something with this dark ball will produce a hazy black mass, and anything exposed to the miasma would be afflicted with the same status condition.

Though that’s just what Elrand had heard from someone else, it seemed. “At any rate, it’s really rare, you know. I myself have only seen one once in the past,” he said.

Apparently there was no way anybody’d use such a rare thing lightly, so there were actually a lot of things that were unclear as to its effects. It seemed certain that it caused some sort of status abnormality, but whether it actually “halved all stats” was still up in the air.

I tried hitting a ghoul with one to test it, but it didn’t seem like it had any effect. It could just be that it didn’t have much of an effect on the undead. But that could just mean that it would work on other monsters, so I talked to Elrand about it.

“Hey, we are almost at the last room. Hurry up.”

It looked like Fel’s senses told him we were close to the boss room.

When we left the room, we were immediately accosted by undead. All of us made for the boss room while slowly-but-surely exterminating the undead.

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We’d made it to the front of the 18th floor boss room.

“So that’s a skeleton knight.....”

“This is my first time seeing it, but that does seem correct.”

Peeking inside, I saw a skeleton that was clearly different from the others. The skeleton knight was an entire size bigger and looked much stronger as it wandered around. It was decked in scale mail and had a splendid-looking helmet, and it held in its hands a longsword and shield that looked extremely dangerous, seeing as how the sword had a black cloud emanating from it. The aura this knight exuded was much more sinister and evil than other skeletons as well.

Unlike all the other floors up until now, this boss room seemed to be trying to win with a few high quality monsters rather than with overwhelming numbers.

And although it’s only “a few”... “Aren’t there more skeleton knights here than people have been telling me.....?”

Nadiya had said that there would be around five skeleton knights here, but the boss room had almost three times that number, at around thirteen of them.

“This is probably because we came during the season of special individuals.”

As I thought.

“Ahh, it has been a while since I have seen a skeleton knight,” Fel said while peeking into the boss room from behind me.

《So that’s a skeleton knight? Looks pretty strong, doesn’t it? Well, it’s still no match for me, though!》

It seemed to be Dora-chan’s first time, too, but that didn’t change his spirit.

《Sui won’t lose to that thing either!》

Sui wasn't the least bit cowed by the skeleton knight's aura, either.

"Dora, Sui, we are going."

《Alright!》

《Okay—.》

All three of them entered the boss room, where the skeleton knights were waiting.

BOOM

Six pillars of light ran through the skeleton knight's heads at the same time — it was Fel's specialty: Lightning magic. The six knights that took lightning to their skulls fell over on the spot before they could do anything.

Thud-thud-thud-thud

Dora-chan, covered in flames, charged into skeleton knights one after another, and opened up holes in their scale mail with his attack. The knights, unable to keep up with his speed, found their weapons and shields to be useless, no matter how dangerous-looking they were.

Plort-plort-plort

The large Acid Bullets unleashed by Sui hit the ominous-looking shields of the remaining skeleton knights. However, the shields may as well have not been there, as Sui's Acid Bullets dissolved right through them before continuing on through the knights' armor, and then their bones.

In the end, the skeleton knights didn't even manage to get an attack off before Fel and the others destroyed them. It didn't even take five minutes. Having beaten them this badly, I was starting to feel sorry for those knights.

"Looks like it's over."

"As expected, Dora-chan....."

Elrand was watching Dora-chan with sparkling eyes. I quietly put some distance between us and started checking the drops.

One of those ominous-looking longswords dropped. *Let's try using Appraisal on it...*

【Cursed Sword】

A sword with a curse imbued upon it. If one is cut by this sword, the wound will rot and fester.

The name alone is awful. What the hell? A cursed sword? A sword of curses? What does that even mean, a sword with a curse embedded in it? And anything cut by it will rot? Like, actually rot? Isn't this just like, the worst? In the first place, is this even safe to handle?

"H-Hey, Fel, can you try using Appraisal on this?"

"You can do that too, no?"

"No, but, yours is more detailed, right Fel? Just the name sounded so dangerous, so I was wondering if it was safe to touch."

"Let me see..... A cursed sword? Seems safe to touch. From what I see, grabbing the hilt is no problem."

That means, if I make a mistake and cut myself with it..... "By that, do you mean, if I accidentally cut myself...?"

"If you are cut with this sword, the wound will begin to rot and fester, and eventually turn into dust, it seems."

What the hell — that's scary! I don't need something scary like this. Let's just go and sell it already...

I shut the cursed sword into my Item Box, and then heard Sui call out to me in my head.

《Master — there's a box here.》

Oh, so Sui found a treasure chest. I went to where Sui was and found an old wooden casket.

"Good find, Sui. Nice work."

The old chest blended in so well with the background, anyone could fail to notice it. It looked like it'd been left there for quite a long time.

【Cursed Treasure Chest】

Those who open it will become cursed, having calamity befall them.

Whaaaa-..... The one who opens it will get cursed and struck with calamity? They have no intention of letting anyone open this, huh?

《**To think this treasure chest was cursed... But, you will be fine. You have god's blessings and Perfect Defense. Why should you worry?**》

W-Well, Fel's right, but it's still scary, you know?

I hesitated too long, causing Fel to glare at me. **"Hurry up and open it."**

"G-Got it." Slowly, hesitatingly, I opened the chest.

Yeah, I don't really feel any different.

Peeking inside, I found a single knife. It was a beautiful knife: jet black, like a crow's plumage. I took the knife out of the chest. When I appraised it.....

【Vampire Knife】

A knife made from an alloy of magic iron and a vampire's bone. It thirsts for blood, and will endlessly absorb it.

"Phhbbbhht!....." *W-What a violent knife! It hungers for blood.....*

"Hmm, a knife that endlessly absorbs blood? Would it not be useful for draining blood from meat?"

Ah! Fel's right, I can use this! I thought it was really dangerous and violent from its description, but I guess it's just how you think of it. Just as Fel said, I can use it to drain the blood from prey. And if I do that, the butchering will go faster at the Adventurer's guild, and most importantly, the taste will improve too. Even though my Item Box stops time for everything inside, it's still better in the end to drain the blood on the spot. This is a pretty good item, all things considered. It'll have to wait until we're out of the dungeon, but let's talk to Elrand and get him

to let me have the knife. Oh, where is Elrand, actually?

I turned around, and found Elrand chasing Dora-chan around.

“What are you doing, Elrand.....”

《Hey! This crazy nut’s trying to catch me! Do something!》

In any case, Dora-chan couldn’t very well attack him, so he was running away.

“Dora-chan, let me hug you! Just a little is fine!”

It seemed that Elrand’s passion for Dora-chan welled up from seeing him fight.

I’m feeling like he’s not gonna give up until he gets to hug Dora-chan right now...

《What if you just let him, Dora-chan?》 I told Dora-chan through telepathy.

《No way! It’s never happening! This dude’s eyes have gone all crazy — it’s creepy as hell!》

Complete rejection. I’m starting to feel sorry for Elrand, since he’s getting rejected so firmly.

《This is more important! Do something about this guy!》

Oh, fine.

“Elrand! If you keep that up, Dora-chan’ll really hate you!” I called out.

Elrand stopped on the spot. “I don’t want him to hate me~. But I want to hug him.....”

“Hahh, it’s going to be impossible right now. You have to build up trust in your relationship first, bit by bit.”

“Ghh... Trust, huh?”

“That’s right. If you just keep chasing him around without that, he’s never going to let you come close. In fact, he’ll just hate you.”

“Gggnnrrrrrrr.....”

It seemed that Elrand was already catching the hint that Dora-chan didn’t like him, so his expression was bitter.

“Slow and steady is the way to go. Never overreach. Once you build up trust, hugging him isn’t out of the realm of possibility,” I said, and Elrand nodded grandly.

“Okay. I’ll do my best to win Dora-chan’s trust bit by bit!”

Good, I somehow got him to calm down.

...Well, whether Dora-chan’ll ever trust you that much is an entirely different question, though.

《I’m saved! Hey, don’t let this thing near me again. I get the chills every time that happens.》

Man Elrand’s getting blasted. W-Well, do your best, man.

Having cleared the 18th floor, we moved on to the 19th.

Chapter 5: A Luxurious Hot Pot With Extremely High-Class Ingredients

We'd finally gotten through to the reptile zone, the 19th floor.

"Do you know what monsters appear on this floor, Elrand?"

"From this point on, the documents start getting sparser. I think this floor is turtles, but....."

"They are here."

The ones slowly coming down the passage right towards us were.....

"Hmm? Those are... they look like soft-shelled turtles....." I stared closer at the approaching turtle, and it really was basically a soft-shelled turtle. Even though there was no water nearby, there were huge soft-shelled turtles over a meter long heading our way in a group of about ten.

"'Soft-shelled turtles'? Those are called 'big bite turtles.' It's been a while since I've seen one. They move slowly, but be careful: if you get bit, they won't let go until either you die, or they do."

So they won't let go? That's literally just like a soft-shelled turtle. Getting bit by a soft-shelled turtle that big... well, you probably wouldn't get off scot-free. It might actually be instant death depending on where it gets you. Thank goodness they're slow, I guess.

"With how slow they are, I guess it's kind of a waste to use dark balls on them."

"Oh yeah, we were supposed to test them out, weren't we? Hmmm, then why not wait until the next floor?"

"Mn? What boring opponents. Dora, Sui, I leave it to you." Seeing the soft-shelled turtles, Fel instantly lost his drive.

Well, they are really slow. Even I can probably just stab them with my spear as

long as I stay beyond their reach.

《You got it! Leave it to me!》

《Sui will do it too!》

Thudshh-thudshh-thudshh

Dora-chan unleashed spiked pillars of ice at the soft-shelled turtles.

《Tch! Ice magic's no good, huh? Then, Lightning!》

It's said that soft-shelled turtle's shells are comparatively pliant, but it looked like their shells in this world were really hard. Understanding that his Ice magic wasn't doing any good, Dora-chan immediately switched over to Lightning magic.

Snap Crackle-crackle

A lightning strike akin to a powerful stun gun struck the soft-shelled turtle.

As for Sui, it had just shot its 18th Acid Bullet at the soft-shelled turtles.

Pew-pew-pew

Sui's Acid Bullets ate through the soft-shelled turtle's shell.

Now then, let's check the drops.....

"Is this big bite turtle meat? The fact that meat dropped means it's edible, but I've never heard of anyone eating big bite turtle meat....." Elrand said, seeming confused while looking at the hunk of meat.

Apparently, they didn't eat soft-shelled turtles in this world. Personally, I was happy since I wasn't expecting any meat to drop from this dungeon... Not only that, it was a luxury food item like soft-shelled turtle. I myself had only eaten soft-shelled turtle enough times that I could count it on one hand due to its price, but cooking it in a hot pot was really, really good.

"I tried eating that because Appraisal said it was good, but it was not actually that amazing. It was not bad, but it was not good either."

It seemed like Fel had eaten it before, but didn't really care for it. I tried appraising it too, just in case.

【Big Bite Turtle Meat】

An extremely delicious meat with light flavor. Abundant in collagen and good for skin.

It's totally just a soft-shelled turtle.

And, it's gotta be hot pot for soft-shelled turtle, right? Soft-shelled turtle hot pot's ridiculously good..... Oh, wait.

"Fel, did you eat it raw?"

"Of course. Did you think I could cook like a human?"

Good point.

"You know, this meat is incredibly good in a hot pot."

"What? Really?" Fel immediately brought his face really close to mine upon hearing it was delicious.

Elrand was also in shock, hearing that soft-shelled turtle meat was delicious.

"Yeah. This meat is good by itself, but having it in a hot pot with some good stock to make zosui rice soup with is great, too."

"Okay, we are hunting more. Dora, Sui, help me."

《All right! So that's delicious, right? Okay, then let's keep getting more!》

《Meat~!》

Man, you guys're really selfish.

"Uhh, is big bite turtle meat actually really good?" Elrand asked, stiff-faced.

"I know how you feel given how they look, but it's true that they're delicious in a hot pot."

"If you say so, it's probably true Mukohda, but..... I've lived so long, but I see there's still more to learn. Please, let me try some."

"Of course. That's why we're obtaining meat right now."

After that, we started hunting soft-shelled turtles. Other than meat, the soft-shelled turtles also dropped blood in small bottles, as well as their shells. But at

any rate, we just wanted meat, so we kept killing them, intent on completely wiping this floor clean. I also defeated several myself while making sure to keep my distance so I wouldn't get bitten.

We could stock up on meat on this floor, and I could fairly easily gain experience here as well, so it was totally a bonus-time freebie floor for us.....

...I was an idiot for thinking that.

I trembled in fear at the sight of the boss room. There were a total of six extra-huge soft-shelled turtles that were over 3 meters in length just plodding around.

Aren't those just kaiju?

"Those are giant bite turtles, I see. So they really do exist....."

Apparently Elrand had learned of them from a book, and this was his first time seeing one.

"They really are big, no? At that size we can look forward to the meat as well, most likely. Okay. Dora, Sui, we are going."

《You got it!》

《Meat!》

Sui, I don't think you should just be yelling that as a battle cry.

BOOM-BOOM

BLAM-BLAM

Pew-pew

Fel and Dora-chan used Lightning magic, and Sui used its Acid Bullets.

The six extra-huge soft-shelled turtles — or giant bite turtles, rather — fell and disappeared one after the other. They left behind two large chunks of meat and a smallish magic stone.

《Ohhh! We managed a huge chunk of meat!》

《Meat, meat!》

Excited for the meat, Dora-chan was flying in circles, and Sui was bouncing everywhere.

“Hey, this meat is delicious in a hot pot or whatever it is, right? Make it quickly,” Fel demanded. Dora-chan and Sui were also raising a fuss in their desire to eat.

“We can’t do it here. If we take too long, the giant bite turtles will show up again.”

“Mm, that is true. Then, let us return to the safe area to make it. It is almost time for dinner. I am hungry.”

It’s already that time, huh? “Oh fine. Let’s go back and eat dinner at the safe area.”

We returned from the boss room to the safe area on the floor.

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At Fel’s request, today’s dinner was soft-shelled turtle hot pot. Prodded on to hurry by Fel, I quickly bought the ingredients I needed with my skill. Whipping out my prized magic stove from my Item Box, I started cooking.

Though soft-shelled turtle hot pot wasn’t all that hard to prepare in the first place: as long as you made sure to remove the scum that appeared, the ingredients themselves would provide excellent umami and make for a delicious hot pot.

As for why I knew how to cook soft-shelled turtle, this was also thanks to the internet. I had ordered some online because I wanted to try eating soft-shelled turtle, but traveling to eat it was too big a hurdle for me. And situations like that were exactly what online ordering was for.

Ordering and eating a soft-shelled turtle hot pot in your house, alone — that was the height of luxury. The zosui soup I had made out of the leftovers of the hot pot had also been incredibly delicious.

Just remembering it makes me drool... Wait, now’s not the time for reminiscing. If I don’t hurry, Fel and the others’ll be mad. I have to make the hot pot as soon as possible.

I put my magic stove to full use, with a hot pot on each of the four burners.

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After adding water and seaweed dashi to a clay pot and setting it to boil, add cooking sake and soft-shelled turtle meat cut into appropriately-sized pieces into the pot to simmer.

In the process, take out the seaweed dashi, and start scooping out any scum that forms. *Removing the scum is absolutely necessary for the taste of the dish, so make sure to do it thoroughly and carefully.*

Once all the scum is taken out, add in the vegetables. *This time, I'll go with a simple preparation of just spring onions and Chinese cabbage.*

Once the vegetables wilt, adjust the taste with soy sauce and salt, before putting the tofu in last. When the tofu is heated up, the dish is finished.

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Khhh! It looks so good!

I took some deep wooden dishes, and loaded them up with a large portion of soft-shelled turtle meat, vegetables, and tofu before handing it out to Fel and the others.

"Here you go, soft-shelled turtle hot pot. It's hot, so be careful."

"Understood."

《Ohh, so this is their meat.》

《It smells so good~.》

After giving it some time to cool off, Fel and the others started to eat.

"Mh? Mmmh..... This is quite good. To think that meat would become this delicious....."

Fel, who seemed to have taken a liking to the soft-shelled turtle hot pot, started to chow down.

《This is good meat, contrary to how they look.》

It seemed that Dora-chan also liked the food.

《This is tasty~.》

And Sui makes three, it seems.

Both Fel and Dora-chan were eating single-mindedly, their mouths glossy with fluids. Sui, who was just as entranced by the food, seemed to be jigglier than usual.

I should probably be getting more servings ready for everyone, but I can't wait anymore. I'll be eating now.

"Let's eat too, Elrand."

Elrand and I shared a single pot. I filled out a wooden bowl with soft-shelled turtle meat, vegetables, and tofu before handing it to Elrand.

"Here you go."

"Y-Yeah....."

Even though I told him it was good, it seemed like Elrand was still hesitant. I understood how unbelievable it was from how the monsters looked. Thinking like that, the first guy who ever tried soft-shelled turtle must have been a damn hero.

In my case, I already know it's delicious, so I'll eat it as soon as I fill my bowl.

I bit into the soft-shelled turtle.

"Delicious!" The otherworld soft-shelled turtle was light in flavor, but clearly had its own umami. And with so few bones but so much meat, the texture was great as well. *This is better than the soft-shelled turtle I ordered back then.*

Engrossed, I continued to eat the soft-shelled turtle.

"You're eating it like it's delicious, I see. For big bite turtles to be that good....." Elrand must have finally prepared himself, as he bit into his soft-shelled turtle.

"This is.....!!"

Right? Right? It's good, isn't it?

Elrand also started to eat the soft-shelled turtle, engrossed by its flavor.

Drinking too much of the soup would ruin the finisher, so while keeping that desire in check, I enjoyed the heck out of it. Once I was filled to an extent, I shifted my efforts back to churning out soft-shelled turtle hot pots. In fact, I ended up having to buy even more clay pots with my skill in the process.

After all of us had our fill of soft-shelled turtle, it was time for the finisher. The zosui soup, with lots of the soft-shelled turtle's umami, was superb, and even Fel and the others sung its praises.

"Whew, that was great."

"Indeed. I was honestly surprised that it was this good."

《That was delicious~.》

《It was so tasty~.》

"This is a new discovery! To think that big bite turtles would be this good!"

Soft-shelled turtles are the best, no? I want to do this again.

"Hey, do we still have more of that meat?"

"Ahh, we technically do, but with how we ate that just now, it's only enough for five... no, four more meals."

"Okay. Then let us go through this floor again."

《We're going to get more meat, right? I'm all for it, if it's this good.》

《Sui is fine with it too~. This meat was good.》

Fel and the others were completely set on going through the 19th floor again. Personally, I wanted as much of the soft-shelled turtle meat as I could get as well. And the experience on this floor was a great bonus, too.

"Elrand, would it be okay to go through this floor again?"

"Of course. In exchange, let me eat that again."

"Sure."

The next day, we went around the 19th floor. Everyone was full of energy due to the soft-shelled turtle hot pot, and, knowing that was the cause of their pep

and vigor, we moved to secure more of the meat. Hence, we spent the whole day hunting around the 19th floor.

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We were on the 20th-floor of the dungeon, the 2nd floor of this dungeon's reptile zone. This floor played home to giant iguanas; when I tried using Appraisal on one of them, I found it was called a "big bronze iguana."

Including the tail, it was close to 2 meters long and bronze colored, and unlike earth iguanas, their mouths were filled to the brim with small, sharp teeth. They moved fairly fast, so they might have been considered annoying, but it was nothing for my three familiars.

Or rather, the usual massacre was so pronounced this time that even though they were enemies, I was actually feeling sorry for them.

Well, it was partially my fault it happened, though. Maybe.

We ended up having soft-shelled turtle hot pot again that night for dinner, since Fel begged me for it. That made two dinners in a row. Probably thanks to that, Fel and the others were full of energy, like their eyes were glinting with drive, or something.

So everyone was happily mowing their way through iguanas. Elrand was also more energetic than usual, and he was downing iguanas one-by-one with his dance-like swordplay. I had absolutely no room to do anything, so I just focused on collecting drops.

By the way, the big bronze iguanas dropped their hides and livers that oh-so-courteously appeared in bottles. When I appraised them, the livers apparently turned into medicine to promote regularity.

In spite of moving through the 20th floor like we were trying to commit iguana genocide, it only took us a scant couple hours to reach the boss room. The boss room was home to seven "giant bronze iguanas," which were about twice as big as the regular big bronze iguanas.

"Nonono, that's just a dinosaur," was what I wanted to reflexively shoot back, but Fel and the others were already inside, not even phased by their appearance.

I guess it was just becoming routine now: like always, they sent the giant bronze iguanas to their deaths in just a couple minutes. All that was left behind was one hide, a liver, and a smallish magic stone.

While picking those up, I was quietly congratulating myself on not feeding them the soft-shelled turtle's blood. Even I felt some resistance to consuming it, so I didn't drink the blood that came with my order in the past, either, and that's why I didn't feed them any of it either, even though we had gotten some as drops.

Thinking back on it, that was the right decision. I quietly appraised it before making the soft-shelled turtle hot pot last night, and it said it was "highly nutritious, making one sturdy and strong. Especially effective on bodies that have been weakened. Also amplifies one's vigor." If just soft-shelled turtle hot pot had this effect, if I were to give them blood as well, I wouldn't even be able to imagine how much they'd hustle.

"Well then, let's move to the next floor."

"Indeed. We are going to the next floor."

《Sure! Next, next!》

《Sui will beat lots!》

"*Sigh* .....Sure, fine."

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What we found on the 21st floor were obviously extremely dangerous crocodiles, which were almost 3 meters long, with red scales like the color of blood. I used Appraisal, and found out that they were called "red killer crocodiles." Their sharp, pointy teeth and strong-looking jaws told me that being bit by one would be no joke. They also moved faster than I expected with their short legs. Right after descending to the 21st floor, we were greeted by a huge group of them, just spread out through the passageway. However, my three familiars quickly got rid of those red crocodiles.

By the way, the red killer crocodiles dropped sharp teeth and hides.

Just as I thought that this floor wouldn't take all that long at this pace, Fel and

the others all complained of their hunger, and we were forced to stop for lunch at a nearby safe area.

“Meat.”

《Yeah, meat.》

《Sui wants mea—t.》

All three of them requested meat for something really solid and hearty, so for lunch I decided I’d make stewed pork rice bowls with meat I’d pre-prepared.

Although we had meat for breakfast, too, it was a fairly light meal, since I used the poultry soboro I’d made to make soboro rice bowls. That must have caused them to want something heartier.

On top of the rice, I laid thickly cut stewed pork, and a marinated soft-boiled egg.

All three of them were eating with gusto. Elrand was also eating with a vigor that more than matched my familiars, as well.

Once we’d filled up, we once again set off through the passages of the 21st floor. However, the red killer crocodiles weren’t a match for Fel and the others. Our exploration of the 21st floor went smoothly, and the monsters in the boss room — “giant red killer crocodiles” that were roughly 5 meters long — were defeated in no time.

The giant red killer crocodiles were — *at least, they were* supposed *to be* — A-ranked monsters, but in front of Fel and the others, it was like taking candy from a baby. Elrand and I picked up the drops, which consisted of hides and magic stones.

“Mukohda, you guys really do go through the dungeon so quickly, huh?”

Normally, adventurers probably put their lives on the line to desperately get through a dungeon. I’m feeling a little sorry.

However, it’s just because Fel and the others are ridiculously strong. Also, I think having eaten those soft-shelled turtles two days in a row was having an effect.

Unsurprisingly, I’d secretly sworn to myself not to let that happen again.

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Our exploration of the dungeon went smoothly, outside of fitting in meals and breaks.

Meals and breaks are important, though — especially for us. The stomach clocks for all three of my familiars are unerringly accurate, after all. Fel's most of all.

At any rate, with breaks in between (because I was getting hounded by everyone), we went through the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th floors. Thanks to Fel and the others hustling so hard, I hadn't had a chance to try out the dark balls yet. We had to put off the experiments all the way to the 25th floor.

By the way, the 22nd floor was black anacondas, which were huge snakes with matte black scales. They dropped their scales as well as huge chunks of meat, and the boss room had tyrant black anacondas (which, just like the name suggested, were just huge black anacondas), who also had largish magic stones.

I wasn't sure if I was happy about snake meat. *I mean, I've already eaten black and red serpents, but it's different when you see them moving and alive first.*

I'll still eat it because it'd be a waste otherwise, though.

The next floor, the 23rd, was home to scavenger lizards, which were basically Komodo dragons, the only difference being their venomous-looking black-red color.

They pretty much lived exactly like the Komodo dragons I had seen on TV before, meaning they would bite and envenom their enemies first, before slowly devouring them once they were weakened.

A shockingly large number of scavenger lizards appeared. The boss room was so flooded with them there almost wasn't anywhere to even stand. There were even some who were resorting to cannibalism in the room.

Of course, it was no problem for Fel and the others, though.

The scavenger lizards dropped their purple-red hides, and venom stored in a bottle. This venom stopped blood clotting, which, just as implied, would force one to bleed out from a wound, killing them through circulatory shock. The

lizards were dropping some scary stuff.

While I was wondering if something this horrific even had a use, Elrand said, “I can’t say it out loud, but this does have its uses.”

Apparently the other poisons and venoms have their uses too, but to think there’d be people willing to pay for stuff like this. This world is scary.

On the 24th floor were the familiar and delicious red and black serpents. I was thinking they’d drop their skin, meat, and magic stones, and I was exactly right. Everyone, including me, already knew how tasty black and red serpents were. I had them securing meat with enough force to wipe the snakes out.

Thanks to that, I ended up with a huge amount of their meat. I got a lot of their highly priced skins and magic stones too, so I was feeling pretty good about it. All three of my familiars were making a fuss about karaage, though.

We have the black anaconda’s meat, too, so let’s make a snake meat feast once we get out of here.

With all of that happening, we kept going down further and further at a good pace, and finally managed to reach the last floor of the reptile zone, the 25th floor.

Now then, what’s going to come at us?

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“These are..... crimson asps? Another troublesome one.....” Elrand was making an extremely hateful expression as he said that.

Crimson asps looked exactly like cobras, except that they were colored a purplish red and were around 3 meters in length.

And, currently, there was a pack of them occupying and blocking the way forward. Their signature flat heads were raised as they made hissing sounds to intimidate us.

“How cheeky. Dora, Sui, let us go.”

《Yeah!》

《Okay!》

Elrand called out to Fel and the others, who were closing in on the crimson asps.

“They have an extremely strong venom, so please be careful! You probably won’t survive if you’re bitten. Also, they’ll spit clouds of venom as well, so be careful of that, too!”

I had figured they’d have venom since they looked like cobras, but I didn’t expect the clouds of venom.

“Also.....” Elrand, who was about to say something, suddenly whipped out his favorite sword instead and got into his stance.

I wondered what happened, and soon found out when a single crimson asp that wound its way through my familiars while they were busy attacking approached us, looking like it would lunge at us any second.

Oh no.....!

Spanggg!

The crimson asp’s head flew through the air.

“They’re surprisingly quick like this, so be careful,” Elrand said, cleaning the blood off of his favorite sword.

“Hahh, that was close. Thanks, Elrand.” *That was almost really bad back there.*

“Even though Fel, Dora-chan, and Sui are around, you can’t just let your guard down, Mukohda,” Elrand said, looking a little exasperated.

You’re right. I completely had my guard down, since I had Perfect Defense on top of Fel and the others. But that’s no good, huh? Even with Perfect Defense, I can’t just let my guard down. I have no idea what can happen, and I’m in the most danger just when I believe I’m completely fine. Carelessness is the enemy.

I stored several dark balls in my bag so that they’d be easy to prepare, and held my mithril spear tight.

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“Hahh!”

Spang

While Elrand was standing his ground, I tossed a dark ball at an approaching crowd of crimson asps.

The black mist, which came out of the ball and covered the crimson asps, disappeared after about ten seconds. It left behind a bunch of crimson asps that were suddenly moving with great difficulty; the affected crimson asps slowly dragged themselves across the stone floors.

“These dark balls are really amazingly effective, aren’t they~?” Elrand remarked passionately, watching the crimson asps struggle.

“They really are. I didn’t think they’d be this powerful, either.”

Now, even I can beat a crimson asp.

After that, I used several more dark balls on the crimson asps, and made doubly sure the rumor was the truth — that the effect really was, “touching the black mist that spreads will afflict you with a status condition, halving all your stats.”

When I tried using Appraisal on crimson asps that the black mist had touched, the status condition really was there, and it looked like it lasted for ten minutes. I relayed that information to Elrand as well.

Of course, I never told him I had the Appraisal skill, and just said that Fel was the one appraising them.

“Now, let’s beat them while the status condition still lasts.”

“Yes.”

Elrand and I approached the affected crimson asps. Only the two of us, Elrand and I, were fighting crimson asps in this hallway. All three of my familiars were fighting in a nearby room. They were most likely already done, though.

Now that we understood the dark ball’s effects, in situations like this where a room was nearby, we would split into two parties and battle, because I asked Fel and the others to do so. Since I knew that even I could beat an A-ranked monster with the use of dark balls, I needed to fight as many of them as possible in order to gain more experience so that I wouldn’t get complained at

by the gods later, who were definitely watching me right now. Most importantly, leveling up would do me some good as well.

Even so, my opponents were monsters with such powerful venom that I'd die if I was ever bitten, so I still carried some of Sui's special elixir with me, just in case. I had it stored in my bag for ready use.

"Hahh!"

Even though their stats were halved thanks to the dark ball, it wasn't like they lost their venom. After approaching carefully, I stabbed at their heads with my mithril spear. Repeating that over and over, I continued to kill crimson asps. Elrand was beheading crimson asps with his favorite sword, as well.

"Whew, they're all gone, huh?"

"Yes. Let's pick up the drops."

We started picking up their drops, which consisted of their skins, bottles of venom, magic stones, and meat.

That's right, meat. Once again, I got more snake meat. I had black anaconda, black and red serpent, and now crimson asp meat. I'd better compare them with a snake meat feast.

《Master—! Sui beat lots of them and picked this up!》

"Oh, thanks Sui."

Sui had picked up all the drops from their room. Having Sui expel all the drops from its body, I stored them in my Item Box.

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After all that, we reached the boss room, but we wanted to avoid continuing onward and having to spend our night on an undead floor, so we decided to camp in the safe area near the boss room instead.

Everyone was complaining about their hunger, too.

Tonight's dinner was hashed-beef rice using bloody horn-bull meat. I served an extra-large portion of the food to my three familiars in deep wooden dishes. Then, Elrand and I had our own meals in a smaller sized wooden bowl.

“Here you go, Elrand.”

“Oh, this smells nice~. What kind of food is this?” Elrand was all smiles after smelling the dish.

“It’s called hashed-beef rice. Please eat these white grains together with the brown sauce. It’s good.”

“I see. So together..... Oho? This is great! It’s complex, and has this deep, indescribable flavor.”

Elrand wouldn’t put down his spoon. *I’m glad that even Elrand, a gourmand, likes it.*

I also started on my portion. Everyone’s appetites were probably stoked from all the exercise in the dungeon, as they cleanly polished off the entire huge cylindrical pot of hashed-beef rice I had made.

“I still do not quite feel satisfied. You have snake meat, no? Make karaage,” Fel demanded.

《Karaage? That sounds great!》

《Karaage~.》

Hearing that word, both Dora-chan and Sui started making a fuss as well.

“No, no, I can’t make it now. If you haven’t had enough..... Ah, I still have some sea serpent karaage.”

“Mm? Fine. That will do.”

After plating some sea serpent karaage, I placed it in front of Fel.

《I want some too.》

《Sui also wants some.》

I served some more sea serpent karaage to both of them.

“Um, I think I just heard sea serpent.....”

“Ah, do you want some too Elrand? This is sea serpent karaage.”

“I’ll eat it! It’s been several decades since I’ve last had sea serpent.”

As soon as I handed him the food, he started eating. He really ate a lot,

despite being so thin.

“This karaage stuff is really delicious~. The meat is soft and the taste is integrated well. I don’t think I’ll ever get tired of this. Sea serpent’s already delicious since it’s such a wonderfully rare ingredient, but with your cooking, it just got even better, Mukohda.”

“Indeed. Karaage is good.”

《Karaage really is great, right?》

《Karaage is delicious.》

Yep, can’t go wrong with karaage. No matter where or when, it’ll be popular. Ah, focusing the snake meat feast on karaage might be a good idea once we get out of this dungeon. Of course I’d use the standard soy sauce and salt marinades, but it might also be nice to use some different ones, too.

I started daydreaming about what I’d do after getting out of the dungeon.

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In the boss room, there were three giant purplish red cobras wound together. They were over a meter thick, and looked like they might be 20 meters long.

“Those are king crimson asps..... This is the first time I’ve ever seen one live.....” Elrand whispered beside me. He stared, dazed by the sight.

A monster that even Elrand’s never actually seen...

When I appraised them, I found them to be S-ranked.

We continued to watch the huge cobras from outside the boss room as they hissed and threatened us. *With how big they are, I could probably be swallowed in a single bite.*

Gulp.....

“Hm, it is perfect that there are three. Dora, Sui, we will each take on one.”

《One each, huh? Alright!》

《Let’s go!》

Not even caring that Fel just said that they would take on one each, Dora-

chan and Sui rushed into the boss room.

“My god, those two.....” Fel said, entering the boss room a step late.

After that, how should I put it.....

The bosses were completely outmatched by the three of them.

The king crimson asp Fel faced off against died getting split in four by a single Rending Claws attack. Dora-chan’s opponent died with three huge holes opened up in it by Dora-chan himself, who flew right through it covered in Lightning magic. Sui’s king crimson asp got melted from top to bottom with Acid Bullets.

Even though they were enemies, it was so one-sided I felt sorry for them.

《Master — look, look, a huge piece of meat dropped!》

I looked, and the king crimson asp that Sui defeated dropped a gigantic chunk of meat.

“Ohh, that’s huge~.” *This one looks like it’ll last a while. Also, it was an S-ranked monster, so it should have dropped a magic stone...*

“Oh, there it is, found it. It’s pretty big.” Searching around where the meat dropped, I picked up a red, round magic stone.

“Mukohda, the ones Fel and Dora-chan defeated dropped skin, fangs, and magic stones.”

“Ohh, their skins really are huge.....” I wonder how many regular snakes-worth this is.

“Hey, there is a treasure chest here, too.”

I got closer, and found a simple wooden box that looked nothing like a normal treasure chest set flush with a wall.

“This is a treasure chest?”

“There is no doubt: I used Appraisal on it.”

“What about traps?”

“When it is opened, it is set so a pitfall will appear right in front of the box.”

Ghh, a pitfall? All the traps up until now were in the treasure chest itself, but now there's a pitfall.....

We were saved thanks to Appraisal, but it wouldn't be funny for anyone else to open the box expecting a trap inside only to find a pitfall.

"Well then, I'll open it." I stood to the side against the wall, leaving some space from the treasure chest just in case, and used my spear to open the treasure chest. The spear tip caught on the metal fixture of the box, and I carefully undid the clasp and opened the box.

Clannggg!

As soon as I opened the box, a hole opened up in the floor in front of it. After a little while, the floor went back to normal, but I made sure not to step in the same area as I looked into the box, just in case.

"Ohhh!" I couldn't stop myself. "These're gold ingots..... one, two, three..... There's ten of them! That's pretty nice!"

Elrand was also all smiles, seeing the shining gold bars.

The weight of the pile of gold bars sure feels nice.

After retrieving the gold bars, we moved down the stairs to the next floor. Now, it was finally time for the last undead floor.

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"We're finally at the last undead floor, huh?"

"Yes. Apparently the last one who conquered the dungeon found a lich when they came through, but there's no guarantee it will be the same. Honestly, I wouldn't be surprised no matter what comes out. Let's be careful as we move forward."

I nodded in response to Elrand's words. I'd already applied the holy seals to everyone. We were fully prepared, but this was still the 26th floor. That meant that this was the dungeon's deepest area.

From what I heard before, a lot of different undead appear here, from ghouls to wraiths, and even liches. But, that information was from 200 years ago, when the last adventurer conquered this place, so it couldn't be relied on. Anything

could come up.

The first enemies we encountered were a group of ghouls and mummies. All three of my familiars immediately attacked.

“Mummies can freely control the bandages they’re wrapped in, so please be careful!” Elrand called out.

Fel and the others were strong, though. Just like always, they defeated the undead with maximum efficiency.

“Dora-chan watch out!!” Elrand yelled as he jumped forward. Then.....

Spangg!

A mummy’s head flew through the air. While Dora-chan was preoccupied with a ghoul, the mummy had tried to bind him with its bandages, so Elrand beheaded it.



“To try to touch Dora-chan with those filthy bandages..... Dying is a matter of course. I will personally pass judgment on any lowlife that tries to dirty Dora-chan! Oh, that’s a good idea. Yes, let’s do that. It’s decided — we’re exterminating all the undead on this floor.”

“E-Elrand.....?”

Elrand’s eyes were scary. After that, Elrand naturally jumped into the fray.

“Hey, Dora, you are not being careful enough!”

《Tch! .....Shaddap, I know already!》

Dora-chan must have been aware of his own carelessness, so he didn’t say anything more, but instead returned to attacking the undead even more fiercely, as if he was taking out his anger on them.

After that, well, what should I say..... The invincible trio and an angry Elrand made for a scary quartet. A super dangerous group to their enemies. Everyone mercilessly attacked their foes.

Somewhere in the middle there was a room with a lich that used powerful magic, but even that was like a bug to the quartet. It was all I could manage to keep up with them and pick up drops.

Then, finally we reached the boss room of the 26th floor. Inside.....

“Are those all liches? But the one in the middle is kind of different.”

There were five liches in the boss room. The liches, with their sunken eyes and skinny bodies that were literally just skin and bones, were wearing black robes. However, the lich in the middle had scraggly long white hair on its head and a heavily dulled gold crown.

“No way, is that? .....No, but.....” Seeing the crown on the middle lich, Elrand’s expression changed.

“Oh? An emperor lich. As an opponent, it is not unworthy,” Fel said, licking his lips as he peered into the room.

“So i-it really is an emperor lich.....”

According to Elrand, emperor liches were the highest form of the species, and

were S-ranked undead that could use high level magic. Looking into the boss room, I locked eyes with the emperor lich.

It sneered.

Brrrrrrrrr! Shivers ran along my entire body.

J-Just now, he sneered at me. That emperor lich, it looked at me and laughed! Weren't the monsters in the boss room supposed to not notice you until you went inside? That's how it was up until now. They only recognize us as enemies once we're inside. But that emperor lich, it just looked at me and laughed. He definitely knows I'm here.

Gulp.....

Somehow, I get the feeling that this guy is the most dangerous one yet.

"That one, it knows we are here."

"Y-Yeah, thought so."

"Huh? Weren't floor bosses not supposed to recognize us until we went inside?"

"That is probably the norm for dungeons like this. However, this does happen sometimes. That is, monsters that do not fit into the rules appear."

Hearing Fel explain, Elrand's expression changed into one of shock and terror.

"So that means, as soon as we go in, it'll attack us with magic?"

It was exactly as Elrand said. Since it knew we were here, there was no way those liches would let go of their best opportunity.

"Do not worry. I will erect a strong barrier for us. It will be able to withstand at least ten hits of the high-ranking magic an emperor lich can unleash."

"T-Ten hits of high-ranking magic....."

"In the meantime, we must finish it at all costs. Or is ten hits too little?" Fel said provocatively, and Dora-chan and Sui took the bait.

《Hah! Ten hits is too many! Actually, that thing'll never hit me with magic at all!》

《That's right, Uncle Fel! Sui won't lose to that thing! Sui will definitely beat it!》

Both Dora-chan and Sui had the emperor lich in their sights, and were raring to go.

"Indeed, that is the spirit. Oh yes, *you* will just be in the way, so do not come in. What will the elf do? Will you come?"

Wha-! ..... You're just leaving me out?

...No, I get that I'll just be in the way. I already knew I was the weakest one here, too. But you know, you don't have to say it bluntly and out loud like that. Can't you like, skirt around it? Or wrap it up nicely so it doesn't sound as bad? Well, it's probably impossible to expect tact out of Fel, though.

"I've decided. I'm going in. Given my age, I took on the guildmaster job, so I thought I'd never have a chance to raise my level again..... But with an emperor lich as an opponent, I can expect my level to rise, too. Sir Fel, you will protect me with a barrier too, right?"

It looked like Elrand was going to challenge the Emperor lich, too.

"Hm, very well..... Okay, the barriers are up, Dora, Sui, Elf. Now then, let us go!"

Following Fel's call, everybody else entered the boss room. The liches that had been waiting unleashed a hail of fireballs.

Fel, the strongest of our team, was on the receiving end of an especially large one. But all of them dodged the attacks beautifully. Then, everyone attacked the liches at nearly the same time.

《As if your magic'll ever hit! Here's your magic back, eat it!》

Thud-thud-thud-thud-thud

Sharply pointed pillars of ice rained down on the liches.

"Gghiiiieeeehhhhhh!"

The sharpened pillars of ice produced by Dora-chan skewered two of the liches, and they disappeared while screaming in their death throes.

《Attacks like that won’t hit Sui! Sui is strong!》

Pew-pew-pew

Sui shot its Acid Bullets at the lich, and its body that was just skin and bones covered by a robe melted.

“G-Ghiiieeehhhhhh!!”

Sui’s larger Acid Bullets hit and ate through the lich, and it disappeared.

“I can still do this, too!”

Spang!

Elrand’s favorite mithril sword slashed diagonally into a lich. The lich, with its upper body sliding off at an angle, did not even raise a cry before it died.

“You are my opponent! Hah!”

Zzzzllshhh!

Fel swung his right front paw, unleashing a Rending Claws. Surprisingly, it was stopped by a gray colored, half-transparent barrier.

“Hm, so you can use Barrier magic. I will praise you for stopping my Rending Claws. But how about this?”

Zzshh-zzsshh

Both of Fel’s front paws swung one after the other, and multiple Rending Claws hit the emperor lich’s barrier. The barrier, which could not stand the multiple hits, cracked. Then.....

Clanngg!

The emperor lich’s barrier shattered into particles.

“Die.”

Zzllsshhhh

The emperor lich, stripped of its means of defense, completely ate Fel’s Rending Claws.

“G-G-Ghhiiiieeehhhhh!”

The emperor lich disappeared, leaving behind an even louder death cry.

With the lich fight over, I entered the boss room.

“It’s over, huh?”

“Indeed.”

“Agh, so liches really do just drop magic stones.....”

That’s right, liches only drop magic stones. They’re A-ranked, so the magic stones are all that size. Even though it’s said that undead don’t drop much, it was still way too sad.

“They’re undead, after all. There’s just not much to be used from them. Actually, it looks like the emperor lich Sir Fel defeated dropped something else, too.”

After hearing Elrand’s words, I looked over to where the emperor lich had died and found a crown along with the magic stone.

“This was the crown the emperor lich was wearing, right.....?”

“I think that’s an ‘Emperor Lich’s Crown.’ I’ve only read about it in books, but if you wear one, it seems that your magic will dramatically increase. But if you use it too much, you’ll get charmed by the crown itself and become a lich.”

Whaaat? It’s nice that it dramatically increases magic, but becoming a lich is..... That’s way too awful. “Huh? Doesn’t becoming a lich mean becoming a monster?”

“Yes. But, just like I said, that’s just if you use it too much. That’s why there’s probably going to be a lot of buyers who want it for emergencies.”

From what Elrand says, it seems like there’ll be a lot of buyers for this. But even if it’s just from overuse, the consequence is becoming a lich, you know? I know you’ll get way more magic, but I’m totally not willing to risk it.

I shut the extra-large magic stone the emperor lich had left behind along with its crown in my Item Box. Then, we all descended the stairs leading to the last floor of the dungeon, the 27th.

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“Next is finally the 27th floor, isn’t it? The last boss should be a hydra, right?” I asked Elrand while we were descending the stairs.

He made a strange face. “Yes. However, I’ve only read about hydras in books..... Will it really be fine?”

It looked like Elrand was concerned after all this time. I understood how he felt though, since we’d be taking on the boss of the dungeon in its home turf on the last floor.

“Do not worry, elf. I have defeated hydras more than once before. Of course, I was alone. Right now, Dora and Sui are here too, so there is no chance for us to lose,” Fel declared, dismissing Elrand’s worries.

“This is perfect. Dora, Sui, listen to me. It is about the hydra we will be fighting next,” Fel said, and we stopped walking in the middle of the stairs. Fel probably wanted Elrand to hear this too, as he purposefully used his voice instead of telepathy.

“The hydra has nine heads. If you do not crush all of them at the same time, they will keep regenerating.”

So it’s basically a hydra straight out of a game? ...Huh? But Fel said that he has beat hydras before; if you have to crush them at the same time, how did he do it?

“All nine at the same time? Then how did you manage it, Fel?”

Fel explained that he ran into some trouble at first since he didn’t know you had to crush all nine of the heads at the same time. But, he figured that out in the middle of battle..... **“I simply hit all nine heads with magic at the same time. Boom!”**

Apparently, he had just made extra-huge lightning bolts with his Lightning magic and hit all nine heads at once. According to Fel, **“It is definitely possible to do, but unleashing Lightning magic on that scale is somewhat tiring.”**

That just means Fel’s way scarier for being able to create multiple huge lightning bolts at the same time.

“But right now Dora and Sui are here. It should not take that much time. The

elf will.....”

“The hydra is too much for me. I’ll stand back this time,” Elrand replied.

“Indeed. That is probably for the best. Of course, you will be observing as well.”

Yes, fine, I know already. Even if you asked me to fight a hydra, I wouldn’t do it.

“Listen well, Dora, Sui. Just as I have already said, the hydra has nine heads that must be crushed at the same time. I will take the center three. Dora will fight the three on the right, while Sui has the three on the left. Understood?”

《There won’t be that many chances to fight a hydra. I’ve got no problems with that. The right three heads, yeah? I’ll heckin’ do it!》

《Sui will have these three heads, right? Sui will try hard, too!》

Having split up three heads each for the hydra, it looked like Dora-chan and Sui were both totally ready to go.

“Well then. Once we enter the hydra’s room, destroy its heads on my signal!”

《You got it!》

《Okay!》

All three of them descended the stairs and entered the hydra’s chamber.

In the almost needlessly spacious room surrounded by brown stone walls, there was a huge and obviously dangerous-looking snake with nine heads wound up in a coil. It looked to be several tens of meters in height. All nine heads recognized the three of them as enemies, and were already about to attack.

“Okay, now!!”

At Fel’s signal, all of them attacked at once.

BOOOMMM

Fel’s Lightning magic, in the form of an extra-large bolt, hit all three of the hydra’s central heads.

THDDSSHH

Dora-chan's Ice magic, sharply pointed pillars of ice, pierced through the hydra's three rightmost heads at the same time.

Pewww

Sui, using enlarged Acid Bullets, melted the hydra's three leftmost heads at the same time.

All three of them destroyed the hydra's nine heads at the same time, and it lifelessly fell over.

Thud

"OOAAHHH!" I couldn't stop from cheering.

The hydra, which just looked so menacing, made me think that, although we wouldn't lose, beating it might take some time.

But it was kinda... instant.

"A hydra, in an instant....." Elrand was also shocked at the turn of events.

Ah, the hydra's disappearing.

What was left was an extra-large magic stone, a hide, and a dazzlingly decorated treasure chest. *Could that be the dungeon boss' treasure chest? There was a similar one in Dolan after they beat the behemoth, I remember...*

When I appraised it.....

【Dungeon Boss' Treasure Chest】

A treasure chest that rarely drops upon defeating the dungeon's boss.

No traps. That's what I thought.

Even though it said it drops rarely, I sort of expected it, seeing as how we had just beaten a hydra, and given the fact that right now we were in the season for more special individuals than usual. I stored the extra-large magic stone and the hide into my Item Box; all that was left was finding out what was inside the chest.

Now now, what's in the box~? Wait, where's Elrand?

I looked around for Elrand, and found him still standing open-mouthed at the entrance of the room. It seemed that the shock of what he saw was still lingering. "Elrand!"

I called out his name, and he came to. "Hah! W-What is it?"

"Don't 'what is it' me. The dungeon boss dropped a treasure chest. If you don't come over, I'm going to open it by myself."

"Dungeon boss treasure chest?! W-Wait a second! I'll come look too!"

Elrand hurried over. "So this is a dungeon boss' treasure chest..... Didn't one appear in Dolan, too?"

"Yes. That magic sword was what was inside."

"This is quite the dazzling chest. Just this would be worth a pretty penny."

Truly. The dungeon boss' treasure chest in Dolan was studded to the brim with gemstones and incredibly shiny too, after all. It's still hibernating in my Item Box, though.

Now then, as for what's in the box this time.....

"Well then, I'm going to open it," I said, and Elrand nodded.

"Ohhh!"

"This is amazing."

Inside was an almost overflowing pile of gold coins and gems, as if it was trying to say to the world, "I am treasure!"

There was also something else, a bag laid on top of the gold and gems. *Could this be.....*

【Magic Bag (Extra-Large)】

A magic bag large enough to hold the contents of 300 bags (large).

Ohh! It really is *a magic bag! I definitely want this for Fel to use. The magic*

bag (medium) I have now is too small; I really do need this.

“Could that be a magic bag?”

“Looks like it. From Fel’s Appraisal, it’s extra-large.” I told him that Fel appraised it.

“E-Extra-large? That’s.....”

From what Elrand said, extra-large magic bags hadn’t been found in twenty years. It seemed like it’d sell for a lot, but I wanted it. I’d talk to Elrand about it when we went back up to the surface.

I put the treasure chest and its contents into my Item Box exactly as it was.

“Now Aveling’s dungeon is conquered.”

“Indeed. I can scarcely believe it, though. I’ve cleared my first dungeon at this age, when I’ve long since retired from being an adventurer.”

It seemed like Elrand was deeply moved. *Even Elrand, a formerly S-ranked adventurer, had never conquered a dungeon in his long life as an adventurer. It’s apparently considered a good thing if someone conquers a dungeon once in a hundred years.*

“We’ve got the treasure chest, so let’s go back to the surface.”

“Yes.”

“Wait a second. I am hungry.”

《Me too—.》

《Sui too—.》

Ahh, right... on the 25th floor we spent the night and had breakfast before going straight to the boss. And after that we went straight through the undead floor, and then into the 27th floor without a break. So we haven’t had lunch yet. Of course they’d be hungry.

“For now let’s eat, and then go back up then.”

“Yes, let’s. I’m hungry, too.”

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And so, I was currently preparing lunch in the dungeon boss's room. Fel requested meat, and both Dora-chan and Sui agreed. All I had left of the food I'd prepared beforehand were the seafood tempura and the miso grilled golden-backed bull, so in the end I had to do something with the golden-backed bull.

Well, in the end I just kept it simple though. In other words, I was currently using my magic stove to grill miso-marinated golden-backed bull.

"Still not done?"

The three of them, and even Elrand, were waiting behind me like children, barely able to contain themselves.

"Wait a little more." I formed rice onto everyone's dishes and bowls and laid a bed of shredded cabbage on top to have them at the ready.

Okay, this should be about done.

I placed the finished meat on top of the cabbage to finish off the miso-grilled golden-backed bull rice bowl. The pieces of meat were big, so I cut Elrand's and my portions beforehand to make them easier to eat.

"Here you go." I served the food to Fel and the others, and they immediately jumped on the food.

"Hm, a meal after a fight always tastes better."

《Yeah. This is so good!》

《It's tasty—!》

"The food you make is always so good, Mukohda." Elrand was also grinning happily as he ate.

"Ahh, this is so good....." With the fact that all that was left was to go back to the surface in mind, the meal tasted even better. All three of my familiars ate even more than usual. Elrand too, for some reason.

Now, all we have left to do after eating is to go back to the surface.

If we just put some magic power into the circle that appeared after beating the hydra, we'd get teleported back up. That part was very much like Dolan's

dungeon.

“Is everyone on the magic circle?”

“Indeed, I am ready.”

《Yeah.》

《Sui is on too—.》

“Well then, I’ll put in the magic.” Elrand suffused the magic circle with power, and after a moment’s floating sensation, we were standing on top of another magic circle drawn in a small room surrounded by rock walls. When I took a step off of the circle, a door opened with some rumbling, and light streamed in.

So bright.....

We were on the surface for the first time in about a week.

Chapter 6: Tenant, Once Again

It's great that we've made it back to the surface, but as expected, we've already been grabbed by the Adventurer's guild.

It looked like the dungeon guards were told about us beforehand, and we were stopped as soon as we got out. They then contacted the Adventurer's guild, and we were brought back with the guild employees who came to retrieve us. They rushed us back and straight into a meeting with the guildmaster. All of us, including my familiars, were forced into the guildmaster's room.

"The fact that you came out of there means that you've conquered the dungeon, right?" Nadiya asked with a grin.

"Yeah, well..."

"Okay! Well then, hurry up and show me what you got out of the dungeon! Oh, but this place is probably too small. We're going to the storehouse!" Nadiya said as she got up, positively exuding excitement and happiness.

I wasted no time in stopping her. "W-Wait a second! Of course I plan to sell the drops to you, but there's so many not even I know what I have. It's the same for you too, right Elrand?"

"Yes. With that much, not even I can remember it all."

I tried to keep an inventory in my head up to a certain point, but there was just way too much stuff, so I gave up halfway through and just started throwing everything into my Item Box. I figured Elrand was the same way, with how much we'd been picking up.

"There's stuff I want to keep for myself, too, so I want to take inventory first before I ask you to buy anything. Is that okay?"

"I'd like to ask for that too. Of course your Adventurer's guild here in Aveling will get first pick from the dropped items, but I'd like to buy some for my guild in Dolan, too. Of course, I'll be consulting with you about that, Nadiya."

“Okay, I get it. If we get priority, I don’t mind.”

“At any rate, I think it’ll be impossible for you to buy everything. That was the case for Dolan too. Not only was there a stupendous amount, there were a lot of high-quality materials, too. There’s a limit to the budget, so..... In the end, I was only able to buy around half of the stuff I wanted,” Elrand said, almost like he was complaining.

Hold on. “Stuff you wanted?” You mean for personal use, right?

“Th-That much?”

“Yes. Once you see the list of items, you’ll be surprised too.” Elrand said, nodding to himself. He must have remembered what the drop list was like back in Dolan. *I can’t speak authoritatively or anything, but Elrand did look pretty surprised when he looked at the list for the first time.*

“That means it’ll take a while to pick and choose, huh?”

Well, I think it’s fine to take some time in this case, at least. For the meat, where freshness is an issue, it’s in my Item Box which freezes time, so there’s no problem there, and I’m taking all the meat anyway.

“Since that’s the case, I’ll sort out all of our items tomorrow, so I’ll come back the day after.”

“Okay, got it.”

As one might expect, I wanted to rest for today since we just came back from the dungeon. Nadiya must have understood that too, so we were allowed to leave the guild. After that, we headed for the guild-owned inn next door.

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At the inn, I asked for the same room on the first floor that I could stay in with my familiars. Elrand was looking at me like he was begging me to ask him to stay with us. It was completely obvious he was after Dora-chan, so I put up a hard refusal. Especially since Dora-chan was looking extremely disgusted and even told me over telepathy, 《I absolutely refuse to stay with him, got it?》

In Elrand’s case, he totally gets his passion across, but it’s just obstinate and creepy so he ends up getting hated. I felt a little sorry for him, so I just told him

that the room I was getting wasn't that large. But the room right above us happened to be vacant, so apparently he took that one.

Once in the room, I immediately got a bath going. I almost couldn't stand not being in one at that point. One of the reasons I hated dungeons was because I wouldn't be able to take a bath, after all. In the end, you couldn't separate a Japanese person from a bath.

When I tried to get in, Dora-chan and Sui said they wanted in too, so we ended up enjoying a bath together for the first time in a while.

"Hahhh~, I feel so refreshed."

《Baths really are nice—.》

《It felt good—.》

In contrast to us, who were all clean and refreshed.....

"What?"

...Was Fel, whose fur, of course, was starting to look really dirty and matted since we'd been holed up in a dungeon. However, the bath here was a little too small to use to wash Fel. There was no helping it, so for the moment I made do with just brushing him. I took the brush I always used out of my Item Box and got closer to Fel.

"W-What are you going to do?"

"Now, now, don't worry about it."

Start the brushing!

"You got all dirty since we were in a dungeon, right? But the bath here is too small for you, so I'm just going to brush you."

"Mrr, I am not dirty."

"Ahhh, fine, fine. Just stay still." I started brushing Fel's entire body. Fel reacted like it felt good. According to Fel: **"I dislike being wet, but this is pretty nice."**



I finished brushing Fel, but once I thought to get started on food, Elrand came over. I couldn't very well close the door on him, so we ended up eating dinner together. As one might expect, I wasn't feeling up to it today, so I just used the last of the prepared food I had to make tempura rice bowls.

"Ohh, seafood? Whenever I'm with you, Mukohda, I always get to eat rare food like this, so I'm thankful."

He was happily eating the tempura rice bowl while singing its praises. *Go back to your room once you're done, got it?*

"More." 《More.》《More.》

Sure, sure. I served extra servings to my three familiars. Elrand was looking at that jealously too, so I gave him an extra portion as well.

As soon as I thought it was over — because Fel and Sui, who were the last to keep eating, were done — they started badgering me for cake.

"Hey, hand over the usual white and sweet thing."

《Ahh no fair! Sui wants cake too—.》

《If that's the case, I'll take a pudding too.》

Ahhhh... fine. Everyone did their best in the dungeon, after all. It'll be a reward.

I splurged today and got them five each of the usual treats from Fumiya. Fel, of course, had his favorite strawberry shortcake: he had three of the normal variety, and two with a strawberry gelée sauce in between the layers. Dora-chan had a strawberry pudding sundae, banana pudding sundae, and three custard puddings. Sui had a seasonal fruit shortcake, chocolate cake, blueberry tart, strawberry mille-feuille, and a rare cheesecake — five completely different things. Elrand was staring at us longingly, so I treated him as well. Of course five would be too much, so I just gave him two. It looked like he liked sweets, so I figured he'd go for it. I got him a strawberry tart with lots of custard cream, as well as a limited-time chocolate and black currant mousse cake.

For drinks, Fel and the others had cider while Elrand had Darjeeling tea. I brewed a drip bag of coffee for myself.

“Hahh~, so good.” While I was drinking my cup of coffee, Fel easily gobbled down his treats. Elrand the sweets lover did much the same too.

“Right, right, I came because I had a favor to ask of you,” Elrand said while drinking his Darjeeling tea after finishing his cakes.

“A favor?”

“Yes. I wanted Fel to use Appraisal on me, since he has the skill. With our run through this dungeon, I feel like I’ve raised my level.”

I see. Oh yeah, I haven’t checked our stats either.

“Fel, will you use Appraisal on Elrand?”

《I haven’t told Elrand that I have Appraisal, so you do it Fel. Tell him his results in secret, got it? Normally, personal stats are something to be kept absolutely secret,》 I told him telepathically.

Appraisal is a rare skill basically only held by heroes summoned from another world, after all. It stands to reason that I couldn’t very well tell Elrand about that too. Since no one has a concept of an Online Supermarket in the first place, I could just explain it away vaguely, but it wouldn’t go the same with Appraisal.

“Okay, understood. Well then, Elf, I will use Appraisal.”

I also secretly used Appraisal on my own.

【Name】Elrand

【Age】334

【Race】Elf

【Job】Adventurer’s Guild Guildmaster【Level】251

【HP】924

【MP】1098

【Attack】913

【Defense】882

【Agility】904

【Skills】Item Box, Water magic, Wind magic, Plant magic, Sword techniques, Physical Boost, Magic Manipulation

As expected, his level was high. *Probably because he's lived for so long.*

Fel told the results of his Appraisal to Elrand.

"Ohh! As I thought, I raised my level!" Elrand seemed happy.

"Good for you!" *We have to appraise ourselves after this, so please go back while you're still in a good mood.*

"Well then, I'll have Fel use Appraisal on us now, so please go back to your room Elrand. Go go!" I shooed Elrand out of our room.

"Well then, see you tomorrow."

Whew, now we can use Appraisal in peace. First up is Fel.

【Name】Fel

【Age】1014

【Race】Fenrir

【Level】945

【HP】10142

【MP】9768

【Attack】9429

【Defense】10157

【Agility】9954

【Skills】Wind magic, Fire magic, Water magic, Earth magic, Ice magic, Lightning magic, Holy magic, Barrier magic, Rending Claws, Body Reinforcement, Physical attack resistance, Magic attack resistance, MP Efficiency, Appraisal, Battle Boost【Blessings】Blessing of the Goddess of Wind, Ninrir; Blessing of the God of War, Vahagn

Ohh! He's gained quite a few levels since we last conquered a dungeon. "Fel you've leveled up quite a bit."

"Indeed. As expected, dungeon clearing is great for that. Dungeons really are good." Fel seemed really satisfied.

Next is Dora-chan.

【Name】Dora-chan

【Age】116

【Race】Pixie Dragon

【Level】197

【HP】1223

【MP】3438

【Attack】3299

【Defense】1152

【Agility】4022

【Skills】Fire magic, Water magic, Wind magic, Earth magic, Ice magic, Lightning magic, Healing magic, Bombardment, Battle Boost【Blessings】Blessing of the God of War, Vahagn

Dora-chan raised his level too. Dungeons really are effective.

"Dora-chan, your level's gone up too."

《Thought so. My magic's been getting a lot better. I felt it.》

Now for Sui...

【Name】Sui

【Age】4 months

【Race】Huge Slime

【Level】38

【HP】1719

【MP】1687

【Attack】1698

【Defense】1707

【Agility】1711

【Skills】Acid Bullet, Potion Creation, Cloning, Water magic, Smithing, Giganticize【Blessings】Blessing of the Goddess of Water, Rusalka; Blessing of the God of Blacksmithing, Hephaestos

Sui's level has gone up significantly too. Sui did a lot in the dungeon, after all.

"Sui, you've gotten stronger too."

《Really~? Yayyy!》 Sui happily bounced around.

As I thought, everyone fought a whole bunch, so their levels went up as well. Now then, what about me? It'd be nice if I got to level 40 and unlocked the next Tenant at the very least.....

【Name】Mukohda (Tsuyoshi Mukouda)

【Age】27

【Job】Victim from Another World, Adventurer, Cook【Level】62

【HP】405

【MP】391

【Attack】382

【Defense】379

【Agility】324

【Skills】Appraisal, Item Box, Fire magic, Earth magic, Perfect Defense, Double Experience Gain, Familiars (Contracted Magic Beasts): Fenrir, Huge Slime, Pixie Dragon【Unique Skill】Online Supermarket (+1) <<Tenants>> Fumiya

【Blessings】Blessing of the Goddess of Wind, Ninrir (small); Blessing of the Goddess of Fire, Agni (small); Blessing of the Goddess of Earth, Kisharle (small)

Okay! Got past level 40! Hm? My job changed. I get Adventurer, but what's up with Cook? It's true that all I do is cook, but I haven't become a cook or anything. I don't have any plans to, either.

Sigh~ ...W-Well, it's not really inconvenient or anything, so... whatever, I guess.

At any rate, it's huge that I got past level 40. If I hadn't, I have no idea what the gods would say, especially Vahagn and Hephaestos. I got past level 40, and in fact I gained a lot of levels. Is this thanks to Double Experience Gain?

I have a +1 next to my Online Supermarket entry, so I can choose my next Tenant. That's a relief. Even if they're rotten, those "people" are still gods, so if I didn't manage to do that at least, I have no idea what they'd do. I'll have to make some offerings to them after this, even though it's a lot of trouble. At least I'll be able to bring some good news.

Once everyone was asleep, I started my report to the gods.

◇ ◇ ◇ ◇ ◇

Once everyone was asleep, I moved to a corner of the room and called out to the gods. "It's been a while. Everyone, I'm back from the dungeon."

I heard footsteps.

＜You're finally back!＞

＜He's finally here~.＞

＜Oh! You came back, huh?＞

＜.....I was waiting.＞

＜Ohh, he's here! So, how's your level?!＞

＜All right! What happened to your level?!＞

Hey now — you two with the deep voices at the end, is that really how you greet someone?

＜That’s right, the Tenant! What happened to your level?＞

Oh, this voice must be Kisharle. She’s probably interested because she’s hoping for a drug store.

“Uhhh, my level rose, yes. It’s 62 now. So, I’m going to unlock my next Tenant,” I said, and the gods all cheered.

＜All right! Good job, boy! Get us a liquor store immediately!＞

＜Right on! A liquor store! Liquor!＞

＜No! It’s going to be a drug store!＞

Hephaestos, Vahagn, and Kisharle, who all had their own desires for my Tenant, started arguing on their own.

＜Geez, you’re all so noisy~. I just want my cake already.＞

＜Yeah. I just want some more beer for the first time in a while.＞

＜……Cake and ice cream.＞

Ninrir and Ruka sure are acting calmly since they already have their sweets shop. Agni also asked for a liquor store Tenant before, but she can get her beloved beer as we are now, too. I guess at this point, she’s lost her interest in Tenants.

＜The Tenant is more important! You all just be quiet for a little!＞ Kisharle said flat out.

＜Kisharle, you’re scary.＞

＜Once her temper flares up, it’s better to just wait for it to pass. If you fan those embers, you’ll just end up getting burned.＞

＜……＞

Kisharle made the other goddesses shut up.

S-Scary! However, I don’t know what Tenants I can even choose yet. There’s no guarantee I’ll even get to choose a liquor or drug store.

“Excuse me, but we won’t know until I check what Tenants I can even choose from.”

＜Ah! That's right. Check it right now.＞

＜Yeah.＞

＜Faster, faster~.＞

"I-I get it already. Okay then, look closely." Hurried on by the gods, I opened up my status screen. I pressed on the (+1) part of the Unique Skill entry, where it said Online Supermarket (+1).

【You have unlocked a Tenant for the Unique Skill, "Online Supermarket"】

【Please choose from the following:】

【KFC/Bakery Suzuki/Liquor Shop Tanaka】

Oh, so I can choose from three stores for the level 40 Tenant? Also, the WcDonald's choice that I didn't go for before didn't come back. Still, there's so many holes I can poke in these choices. I get KFC, it's a famous fast food chain, after all. But what the heck are Bakery Suzuki and Liquor Shop Tanaka? Why do they have personal names? Just what kind of standard is being used to choose this stuff?

Well, it's not like I'll be able to figure it out by thinking on my own.

"Uhh, can you see this? KFC is a store that makes fried chicken, which is a food where you take a bird called a chicken and cook it in oil. Bakery Suzuki is well, a bakery. And Liquor Store Tanaka is a place that sells liquor."

As if nobody cared about my explanation at all, I immediately heard a loud, throaty cheer.

＜ALL RIIIGGHT! YES! YEAH! IT'S A LIQUOR STORE! A liquor store!＞

＜YEEEEEAAAAHHHH! THE LIQUOR STORE OF OUR DREEEAAMMS!!＞



In contrast to those happy shouts, a certain unsatisfied voice.....

＜Whaaa~t? Why a liquor store—? There wasn't a drug store..... Ahhh I'm so disappointed!＞

Sorry Kisharle, there's really nothing to be done about this. Just bear with it this time please.

Still, I personally would have preferred the bakery. The difference between the bread offered by a mass-producing supermarket and a bakery is vast. Sometimes I want some delicious bread, but saying that now will probably..... There's no other choice but to bend to Hephaestos and Vahagn's wishes, huh?

"Well then, should I choose the Liquor Shop Tanaka?"

＜Of course.＞

＜As if there's any other choice.＞

＜I don't care if there isn't a drug store~.＞

＜I don't have any objections either. I'd rather you just hurry up with this. I want to choose my cakes already.＞

＜As long as I can get beer I don't care.＞

＜.....Cake and ice cream.＞

Fine fine, then I'll just choose the liquor store.

【Form a contract with the Tenant: "Liquor Shop Tanaka?"】

【YES / NO】

Of course it's a YES.

【Formed a contract with the Liquor Shop Tanaka.】

【The next Tenant will be unlocked at level 80.】

【We look forward to your continued patronage.】

So the next Tenant will be at level 80, huh? The first one was at 20, then at 40, so if the next is 80, that means it doubles every time? Which means after 80 is 160?

Woah, harsh. Apparently the higher level you get, the more work it becomes to level up, so it's just going to get harder and harder, won't it?

Still, I just got through a dungeon, so it's not like I'm going to be trying to level hard for another Tenant, I think. It's not like I need money at the moment, so it'd probably be best to hope I level up while I live normally. I don't want to go to a dungeon for a while, either.

Anyway, this ends the Tenant episode for this time.

"I got the liquor shop Tanaka," I said, and once again throaty cheers resounded.

＜All right! It's time for booze! Booze I say! Hurry up and show me!＞

＜Yeah yeah! Booze!＞

Both Hephaestos and Vahagn were really excited.

But if I show them the menu right now, I can already tell it'll take a really long time, so it'll have to wait until I take care of the other goddesses first.

"Can I listen to the goddesses first? Then you can look over the new menu at your leisure. I think that'll let you look around longer in the end."

＜Ohh, that's right. It looks like there's a lot of them, so I want to take my time and pick some out. Right, War God?＞

＜Yeah. It's alcohol from another world. I definitely want to take my time looking. I think it's fine to go later, Blacksmithing God.＞

I got permission. *So let's get to the goddesses first.*

"Okay then, goddesses, I'm going to take your orders. Just like always, will Ninrir be going first?"

＜That's right! I'm first! I want Fumiya's cakes, of course!＞

Sure sure, I know already. I opened up Fumiya's menu.

＜I want one of those big round ones. Those are good. They let me enjoy cake

as much as I want.＞

She's probably downing entire cakes by herself, isn't she? Isn't Ninrir getting really fat by now, that divine disappointment? It's your own body, so please control yourself.

"Whole cake, right? Which one would you like?"

＜Hmmm, which one should it be..... Okay, I've decided! That one, with all the red and purple fruits on it!＞

Uhh, this one? It was a whole cake with strawberries and blueberries on it. I added it to the cart.

＜After that, I want a lot of different ones.＞

Different? I opened up the cake slices menu. "Oh, looks like they added something new. There's a fresh milk chocolate cake, a chocolate mille-feuille, and a Kyoho grape rare cheesecake."

＜Wooaaahhh! N-New items?! I definitely want those!＞

Sure, sure, the new stuff it is. "Should I just choose at random for the rest of it?"

＜Yes. Ah, make sure to get some extra dorayaki. Also, the sweets that came in bags that you gave me last time were just perfect. I want those too.＞

So extra dorayaki and those sweets that come in bags, right? I picked up shortcakes at random before moving on to dorayaki. I got five each of the normal smooth bean paste, kogura bean paste, some with chestnuts in them, and sweet potato paste. After that, given her description, I picked up the baumkuchen and scotch cake variety pack that I bought for her last time to round out her 1 gold.

Right, that's it for Ninrir's portion. "As usual, Kisharle is next, right?"

＜Yes, it's me~. I was hoping for a drug store... I'm so disappointed~.＞

I mean, even if you tell me that.....

＜Well, I suppose there's nothing to be done about it. This time, I'd like three sets of shampoo and hair treatment with different fragrances. My hair is long,

so I end up using a lot of shampoo. I'm starting to run out of what I got from you before. Also, I want to try out a lot of different things, so I'd like something new.
>

I see, something different from the fragrances before. If I'm remembering right, Kisharle said that her hair was suffering from being frayed and split... If that's the case, it's gotta be the moistening type of shampoo and treatment.

I started choosing things while scrolling through the menu. "How about this one? It's a moistening type of shampoo and hair treatment, and it's scented like a flower called jasmine. It's a refined-smelling flower..... In the world I was in, it was used in teas too, so I don't think there'd be too many that would hate the smell."

<A refined flower fragrance? That sounds nice. I'd like a set of that.>

Roger. I added the jasmine scented shampoo and hair treatment to the cart.

"After that, for the same moistening type of shampoos and hair treatments, there's this floral berry scent..... It's, uhhh... Imagine a sweet fruit fragrance and a flowery fragrance mixed together."

<A sweet fruit and a flower? I like both of them, so I want to try this too.>

Alright, I'll get this too.

"Also, how about this one? It's a little more expensive than the previous two, but it's a rose scented one, which feels classy..... Rose is another flower; on the explanation here, it says it will lead your hair down the path of beauty, moistening every follicle down to the tips."

<Beauty... moisture... down to the tips... I like it. I'll take that one.>

Get this one too, then. "What about the rest? You have a little more than 3 silver left."

<What would be good, I wonder? I've asked for a lot of items for my face recently.....>

Oh yeah, the last time she asked for facial lotion, cream, and even face-washing packs. If she wants skincare products, then next would be products for her body, right?

“If that’s the case, then what about body soap? Unlike soap bars, it’s a liquid, but it moistens and generally works better than soap.”

＜Oh my, those exist? Soap is nice, but it’s definitely inconvenient in some places. Pick out some of that body soap for me, then.＞

If that’s how it is, then maybe a body soap that moisturizes better would be good. Hmmm, alright. These three should do it.

“I picked out three of them. The first one is this moisturizing body soap with honey in it. The second is a new product and has ingredients in it that stay on the skin to continue to trap moisture inside. As for the third one, it seems to moisturize by using essential oils.”

I showed the three body soaps I picked out to Kisharle as I explained each one.

＜What should I choose? They all seem good~.＞

“If that’s the case, why not just get all three to match with your shampoo and hair treatments? They all smell differently, so it might be nice to use something different every day.”

＜That’s true. I want to try all of them, too, so that’s definitely an option. Okay, then please.＞

Sure thing — all three it is~. “You still have about 1 silver left. What do you want to do?”

＜Is there something decent worth that much?＞

Then..... “There’s a moisturizing cream for after a bath called body cream. How about it?”

＜Hm? Those exist too? Then I’ll take it. Pick something that looks good.＞

Leaving it to me again, huh? Well, it’s from another world, and she probably can’t read anyway, so I guess that’s only natural. Uhhh, what’s good.....

“How about this? It uses a vegetable fat called shea butter, and makes your skin nice and moist.”

＜Then I’ll take it. Heheheh, now I can take care of not only my hair and face,

but my entire body!＞

G-Good for you, I'm happy you're so pleased.

This means I've got Kisharle's order down. "Next is Agni, right?"

＜You got it. Like always, I want beer. It'd be great if I could get some simple snacks, but really, just *simple ones will be fine. And I don't really care if there aren't any either. At any rate, beer comes first.＞*

Agni's totally hooked on beer, huh? But beer's delicious, so I get it though. Having beer right after work or a bath is really something.

"Then I think having entire cases like before is a good idea. With 1 gold you can buy up to two cases. Or would you rather have one case and be able to pick out several six-packs of different flavors?"

＜Hmmm, what should it be..... Hrmm, I really do think having a variety is best.＞

"Okay. What do you want for your case of beer, then?"

＜The usual gold and blue one is good. I really like that one.＞

Gold and blue? That's probably S-company's premium beer, isn't it? No, wait a second, is it A-company's premium beer? I've gotten her some several times recently.

I figured having her see it would be faster, so I opened up the menu. "Is it this one? Or this one?"

＜Uhhh, the first one.＞

Agni wanted S-company's premium beer. I quickly picked up the case.

"What other beers would you like?"

＜For other ones I like..... The gold one. After that, just pick some out.＞

Roger. By gold, she probably means Y-bisu beer. The rest is up to me, but..... Oh, there's a limited edition Y-bisu beer here. It's in a red can, and it's got a unique mellow flavor, it says. Let's get this one. After that, let's get one of S-company's long standing beers that went through some improvement. For the rest, I chose A-company's limited edition coolers that had a really clear taste as

a selling point — apparently, it has a balanced but complex taste, and a florid fragrance. I got a six-pack of each.

There was only about 1 silver left, so I got the ultimate in simple snacks. I went straight for several flavors of potato chips and kaki no tane in both plain flavor and wasabi.

Whew, this should be it for Agni. "Next is Ruka, right?"

＜.....Cake and ice cream.＞

Again? It seems she really likes sweet stuff, but she really likes her ice cream, doesn't she?

"For the cake and ice cream, do you want different flavors like last time?"

＜I want the white ice cream cake. Definitely. Get different flavors for the rest.＞

So you definitely want ice cream cake? Got it. I added the vanilla ice cream cake she wanted to the cart. After that, she wanted a variety of different flavors, so for shortcakes I got the new products that I got for Ninrir as well: the fresh milk chocolate cake and the chocolate mille-feuille, as well as the Kyoho grape rare cheesecake. *What should I get next.....*

"About the cakes, are you fine with some of them being something you've already had?" *Having cakes every time means you'll run out of new ones eventually.*

＜Fine. They're always delicious.＞

Since that was the case, I just added stuff from the top of the shortcake menu in order again.

Then lastly, it's ice cream. Oh, they have choux ice cream. Let's get all the flavors of this along with the ice cream cups. Great, this should be it for Ruka.

＜All right! Looks like you're done. Then we're next!＞

＜Right! I'm going to take my time choosing~.＞

I heard Hephaestos and Vahagn say, all hyped up because of the new liquor store.

＜Wait just a second there! We won't just sit here quietly while you two pick out your booze! Hey, send us our offerings first!＞

＜Ninrir's right! I'm not going to just sit here and wait for you to finish. Please send us our things first, otherworlder boy. I want to hurry and test the shampoos, hair treatments, body soaps and creams I got today.＞

＜Yeah! Yeah! I want to get to drinking my beer already too! Hey otherworlder, send ours first. After that these guys can take as long as they like.＞

＜Cake and ice cream. Hurry.＞

It's understandable that the goddesses would say that. It looks like the liquor-loving combo here is going to take a while.

"Would it be all right to send the goddesses their things first, Hephaestos, Vahagn?"

＜Well, it's fine, probably. They'll just be in the way if they stay here, no?＞

＜Yeah. I can't look around at my leisure with them making a racket and complaining.＞

With that settled, I checked out the goddess' portion first. *Great, now just put them all on the cardboard boxes.....*

"Please take your stuff, Goddesses," I said, and the offerings on the cardboard altars disappeared.

After I heard the goddesses raise a shrill cheer, I then heard the sounds of rushing feet.

Looks like they just took their stuff and ran off huh? Oh wow.

Wait, I'm not done yet. I still have the two most troublesome ones here.

＜Nooowww then, let's take our time and choose. Right, War God?＞

＜You got it, Blacksmithing God! I'll go over this with a fine-toothed comb!＞

Hahh, looks like it'll be a long night.....

＜Hurry up and let us choose!＞

＜Yeah! Yeah!＞

Just wait a second!

I chose the “Liquor Shop Tanaka” entry from my Online Supermarket Tenants. I was surprised at what I saw for a second, but... *I guess this is what I* should *expect out of a specialty store, they’ve got a variety of products.*

From the top of the menu, the tabs were: Beer, Wine, Sparkling Wine, Whiskey, Brandy, Spirits, Liqueur, Shochu, Japanese Sake, and Other.

“As one might expect out of a specialty store, they have a wide selection. From the top, the menu sections are Beer, Wine, Sparkling Wine, Whiskey, Brandy, Spirits, Liqueur, Shochu, Japanese Sake, and Other.”

I started off by reading them the menu from top to bottom.

＜Hmm? That’s quite a lot.＞

It’s too early to be getting surprised, Hephaestos.

I manipulated the menu a little, and the whole thing blew up. “Uhhh, please calm down and listen. Each of these sections has almost a hundred brands to each of them.”

And that was just at a quick glance, so depending on the type, it might have been much more than that. It seemed that this store specialized in Western alcohols, so they had an especially large amount of wines and whiskeys. Of course, the other sections were far deeper than the normal Online Supermarket, as one might expect out of a specialty store.

＜What did you say?! That means, there’s more than a hundred whiskeys?＞

“Yes,” I replied, and suddenly I heard a large, throaty cry.

＜＜OOOOOAAAAUUUGGGHHHHH!!＞＞

W-Wait a second, I get that you’re happy, but just calm down!

＜WE DID IT, WAR GOD!＞

＜WE TOTALLY DID, BLACKSMITHING GOD!＞

＜IT’S BOOZE! BOOZE! Like this we’ll be able to enjoy hundreds of different alcohols from the other world!!＞

＜Yeah. All the stuff up till now has been good. We might be able to find even better ones now!＞

I'm sorry to rain on your parade, but you still only have 1 gold each. For now, I should just get them to calm down.

"Please calm down, you two. We can't move on like this."

＜S-Sure. You're right.＞

＜Yeah, I'm fine now.＞

They totally get out of control when it comes to alcohol, don't they?

＜That's right, there's something I want to ask you. We've already tried beer, wine, whiskey, brandy, and sake; what other kinds of alcohol are there?＞

Other? I don't really know that much about alcohol either, just the basics.....

"Uhhh, I'm not sure either, so I'll just tell you what little I know. Sparkling wine is wine that's been carbonated, so it's fizzy in the mouth. Spirits are distilled liquors that are strong in alcohol content. The vodka that you two have tried is a kind of spirit, and other well-known types in this category are gin, tequila, and rum. Liqueurs are basically what you get when you add fruit or herb flavors to things like vodka, and are basically sweetened alcohols. Shochu is made out of different things like rice, wheat, and potatoes, and in the country I was from, Japan, it was the distilled liquor of choice."

＜I see. There really are a lot of different alcohols in your world, aren't there?＞

＜Really. So, what did you mean by 'Other'?＞

You noticed, Vahagn? In the Other tab, it's all just things that didn't fit into the other sections, such as Chinese and Korean liquors.

"The Other section is just liquor that doesn't fit into all the other categories, such as alcohol made in a country called China, called Shaoxing wine, which is famous for its unique taste. Or, there's alcohol made in a country called South Korea, such as this makgeolli, one of their famous clouded liquors. This section is filled with stuff like that."

I showed them the contents of the menu while I explained.

＜Okay, I understand. Still, with this many options, it's really hard to make a decision. Not only that, but each section has over a hundred brands, right?＞

I replied in the affirmative to Vahagn's question, and I started off by opening up the whiskey menu, which I knew they'd be interested in.

"Do you see this? I'll try showing you the whiskey menu. Here's what it looks like."

When I selected the whiskey tab, it expanded to the subsections Scotch whisky, Irish whiskey, American whiskey, Canadian whisky, and Japanese whisky.

"This one is separated by which country it's made in. I'll open up the first one, Scotch whisky."

I selected the top subsection, Scotch whisky. When I did, the right hand side of the menu changed, and this time another subsection came up with the selections: Highland, Speyside, Lowland, Islay, Campbeltown, and Island.

This is just half-remembered knowledge, but I think this section with the Highlands and Speyside and stuff is where it's distilled?

"This is now divided into where it's distilled. Scotch whisky has its own local areas and each place results in quite a different flavor, I hear, so that's why it's separated like this. When I try opening this menu for the Highlands....."

A page with a huge line-up of whiskies appeared.

＜＜Oohhhh!＞＞

The two of them raised surprised voices.

"Like this, there's quite a large selection."

.....

.....

.....

Why're they silent?

"U-Uhhh, what's wrong?"

＜O-Ohh, sorry sorry. I was just taken by all the whisky.＞

＜Whew, me too.＞

Ahhh, seeing all the whisky lined up like that must have knocked them off their senses. I guess people who love booze get like that.

“So, what do you want?”

＜I want to say all of it, but we have the same allowance as always, right?＞

“Yes. That hasn’t changed. I can’t just give you two more.”

If I do that, I have no idea what the other goddesses would do to me.

＜You’re right~. If you gave us extra, those four idiot goddesses would never shut up about it.＞

Vahagn, that..... I won’t deny it though.

＜We need to discuss what to do then, War God.＞

＜Yeah, you’re right. Blacksmithing God.＞

After that, the two of them started whispering to each other.

Thirty minutes later...

＜.....W-.....ake.....＞

＜..... You..... W-.....up!＞

Hm..... What.....?

＜.....Co-..... Hey.....＞

＜W-..... Come..... up!＞

*Mrrnnn... S*hut *up. I’m sleepy.*

＜Hey! Listen here! What are you doing sleeping?!＞

＜Hey! You bastard! Wake the fuck up!!＞

Low, angry voices awakened me with a start. “H-Huh? Huh? W-W-What is it?!!”

＜Don’t ‘what is it’ us! Why are you sleeping?!＞

＜Yeah! Do you know how many times we had to yell for you to wake up?!＞

“S-Sorry.”

I mean, I just came out of a dungeon and I’m tired, and you guys took so long. I just couldn’t stop myself from falling asleep. It’s already the middle of the night, you know? I want to go to sleep already.

＜Hmph! Well whatever. So, after talking it over carefully, we decided that whiskey really is the way to go. So you see, is there something better than our usual world’s best whisky? We definitely want to try that.＞

I do remember telling them briefly that it was the lowest grade... Oh man, so it’s like that, huh? But, those are pretty expensive...

I checked the Japanese whisky menu. *Oh, there it is.*

The usual one I bought for them was 5 silver, and the next up, the 12-year whisky, was 1 gold and 2 silver. That alone was more than one of their allowances. I looked further, and the next highest grade, the 18-year whisky was.....

Gh! .....4 gold and 2 silver?! So expensive! I totally forgot since I’m so used to my Online Supermarket prices. The expensive liquors get reaaalllly expensive. It seems they easily get up to 100,000 or even a million yen. If the 18-year is this expensive, then what’s even up with the more aged ones?

I hesitatingly looked it up, and it was just as I feared. The 25-year whisky was 32 gold.

.....Yep. No way.

“I’m sorry Hephaestos, Vahagn. I have bad news. To tell you the truth.....”

I told them the results of my research. “They say whiskey gets better with age, so the longer they’re aged the more expensive they get, it looks like.”

＜I see. Still, these are expensive..... To think that a single bottle could cost so much.....＞

＜But if they’re that expensive, doesn’t that just mean they’re worth it to some people? If it tastes as good as it costs.....＞

＜I want to try it..... Gulp...＞

＜I wanna try it..... Gulp...＞

No no, I'm not going to buy it for you just because you sound that needy.

"If you pool your allowances together, you'll be able to barely afford the 12-year version. How about it?"

＜Grrrnnn..... War God, we need to talk.＞

＜Sure, let's talk, Blacksmithing God.＞

...They said, before starting to talk to each other again.

Ten minutes later...

＜Hey, I'm really sad to say this, but we're giving up.＞

＜Yeah. It's really too bad, though. We finally got the Tenant and everything. So since it's the first time and all, we want to taste as many different whiskeys as we can.＞

I could hear their deep regret and bitter disappointment.

＜Now, we said that we want to try a lot of different whiskeys, but it's booze from another world. We know nothing. Not only that, there are so many of them that we were surprised just seeing the selection. So, for now, we just want you to pick out some that look good.＞

＜We're planning to pick out what we want from that.＞

I see; is that the plan? Well, it's true that it'd be faster to do it this way than have them look at each one when they don't know anything. The biggest problem is, I'm not that well versed on whiskey either..... Is there something I can do...?

.....Hm?

I noticed something on the screen. Under all the tabs that said beer, wine, sparkling wine and so on, there was another one that said, 'Master's recommended original gift.' I looked into the section, and it had five store-owner-recommended alcohols from each tab.

If you buy these and specify that it's a present at checkout, they'll come gift

wrapped for free, since the concept was to provide a service for those looking for a gift for alcohol lovers. Ohh, this is great, I'm saved. I probably can't go wrong with things recommended by the owner.

Then, I realized something else looking at the screen. There was a small 'ranking' link on the upper right hand corner of the screen. I quickly followed it. It showed a top 10 ranking for the day, week, and month of each category by sales.

Ohh! This'll be useful too.

"I don't know too much about whiskey, so even if you tell me to find something that looks good, I don't think I can, Hephaestos, Vahagn. But I found something nice. This store can recommend you whiskeys. If the store itself is recommending these, they shouldn't be bad, I think."

＜Ohh, recommendations from the store? That's got to be reliable, no? Okay, show me.＞

＜Yeah! Be quick about it!＞

I showed them the five recommended whiskeys from the store.

The first one was a Speyside single malt Scotch that boasted the world's highest sales. It had a fruity fragrance and taste, and was easier to drink for beginners. It said that it was a perfect present for people new to Scotch whisky. It cost 3 silver.

The second recommendation was a single malt whisky hailed as, "The queen of Islay." It was unique for its smoky flavor, and amid that smokiness there were hints of lemon and honey. The smoky flavor was also subtly present in the scent, and reflected the sweetness of the aforementioned lemon and honey, striking a perfect balance. It also said that, amongst all the Islay whiskies that tend to have their own funky tastes, this one was comparatively easy to drink. It was priced at 3 silver and 8 copper.

The third recommended one was a brand that represented all of Scotch whisky, said to be a "Scotch Prince." It featured the fragrance of banana and nuts, but actually tasted like apples and honey, with a nuanced but well-balanced sweetness and mellowness. The section claimed that since they came

in 1-liter bottles, a huge size, it was perfect for those who just love alcohol. It would cost 3 silver and 2 copper.

The fourth was the most famous Tennessee whiskey in the world, a premium American whiskey brand. It held the fragrance of vanilla and caramel, and had a mellow, balanced taste. Apparently it was also recommended because of its affordable price; it was just 2 silver.

The last recommended whiskey was one from Northern Ireland, from what's said to be the world's oldest distillery. Thanks to being aged in a sherry cask, it smelled sweet and tasted primarily of malt. Irish whiskey apparently had a smooth and light mouthfeel thanks to being distilled multiple times, but it said that this one in particular exemplified that. It was priced at 2 silver.

I ended my explanation of each of the store owner's recommendations.

Looking at them as a whole, it seemed that he recommended comparatively easy-to-drink ones. *Makes sense, though, especially since then they'd be perfect for mixed drinks too. I hear there are some that smell really strongly of seirogan medicine, but only true connoisseurs would appreciate something like that, I think.*

By the way, it seems like the owner puts up new recommendations every month. It's written in small font at the very bottom.

Even though I stopped talking, the two of them were still silent. They were really quiet when I was explaining things to them, too.

"Uhmm~...?"

＜Hm, we need to buy all five of these, don't we, War God?＞

＜Yeah. These are being recommended above all the other kinds. We can't afford to ignore that, can we, Blacksmithing God?＞

＜＜So, get all five of these, eh? (...now!)＞＞

Roger. I put all five of them into the cart.

Looking over the screen, I saw that the page actually continued. I scrolled down wondering what it was, and found that there was a section for, "Master's Daily Recommendation." Apparently the owner would recommend one bottle

every day based on his personal opinion. It seemed like he loved whiskey, because it said he frequently picked one. So, luckily, today's bottle was also whiskey. The one he recommended was a Japanese whisky that came in a beautiful bottle with twenty-four cut faces: a perfect example of Japanese workmanship.

"A word from the master... 'Today, I feel like enjoying something with a floral fragrance and a soft taste.'"

That's what it said. It cost 5 silver. I relayed the contents of the section to Hephaestos and Vahagn, and.....

＜I feel that it's a little expensive, but that whisky looks good too.＞

＜That's a whisky that wants to be enjoyed slowly and leisurely, right? Interesting.＞

Oh yeah, this..... "Oh, this is from the same place that makes the world's best whisky that you two like so much."

＜＜W-What?!!＞＞

＜Hey, we're buying this right, Blacksmithing God? It's the same place, you know? It definitely won't be bad.＞

＜Indeed, that's true. If they make that whisky, then there's no way it won't taste great.＞

＜＜We're buying this, son! (...got it?)＞＞

Sure, fine. I added it to the cart.

Uhhh, now they have 1 silver. "You only have 1 silver left. What do you want to do?"

＜1 silver? What do you think War God?＞

＜We have enough whiskey. What about vodka?＞

＜Good idea. Get us a vodka with what's left.＞

Vodka? Are there any that only cost 1 silver?

After looking around, I found several buttons that allowed me to search by price on the bottom of the home page. This was really helpful. I immediately

clicked on the “2 Silver and Under” button on the Spirits tab.

Ohh, this is good. It was a famous one from Poland. I heard about it from someone I knew that liked alcohol. He said that it was infused with herbs, and felt mellow in the mouth while smelling like sakuramochi.

I immediately relayed that to the two gods. It was exactly 1 silver, so it was within budget.

Right, they okayed it. Let’s check out.....

“Please take this, Hephaestos, Vahagn.”

The liquor arrayed on top of the cardboard altar vanished, and at the same time I heard a loud cheer.

Whew, it’s finally over.

I immediately got up to go to sleep, but the two of them stopped me.

＜＜WAIT JUST A SECOND THERE!＞＞

“What?” *I want to sleep already...*

＜For future reference, we want to know what’s recommended for other liquors.＞

＜Yeah. And we want to see what’s on the rankings too.＞

You guys..... Now*, of all times?*

“I’m tired since I just got back from the dungeon. Please, spare me the rankings at least.....”

＜Mmm, oh fine.＞

＜Geez. Ah, Blacksmithing God, let’s try these new whiskeys while we hear about this stuff.＞

＜Ohh, great idea.＞

I heard some clinking. *Grrrr, they plan on drinking while I’m down here, still awake?*

＜Right, we’re ready. Go ahead.＞

＜It’s so fun, learning about new alcohols.＞

Don't tell me it's fine! Gaahh! Hahh~.....

After heaving a huge sigh, I gave up and opened up the whiskey rankings (I really didn't want to show them everything, so I kept it to the daily ranking) and started talking.

＜Thanks, this was fun. We found what we wanted to drink next time, too.＞

＜Yeah, it was fun learning about a lot of different alcohols. I have some ideas for next time, too.＞

＜Still, this whiskey in the green bottle is good. As expected from the store's recommendation.＞

＜Indeed. This is a fine whiskey. It smells and tastes of fruit, but it's not just that. I can't quite put my finger on it. I don't think I'll ever get tired of this.＞

＜Okay, Blacksmithing God, we aren't sleeping today. Let's taste all the whiskey!＞

＜Yeah, that's a great idea. War God.＞

＜＜Okay then, we're looking forward to next time, ya hear? (...okay?)＞＞

Dammit, they just said whatever they wanted and cut the line. Even though I'm so sleepy I could just fall over right now. Making me stay up with them this late, those damn liquor-lovers.....

Ahh~, too sleepy.....

I crawled into bed and lay down.

Just how long can I sleep until Fel and the others force me awake because they're hungry.....

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".....-ey.....-ke up....."

《.....-ungry.....alre-.....》

《.....-er.....sto-.....》

I heard voices.

But I'm sleepy..... I still want to sleep. This is fine once in a while, right?

“Hey, wake up!”

“Ghhuehh!”

Feeling a weight on my stomach, I was forced into wakefulness. Looking around, I saw Fel with his front paws on top of me.

“FEEE~LLL~!” I glared at Fel resentfully, but he didn’t seem to care.

“Hey, I am hungry. Hurry up and cook.”

《Yeah. I’m hungry too.》

《Sui is hungry too.》

This really is just my lot in life..... I’m so depressed.

Unable to just ignore them, I was about to give up and make them breakfast when I heard a knock at my door.

“Mukohdaaaa. Are you awaaake? It’s Elrand. Open uuuuuppp!”

Grrrrrr, he totally just came because he knows it’s time for breakfast.

“Mukohdaaaaa!”

SHUT UP.

I couldn’t very well pretend I wasn’t here this early in the morning, so I begrudgingly opened the door.

“Maannn, so sorry to be doing this first thing in the morning. Could it be breakfast time?” Elrand was taking peeks into the room as he talked.

This old man, he’s being way too free with me.

“No, I was just about to start cooking.”

“Is that so~, may I partake?”

There’s the future to think about, so just saying no is..... Not only that, but I’m going to have to make it for Fel and the others now anyway, so adding Elrand’s portion to that won’t make much difference. This old man has the best damned timing...

“.....Okay.”

This is the only answer, hahhh...

"Oh man, you always make such good food. I'm a happy camper being able to get that right from the morning~."

Oh yeah, sure, that's just great for you. Ugh, it's a pain in the ass, but let's just get this over with, I guess.

I opened a window and went into the room's special backyard. For the familiar-allowed room on the first floor, there was a special backyard that came with it since the draw was staying with a familiar. I brought out my magic stove there.

"Hey, I want meat."

《Oh, yeah! I want meat too.》

《Sui also wants meat.》

All three of them requested meat.

"A hearty amount of meat right from the morning? That sounds great~."

Fel was speaking aloud so Elrand heard it and agreed. His looks said, "vegetarian," but it seemed that he was completely fine with heavy meat from the start of the day.

If that's the case, then I guess I'll make meat. But only something simple, because I can't be bothered. Today will be steak sandwiches, right in the morning.

For now, I just started to get ingredients using my skill. I still had my steak sauces, so I bought lettuce, butter, Japanese karashi mustard, and white bread. I decided to use golden-backed bulls for the meat.

When I was trying to pick out the meat, I found that my stock of wyvern and bloody horn-bull meat was getting quite low. *I might end up using the rest of it while we stay here. We ended up not getting that much meat back in Berléand, too.*

I want to keep the earth dragon's meat for special occasions since it's so amazingly good, and I don't have the red dragon butchered yet, either. I do have a lot of orc meat I got in Nijhoff, as well as all the snake and soft-shelled turtle

meat I got in the dungeon though. Well, it's not like we're in dire straits when it comes to meat, so I'll think about it later. Right now I have to hurry up and make breakfast.

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Oil up a heated frying pan, and after lightly seasoning with salt and pepper, start cooking the golden-backed bull meat, which is relatively lean.

Once it's done cooking, take a plate and let the meat rest for about five minutes wrapped in aluminum foil. Doing so will cause the residual heat to seep in and soften the meat. This is the best way to prepare lean meats.

Meanwhile, lightly toast the white bread in the oven until it comes out a light brown. Spread butter on one slice of white bread and Japanese karashi on another.

Place some lettuce that's been washed and torn into pieces beforehand onto the slice with butter on it, and then add the softened steak on top of that after having added onion-flavored steak sauce onto the steak and letting the flavor seep in a little. Close the sandwich with the Japanese karashi-laden slice to finish.

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Yeah, looks good. Steak sandwiches were way too heavy for me in the morning, so I was thinking something like a ham sandwich, but seeing the results of my cooking, I started to want a steak sandwich too.

After producing a large amount of steak sandwiches, I heard Elrand speak.

"What dexterity~!"

Yeah, I'm feeling that recently, too. For some reason I move really fast when I cook. I wonder if it's because I always seem to end up cooking, ever since I came to this world.....Ah!

Oh yeah, for some reason, I managed to gain the Cook job. Could there be some kind of effect? I'm not sure if I'm happy or sad — what a complicated feeling. I mean, I'm not even a cook. Well, it looks like there's some kind of effect, and it's not negative in any way, so I guess it doesn't matter.

With all that going through my mind, I pumped out a huge number of steak sandwiches. I served them to Fel and the others along with some 100% orange juice.

“Here you go.”

All three of my familiars immediately dug in as soon as I put the plates in front of them.

“You too, Elrand.”

“Ohh, thanks!”

I didn’t bother cutting the sandwiches for Fel and the others, but I did for Elrand and myself because they were so big, they would’ve been hard to eat. I didn’t bother cutting off the crusts, either.

I quickly started on my steak sandwich, and when I took the first bite, meat juices flooded into my mouth.

Yep, it’s good. The spicy sting of the Japanese karashi makes for a great accent.

“Ohh, your food is always so good, Mukohda~. This meat is so juicy and delicious, but this sauce is also wonderful,” Elrand said after eating half of a large steak sandwich.

“Indeed. This is good. I like how it stings. Hey, I want more.”

He’s referring to the Japanese karashi right? It’s totally necessary for a more eastern-style steak sandwich, isn’t it? Actually, aren’t you eating way too fast, Fel?!

I served out an extra helping for Fel.

《Man meat really is so delicious~. This sauce is totally soaked into the bread, which is great! I want more too.》

《Yeah, it’s delicious! Sui wants more too.》

So I served more food to both Dora-chan and Sui as well.

Fel and the others, once they’d eaten massive amounts of food and seemed to have gotten their fill, went into the room and fell asleep immediately on Fel’s

futons.

MUST BE NICE~. I want to sleep too, but I need to go to the Adventurer's guild tomorrow, so once I clean up, I have to get straight to sorting out the loot.

"Okay then, I'll be going back to my room....."

"Where do you think you're going, Elrand?"

Elrand stopped with an audible "GRK!" sound before turning around.

"You'll be helping me with the loot no matter what, Elrand. I'll clean up right away, so wait."

Geez, I can't relax for a second around here. I'm starting to understand how Ugohl feels on a daily basis.

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"It's over....."

"It's finally over, huh? Hahhh....."

After finishing sorting out the loot, Elrand and I took a deep breath at last. I poured some black tea that I'd always kept ready into some mugs and handed one to Elrand.

"Hooh, I feel like I'm coming back to life."

"Yeah."

As for the sorting, above everything else, there were so many things to sort that it was just awful. It was probably because we went in there during the season where a lot of special individuals show up, but just counting total numbers, there were more drops than in Dolan. I'd already promised to go to the Adventurer's guild tomorrow, so I had to figure this all out today, and didn't even have time to make lunch.

That's why today's lunch was just snack buns. Fel and Dora-chan seemed a little unhappy that it wasn't meat, but Sui was happy since it liked sweet things. Elrand was, too.

"To think that bread could be eaten like this..... Sweetening the bread made it really delicious, didn't it?" he said, sounding really moved.

Just like that, we managed to get through lunch and went back to sorting out the loot. We had finally finished just moments ago.

“We’ve done a decent amount of sorting, so all that’s left are the drops from special individuals. I’ll ask Fel to take care of those tonight.”

“The guild here has a simple Appraisal magic item, so you can just ask them, but it’ll probably take quite a while if you do. Since that’s the case, you should probably divide things into certain categories to make things faster.”

So he said, but I’d already sorted them that way. I had Appraisal, after all. While making sure that Elrand wouldn’t notice, I already figured out what drops were from special individuals and knew how many I had, so everything was fine. That’s why the sorting was actually already finished.

Truly, there was a lot of stuff. There were an especially great number from the insect zone.

Like from those... things that shine with a black luster. (Of course, I made sure to use gloves when handling them.) After talking it over with Elrand, he agreed that I should take all the meat.

Then, when I was about to try and convince him somehow to let me have the vampire knife and the magic bag (extra-large), he agreed in a heartbeat.

“I basically did nothing, you know? Haha. Actually, even if I wasn’t around, you probably would have made it through the dungeon just as easily. It’s too much for me to say anything about what you want to do with this,” he said.

Personally, I was thinking that as long as I could keep the vampire knife and the magic bag (extra-large), I could let go of the magic bag (medium), and then I’d be fine with splitting the rest of the sale with Elrand, where he’d get two-thirds of it and I’d get the rest. Magic bags were expensive, so just the vampire knife and the magic bag (extra-large) had a lot of value.

Of course, anything that wasn’t sold, we’d split 50/50. I told him that, and Elrand strongly refused, saying, “I can’t do that — that’s just robbery.”

According to Elrand, he’d be plenty happy as long as I sold some drops to Dolan after Aveling, split some of the dark balls with him, and also gave him about one-third of the treasure from the hydra’s treasure chest for when he got

old.

But if that was the case, Elrand would get too little and that wouldn't sit well with me. It was true that my three familiars were the main stars in fights, but I had been taught a lot of things by Elrand, who was a former adventurer. That helped me a lot, too. So, although he'd probably refuse if I tried to give him half of what I earned from selling drops here, I was still thinking I'd give him a third of it. I wanted to do that much at least — as both a gesture of thanks, and as comrades who went through the dungeon together.

"What's for dinner tonight, Mukohda? I'm so hungry."

.....I was just thinking nice things about you, and you ruined it.

Chapter 7: Booze, Booze, Booze

“Okay then. Sorry about this, but see you in three days.”

“Yes, I understand.”

After finishing my conversation with Nadiya in the guildmaster’s room upstairs, I’d returned to the receptionist’s desk on the guild’s 1st floor. I just came to report my loot from the dungeon, so my familiars were holding the fort back at the inn.

“But wow, I totally understand what Elrand was talking about. That amount is no joke,” Nadiya said, sounding really sincere. When I showed her the list of drops, Nadiya’s eyes nearly popped right out of her head, after all.

“Right? It was like that in Dolan too. Actually, like I said, since there’s a lot of special individuals around right now, there’s just way more in total this time,” Elrand said.

Nadiya brought her hand to her forehead and whispered, “Really?” in a troubled voice.

Yeah, sorry. I didn’t think there’d be this much, either.

“There’s a limit to my budget, so I’ll have to talk this over carefully with my sub-guildmaster.”

“Just like I’d said before, Nadiya: please leave some dark balls and some materials that’ll make for weapons and armor for us.”

“I know, Elrand. You already know we can’t buy nearly all of that. There’ll be some left for Dolan no matter what.”

“I’m grateful to hear you say that.”

I was glad that it all worked out between Nadiya and Elrand. “I’ll come back in three days, then,” I told Nadiya before leaving. “Okay, I’ve done all I need, so let’s go back to the inn.”

“Yeah.”

As Elrand and I were about to go back, I heard a voice from behind me. “Oh, it’s Mukohda!”

I turned back around, and found some familiar scary faces and the stench of dudes.

“Alonzo! Clement! Matthias! Ernest! So you were here!” I called out to the party Shadow Warrior, who exterminated an orc settlement with me while I was in Nijhoff.

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“Oh man~, to think you’d go through Aveling’s dungeon too!”

“And at some point you became S-ranked on top of that.”

“So we actually got to know someone amazing, didn’t we? We did good taking that request.”

“Yeah. We got a lot of money thanks to Mukohda, too.”

Having reunited with the members of Shadow Warrior, I was currently talking with them in the pub that was in the Adventurer’s guild. According to them, after we said our goodbyes, they took a little break since they were pretty well-off financially thanks to me. Then, they came here just like they’d planned. They got here ten days ago, and apparently, they’d recently started going into the dungeon after gathering some info.

“But you know, around three days into exploring the dungeon, we felt something was wrong.....” Matthias said.

Apparently, in the previous party, Alonzo and Matthias went into a dungeon as well and they were worried about the high numbers of monsters back then also.

“Matthias’ got great intuition, you know? It’s saved us more than once,” said Clement, with both Alonzo and Ernest nodding in agreement.

“Thanks to you, Mukohda, we’re doing pretty well monetarily. So we went with Matthias’ gut and left,” said the leader, Alonzo.

“And he was right. ’Cause, right after that, the guild made an announcement that the dungeon’s entered a season where a lot of special individuals pop out.”

From what I heard out of Nadiya after the fact, with several reports from other adventurers out of the dungeon, she officially made the decision to announce the arrival of the season in the dungeon.

All the guys in Shadow Warrior were showing up in the guild every day to gather information, since they planned to go right back to the dungeon after the unusual conditions lifted.

“Looks like we basically tagged out in the dungeon, didn’t we, Mukohda?” Ernest said, and I nodded. Given what they said, that’s exactly what it felt like.

“So, how was it actually? There were a lot of monsters even when we went in.....” Alonzo asked with a serious expression.

“Oh man, it was surprising how many there were. There were a lot of special individuals too,” Elrand answered.

I’d already introduced Elrand to them. They were surprised to hear he was Dolan’s guildmaster, though. So, when I said that I’d conquered Aveling’s dungeon along with him, they all asked, “Why were you with Dolan’s guildmaster?” To be honest, ‘it just kind of happened that way’ was my only answer.

I mean, there’s no way I could say that he was after Dora-chan, right? That he barged in here even though he was supposed to be in the capital because he wanted to see a small dragon...

“But Fel, Dora-chan, and Sui are all so strong, so it wasn’t a problem,” Elrand said, and they all nodded, going, “Yeah.”

“Well of course. With a Fenrir there, there’s basically no way anything’d happen to you guys.”

“It’s not just the Fenrir, you know? That small dragon and the slime were also ridiculously strong.”

“Back when we went to exterminate the orc settlement too, they basically did everything.”

“Yeah. Mukohda’s familiars are all way too strong.” said the members of Shadow Warrior.

“I almost didn’t have to fight at all. Going into a dungeon with Mukohda’s basically like a vacation. Most of all, with how good his cooking is.....” Elrand said while closing his eyes, as if he was remembering the food he ate.

“Mukohda’s cooking... it really was good.....” Alonzo muttered, and all of them nodded furiously.

“So you’ve tasted his cooking, too? It’s wonderful, isn’t it~?”

After that, for some reason, they left me out and just talked about my food by themselves. While I was sitting there, watching them and feeling kind of exasperated, someone tapped me on the shoulder.

“Yo! Mukohda.” I turned around, and saw another familiar face. “I heard you came back from the dungeon. I was going to wait until things calmed down, but I heard you were in the guild right now, so I decided to stop by.”

It was all the members of Ark, who I’d met in the dungeon.

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“Well then, I’ll be looking forward to tomorrow!”

“I’ll bring my special liquor with me.”

“I’m looking forward to your cooking. It’s been a while!”

“Y-Yeah.....”

The members of both Ark and Shadow Warrior left with a smile. At some point, it was decided that I’d be holding a celebration for conquering the dungeon.

W-Why.....?

Without my input at all, Elrand and the two parties started getting excited about the food I made as well as a lecture about dungeons, and while I was leaving them alone, before I knew it, I ended up having to throw a celebration for my success in the dungeon for some reason.

But I’m the one who should be celebrating. Why is this? Wouldn’t I usually not have to do anything as the guest of honor or something? That’s what I thought, but I got all twisted around by some nonsense logic they were spouting. What

the hell does, “That’s that” even mean?

And Feodora piled on top of that when she said, “You promised to treat me again on the surface.”

Like..... It’s true I did say that to Feodora.

In the end, I couldn’t say anything back, and it was decided that I’d do it.

They say it’s a celebration, but basically they’ll just be eating and drinking as much as they like. And since I’m hosting it, that means I have to cook. That’s exactly what they were after, too. Hahh, I guess I have to prepare once I get back. Since Alonzo’s not good with seafood, it’s going to have to be mainly meat, won’t it? Still, I don’t have a lot on me...

.....Oh, but I have that*. I got bunches of it in the dungeon.*

All right, I’ll use snake meat! A snake meat party with all the snake meat I have!

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When I got back, all three of my familiars were waiting for me. They all complained about their hunger, and of course Elrand was going to join in since he came back with me. I’d made a lot of rice in the morning, so I just quickly whipped up some sweet and spicy Chinese miso stir-fry rice bowls with orc meat and lots of vegetables.

Thank goodness I decided to make that rice in the morning.

While they were eating, I told Fel and the others about tomorrow’s celebration, and apparently they had no problem with it as long as they could eat too. Actually, they were happy since they’d get to eat a lot of different foods.

With all the people in Ark, Shadow Warrior, and now Fel and the others, I’m going to have to cook a lot.

Once dinner was over, I immediately started preparing for the next day.

First, how do I cook this snake meat..... Hmmmmm, well, given the amount of people I have to cook for... It’s going to have to be barbecue, right? With barbecue, everyone can just cook it how they like to eat, and it’s much easier to

prepare. How many types of sauces should I marinate the snake meat in? Also, let's make some skewers with vegetables. The raw sausage I made before should be perfect for a barbecue too. Let's make that. Also, I have both black and red serpent, so let's make some karaage. It'll definitely be popular.

I decided to start with the karaage. I started cooking after taking the black and red serpent meat from my Item Box.

"Whew, this should be about it." I fried the karaage twice, so I let them rest for a while. I used both a soy sauce base and a salt base, and made a huge amount.

While I was cooking the karaage, Fel and the others came to watch, lured by the smell. They were drooling, and I eventually had to give in.

"You just ate, didn't you? Eat this," I said and tossed some snack buns at my familiars.

Seeing that, Elrand started to look jealous too, so I ended up handing him some as well. And so, since everyone was now looking forward to karaage for dinner, I ended up having to give them some then as well. In the end the amount I had to make was no joke.

"For now, this should be good for karaage. Next is the raw sausage."

I made some mixed minced meat using orc and golden-backed bull along with Sui's special mithril mincer, and used that to make the same coarsely ground black-pepper-and-soy-sauce-flavored and lemon-herb-flavored-sausages.

"The karaage and sausages are done, so all I need to do is marinate some snake meat in different sauces, and prepare the skewers, right?"

Using black anaconda, black and red serpent, and crimson asp meat, I cut each of them into proportionate-looking sizes. Then, I marinated them in a sauce I made by mixing together soy sauce, slices of garlic, and apple juice. It was just a simple garlic soy sauce, but the apple juice enhanced the flavor with a refreshingly sweet component. I also used a cleansing salted koji and lemon sauce. This one was a simple sauce made by mixing together salted koji, black pepper, and lemon juice. It was delicious and stimulated the palate.

Lastly, I made tandoori chicken — *no, maybe it should be "tandoori snake"* — because everyone loved the curry I'd made. I pickled the meat in a sauce which was a mixture of plain yogurt, grated garlic, grated ginger, salt and pepper, and curry powder.

I sealed them all up in vinyl bags and finished up what I had to do for the marination for now. *Now they should be ready by tomorrow, so all I'll have to do is take them out and cook them.*

I bought long skewers using my skill, and made skewers by alternating random vegetables and snake meat. I used peppers, onions, garlic, and asparagus among other vegetables. I made a large number of those as well, so all I had to do was cook them.

Simplicity is best for skewers, so I only seasoned the skewers with salt and pepper. I did prepare some vegetables just in case, but when I think of the people in Ark and Shadow Warrior.....

"They're totally carnivores, aren't they?"

For now, I just used all the time I could before the afternoon, and finally finished my preparations for tomorrow. I fed my three familiars, who were all waiting for dinner, a mountain of karaage.

Of course, Elrand was there too.

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"Oh man, this is crazy good!"

"Yeah. It's crispy and juicy at the same time!"

"This cold ale is great. And it's perfect with the meat."

"You're right. This ale and meat's just the best!"

It was past noon, and the gathered members of Ark and Shadow Warrior were in the middle of praising the food I made for the dungeon conquering party (snake meat festival).

The number of people being what it was, I had to borrow the table that was in the room and hold the party out in the exclusive backyard.

While I was grilling the meat using the special barbecue grill I ordered in Dolan, I first served out the mountain of karaage I'd made. Both the people of Ark and Shadow Warrior liked alcohol, so I figured it had to be beer for a barbecue and readied bottled beer by the boatload. Given that the dwarf Sigvard was around, it was basically already decided there'd be a lot of drinking going on anyway, after all.

Both of the party's members had beer in one hand while crowding around the mountain of karaage. Both Elrand and Feodora were ignoring the beer in favor of karaage, though.

My three familiars had their own reserved plates of karaage, and they were chowing down.

"*Munch Gulp* You know, this is called karaage. It's black and red serpent we got from the dungeon that's been cooked in oil," Elrand explained smugly.

I'm the one that made it, though.....

"B-Black and red serpent?! Aren't those super-high-class ingredients.....?"

"Is it really all right to let us eat this, Mukohda?"

Both of the parties collectively looked at me, worried.

"It's fine. I was going to keep the meat for myself anyway. See, look at how much they eat....." I said, glancing at my familiars who were gorging themselves behind me. "That's how it is, so don't worry and just eat."

"I see. If that's the case, then I'll just be thankful and eat it."

"Yeah."

Both parties were convinced and returned to their food, smiling.

The two parties seemed to be concerned about me, and I got a lot of gifts, too. The members of Ark got me some ohränge blossom honey, which could only be harvested from the Opatrný region to the south of this country. The members of Shadow Warrior got me natural pink rock salt harvested from the Yermolay mountains in the east. I'd seen them in stores in other towns, and I remembered that both of them were pretty expensive.

Both of them are high-class ingredients meant for nobles, aren't they? It

seems that the association between me and food was strong, and that led them to this choice.

I'll go ahead and use them gratefully later.

However, even as that was going on, both of the elves, Elrand and Feodora, acted as usual. I looked over at them, and they were just completely occupied by the karaage.

Well, I guess it's like them. Setting the matter of the red dragon aside, while Elrand's here I do want to learn some things from him, so I'll consider us even. Oh, the barbecue is just about done.

"This meat's done too, everyone. Here you go," I said, and everyone crowded around the grill.

"Hey, give it to me."

《Me too.》

《Sui too.》

The quickest ones to speak up were Fel and the others, but right now..... "Our guests come first. You all just wait," I said, so they waited behind me, seeming dissatisfied but understanding.

"This is black anaconda, and this is crimson asp, and this....." I started explaining the meat, and everyone was surprised. It seemed that all of it was expensive, just like the black and red serpents. Among them, crimson asps were both high-ranking monsters and hard to find, so it was said that even nobles would be lucky to be able to eat it once in their life. That's the kind of ingredient it was, and there was a story from five years ago, where some country's palace had it served at a banquet and it had become the talk of the town.

You really can't count out snake meat, I guess.

"Black anaconda....."

"Crimson asp....."

"To think we'd get to eat this....."

"This is something we'd never have our entire lives if it wasn't for Mukohda,

huh?”

The members of both Ark and Shadow Warrior both muttered to themselves, and wouldn’t reach for the food. There was nothing else to be done, so I just took plates and started serving it out at random. The elves with sharp eyes full of greed were last.

“Okay, okay, just eat up. I made this for all of you,” I said before handing the food to them, with the elves after everybody else. As soon as the plates were in their hands, the two gourmand elves stuffed their mouths. Seeing that, the others also started eating.

“So good!!”

“I’ll never get tired of this!”

“It’s so light, but every time I chew it bursts with flavor!”

“This flavoring is good too~.”

That’s right, just keep eating. I made this much for everyone, after all.

“Oh, there’s meat here too, so you all can just grill it and eat it as you like later.” I had marinated meat and skewers ready on a plate. I also readied several tongs, so it was up to them to cook for themselves.

Oh, I need to get Fel and the others’ portion too.

I served each of them their own individual mountains of food split onto two plates, each with an extra-large portion on them. I also refilled their karaage dishes since they were empty.

“For now just eat up. If you want more just say so,” I told them before returning to the ring of people.

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“*Glglglg* Still, this stuff is really good!”

“Yeah. I didn’t know cold ale could be this good.”

“Not only that, but it’s perfect with Mukohda’s meat dishes.”

“Yeah, no joke. I can’t stop eating.”

That's not ale, though.

I decided on S-company's black label beer since I figured that was the best bottled beer, and it seemed like everyone else agreed, since they were drinking like it was water. Now that they'd gotten some booze in them, it looked like everyone had loosened up, and they were having great fun eating or drinking whatever they pleased.

"Mn... There's no more booze....." said the dwarf, Sigvard, while turning his bottle upside down.

Woah! Already?! I thought I prepared quite a lot, though. They drank far more than I expected. They're like fish. I was right to keep some beer in my Item Box just in case.

"I'll go bring out some more so just wait a second." I put more beer from my Item Box out onto the table.

"Oh nice, sorry about that," Sigvard said as he tried to pour some more beer into his cup from a new bottle.

"I'll pour it for you. Here you go." I smoothly stole away the bottle of beer, and poured it into Sigvard's cup.

Sigvard apologized quickly before starting to chug his beer.

"*Glglglglglg* Ppbbhaahhh~ .....So good!"

Yep, he's a dwarf. Nice drinking.

"This is the first time I've ever had such good ale. It's cold and goes down great. I don't want to stop."

"This is called lager beer. Technically, it's different from ale."

"Hm? It's different? Well, it's good stuff so whatever. Gahahahaha!" Sigvard said, laughing as he downed the rest of his cup.

"Whoops, almost forgot. This is my special booze that I talked about yesterday." Sigvard took a bottle out of an inside pocket and handed it to me. It was a golden alcohol inside a clear bottle that seemed handmade.

Sigvard himself, who's a dwarf, said that this was his special booze, so no

matter how I look at it, it's gotta be strong.....

"Go on, try giving it a quick chug."

I couldn't just say no after that, so I uncorked the bottle and tried just a little bit.

Gulp

My throat flared up all at once with a burning sensation.

"*Cough Cough Cough Cough*.....Hahhh, hahhh... W-What the hell is that?!!"

I only drank a little, but my throat felt like it was burning. Since I normally only drank beer, this was nothing but harsh. I immediately tried to soothe my throat with the orange juice I'd prepared along with the beer.

"Gahahaha! This is dwarf-made liquor!"

"Dwarf-made" my ass. It's so strong I couldn't even taste anything.

"It's not funny! What the hell is this? I thought my throat was on fire," I complained, as both Gaudino and Gideon came over. Lured by that, the members of Shadow Warrior were along for the ride.

"You made Mukohda drink that, Sigvard?" Gaudino said, exasperated.

"I said I'd bring my special booze, so it's gotta be this, right?"

"Ahahaha, you can't go around drinking stuff special to dwarves, Mukohda." Gideon was laughing.

"Oh yeah, didn't you also collapse a long time ago after drinking some of Sigvard's booze, Gideon?"

"Wai-! Come on, don't do that, leader~!"

Hearing that exchange, the members of Shadow Warrior all started laughing.

"Gahaha! I do hear that dwarf booze is real strong!"

Geez, it's not just how strong an alcohol is that makes it good.

.....No, wait a second. Don't I have some really strong stuff too?

Truthfully, I had actually bought a lot of different liquors last night in

preparation for today. Since I managed to get a liquor store as a Tenant, I decided to look through the menu and ended up with a lot of different stuff after picking up what looked good. However, I was thinking more clearly in the morning, so I ended up only serving the beer after thinking to myself, *wouldn't beer be best for a barbecue, though?*

So, there was one bottle that I bought due to things I heard online. *Heheheheheh... This won't lose to that dwarven stuff.*

"To tell you the truth, Sigvard, I do have something I want you to try." I took it out of my Item Box.

It was a vodka from Poland, and its ABV was 96%. It was hailed as the world's strongest vodka. With an ABV this high, it would get set on fire easily, so it really earned its flammability warning. I had been told by my acquaintance who loved alcohol that vodka needs to be cold if it's going to be drunk straight, so I did just that, storing it in my Item Box with ice. I also bought several glasses with my skill last night as well, so of course I also had shot glasses.

I poured the extremely chilled, world's strongest vodka into a shot glass.

He's been drinking that dwarven stuff on a regular basis, so he should be fine with at least one cup of this straight.

"It should be quite equal to your prided dwarven brew."

"What? Let's see....." Sigvard took the shot glass and downed the world's strongest vodka in a single swig.

"G-GUOOOOOHHHHH!!"

W-Whoahh! W-What the?! W-Was the alcohol level really too much for dwarves?

"W-W-What the hell is this?!! It's thick and there's a sweetness to it that's wonderful. Even though it's so delicious, its strength is still scarily high!"

No no, wait a second, Sigvard. Your face is way too close.

"More! Give me more!" Sigvard was pressing me for more between heavy breaths.

"No, uhhh, just like you tasted, this stuff is really, really strong. So, you know,

to drink so much at once is.....”

Even though my acquaintance had said all that stuff about drinking straight vodka cold, in truth, he had also said that you shouldn’t drink this specific vodka straight at all.

I only bought this thing as a joke because of what I’d heard..... Even dwarves shouldn’t be drinking this willy-nilly, right?

“I’m a dwarf! I can handle something like this! More importantly, hurry up and give me that good stuff!!”

“No, listen, I’m telling you not to drink so much of this stuff!”

It was supposed to be a joke, but Sigvard was demanding more.

Aaagghh! Fine!

“I’m really, really serious. This is strong. You normally should be diluting this with something, got it?! This is the last time I’m letting you drink it straight! Got it?!” I said before pouring a second round of the world’s strongest vodka into Sigvard’s shot glass.

And Sigvard once again downed it in a single gulp. “Gff... Woooh! This really works on your system~! It’s good! So good!!”

Seeing the exchange between Sigvard and I, Gaudino, Gideon, and the members of Shadow Warrior looked stunned.

“A liquor that surprises Sigvard.....”

“Hey, no way, he’s talking some shit about how that stuff will even work on Sigvard.”

“I can’t believe there’s actually something that’ll surprise a dwarf that just downs strong stuff like it’s water.....”

If any of you drink it, you’ll most likely fall over.

“One more! Give me one more!”

“I’m telling you no, Sigvard. I already said that was the last one.”

“Don’t be so stingy! Come on, for me?”

Don't you "for me," me.

"Aahhh geez, I have other stuff too, so just drink that."

If he kept drinking this 96% ABV vodka, I had no idea what'd happen to him, even if he was a dwarf.

"What?! Other stuff?! Say that sooner!!"

Just calm down man. Dwarves really do change when it comes to liquor, don't they?

"You all feel free to try some too," I called out to Gaudino, Gideon, and the members of Shadow Warrior as well.

Then, I started lining up the different bottles I'd bought the night before on the table. It was all safe stuff that I had picked off of the ranking list that was both affordable and seemed easy to drink.

First was whiskey. Since I'd started to recognize some stuff after having to serve that liquor-loving combo, I ended up getting a lot of whiskey. I got a clear tasting whisky from a Japanese distillery that was easy to drink and hard to get tired of. It was famous for the bearded man on the label. After that, I also got something that was loved all over the world: blended Scotch whisky. The one I got mixed over forty different bases together to make a rich and smooth taste. Lastly, I got a bourbon whiskey that seemed to be the representative of its category. It was made with the concept of, "The real thing doesn't compromise." It was really strong, but there were comments saying that this was the one to get if you wanted to try bourbon, so I bought it.

Next, I went for brandy. It was from France, and apparently from a maker that presented cognac to emperor Napoleon, and even climbed up far enough to be the "emperor's purveyor" in the time of Napoleon III. It was in the rankings due to it being more reasonably priced in an always expensive category. It was fruity, and it seemed like it could be easily enjoyed, as it had a nice, mature, mellow mouthfeel.

Then, I got gin. This gin was popular even with women due to its beautiful blue bottle. Even I'd tried this one on the rocks, and it smelled like herbs and citrus. It had a refreshing, cool taste, and it was easy to drink. Even though it

was gin, and it was appropriately strong, it was so easy to drink that its downside was that it was easy to drink too much. I had a hard time of it the next day, too.

After that, I also bought some rum since recently Japanese fans of it had been growing. The rum I got was from Guatemala, and it was a dark rum suited for drinking straight or on the rocks. I also got a premium blended rum that was made from over twenty different bases before being aged for four years in a white French oak cask. I bought it even though it was pretty expensive due to the store owner's comment, which said, "It has a mellow fragrance coupled with a sweet and rounded taste. First timers to rum, please try this."

And lastly, I got Japanese sake. The one I got was made in Niigata prefecture, and even I knew of it due to its good reputation. It had a clear and refreshing taste that still had umami to it, as well as its own sharp aftertaste. It seemed to be a spicier sake that nevertheless went down well, so it was always shining in first place in the monthly rankings.

Those were all the different liquors I'd lined up on the table. They were all spirits that went well straight or on the rocks, so I readied both empty glasses and glasses with ice.

"Here you go," I said, and I got quickly mobbed by an excited crowd of smelly men.

"Alright! It's booooze!!" Sigvard, the liquor-loving dwarf, exclaimed excitedly upon seeing all the bottles lined up.

"Still, I guess I should be expecting this out of you by now, Mukohda, to be able to ready this many types of liquor for us," Gaudino praised, and everyone agreed.

"I do have some connections in the field....."

I didn't lie, not technically. Tenants are a sort of connection.

"There are a lot of relatively strong ones, so please drink slowly."

Everyone put their hands on the bottles one after the other.

"This one smells great."

“Oh, this one’s good too.”

“This one looks nice.”

“I’m gonna try this one in the blue bottle.” Clement poured out the gin in the blue bottle into his glass as-is.

“Ahh! You should be drinking that one on the rocks.”

“Hm? Really?”

Beside him, Gaudino was about to pour brandy into a glass with ice in it.....

“Ah! No — drink that one with this glass without ice in it!”

“Oh?”

While I was taking care of all that, Sigvard pulled something. He filled up a glass full of bourbon whiskey and drained it in a single mighty swig.

“Khhhaaahhh! Good!”

“W-Wait a second, that one’s strong! I told you to drink slowly!”

“There’s a lot of good booze here! We’re gonna drink till dawn!”

“”””””Yeah!!”””””””

After that, it was chaos.

It was my mistake for bringing out all that liquor. Hahh.....

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“Urrrgghh.....”

It was the worst way to wake up.

As soon as I slowly started to get up, my head was rocked with aches. “Agh.....”

My head was ringing and bursting at the same time. And since I slept on the floor, I was sore all over. While holding my head, trying to ward off the pain, I looked around. There were bottles of liquor laying all over the place, and the members of both Ark and Shadow Warrior were squeezed together tight, snoring. For some reason, Gaudino was occupying the bed by himself. My three familiars were sleeping together on Fel’s futons.



Elrand and Feodora were nowhere to be found. Those two concentrated on eating and didn't drink at all, so they probably just went back at some point.

I do remember the two of them using the grill to cook the meat as they liked, but.....

Feodora had been feasting with a skewer in each hand. It looked like Fel and the others had made Elrand cook meat for them as well.

On the other hand, we were busy boozing ourselves up. Sigvard said, "We've got more than enough good booze! We're gonna drink till the sun sets and rises again!" So the mood just kept getting more and more excited.

They weren't satisfied with the stuff I'd already brought out, so I had to get more several times during the party. Thankfully everyone was drunk off their rockers, so no one really even noticed I was using my skill.

"Urp....." Not only did my head hurt because I drank so much, my gut was mad at me too.

"Urghh, this hangover is just awful. Wasn't I supposed to be invulnerable to status conditions because of the gods' blessings?" I muttered my complaints to myself, but I heard a low unhappy voice pipe up.

＜Hmph! Of course.＞

＜He's right! Not even our blessings cover stuff from another world.＞

Th-Those voices.....

"Hephaestos, Vahagn....."

＜That's right, it's us. We watched you all night. Right, War God?＞

＜Yeah. We were watching allllll that time, Blacksmithing God.＞

Grk.....

＜We watched you treat all your adventurer friends to so much liquor.＞

＜Yeah. You left us gods out of it, and just drowned yourself in so many different kinds of alcohol...＞ said Hephaestos and Vahagn in truly jealous voices.

“N-N-No, you see, I was the host of the party, so I need to provide some drinks at least.....” *W-Why do I have to make excuses for this?! Wait, no, they were watching this whole time?! You bored-ass people, stop that!*

＜You even wasted so much booze in the dungeon throwing it at monsters, I thought I might explode with rage back then.＞

＜Well, we didn’t say anything since it was to defeat monsters, and it worked. But yesterday...＞

Grrrrr, they were watching that, too?

＜Even though we’re gods...＞

＜Even though we’re gods, you know...＞

＜＜How nice, to be able to drink as much as you like... (no?)＞＞

Urrrgghh, even though I’m suffering from a hangover they’re nitpicking right from the start of the day... These damn alcoholics.

“Aahhh geez, I get it, all right?! You just want booze, right? I don’t mind giving you some, but don’t get found out by Ninrir and the others, got it?”

I didn’t really mind giving them alcohol. But I was just worried that they’d get found out. If they did, then there’d be a huge fuss over it. There definitely would.

＜Urgh, even if you tell us that... they all have such good intuition...＞

＜Yeah... Also, as fellow gods, we can’t completely hide our interactions with you.....＞

From what they were saying, it seemed that since they were of the same divine rank, they couldn’t hide anything completely. *I’m not sure what that means, but I guess their powers cancel each other out? Well, anyway.....*

“If there’s a chance of getting found out, I think you should stop. I have no idea what they’ll do, and I bet there’ll be a huge argument. So how about this?”

I told them my idea: I was thinking of allowing everyone a free choice of one thing they wanted during the next offering. “I’m going to reject anything too expensive, but what about anything up to 1 gold?”

＜1 gold? Why not just a little more?＞

＜Yeah. There's a whiskey that was just a little more expensive than that that we wanted last time.＞

What? They already had their eyes on something like that? "Then I don't mind if it's a little more than 1 gold."

＜Ohh! That's great to hear. Then we're fine with it. Right, War God?＞

＜Yeah, that's perfect, isn't it, Blacksmithing God?＞

The two of them suddenly were sounding much happier.

Hahhh, these damn greedy gods.

"All right then, bye."

Please just leave. I'm nursing a hangover here, I want to go back to sleep.

＜Then we'll see you next time.＞

＜I'm looking forward to it!＞

With those words, the connection cut with the sound of a TV turning off.

"Now then, let's go back to sleep."

Just as I'd thought I was free now that those annoying gods were gone, I felt something behind me.....

"Hey, I am hungry."

《Me too — you just wouldn't wake up.》

《Sui is hungry too—.》

You guys wake up so early..... I was just about to go back to sleep...

"I'm not feeling well, so I'm just going to buy you something."

"Hmph! You just drank too much. I have no idea why anyone would want to drink something like that." Fel seemed unhappy since we were making a racket late into the night.

"Now don't be like that. It's irresistible to the people that like it. Just like meat is for you," I said, dodging the irate Fel's words as I opened up my Online

Supermarket to buy some breads meant to be eaten as side dishes. I got bunches of croquette buns, yakisoba buns, curry buns, wiener rolls, and corn mayo buns. Since I was buying bread for breakfast, Fel and the others requested sweet ones too, so I got the usual red bean buns, cream buns, and other stuff as well. While I was at it, I got a nutrient drink to help with my hangover. I unwrapped the buns and piled them up on a plate.....

“Okay then, have fun. I’m going back to sleep,” I said, bringing out my futon from my Item Box. Then, I downed the drink I bought for my hangover real quick before getting in.

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“Haa~ah...”

After waking up from my nap, I felt a lot better thanks to that drink. I looked around, and both the members of Ark and Shadow Warrior were still dead asleep. While making sure not to wake them, I put away my futon.

“First off, I’m gonna have to do something about this.....” I threw all the empty bottles that were scattered around the room into my Item Box. There were a lot of them.

Let’s feed this all to Sui later. All trash like this gets cleaned up by Sui and its clones, so it’s a huge help. Now that the matter of the bottles is settled... Right, I left the grill out in the yard, didn’t I?

I went outside, and saw my familiars dozing off in the sun.

Peace is nice, isn’t it?

Right after that heartfelt thought, I started cleaning up the grill.

“Whew, that does it.” After taking a breath in relief, Fel spoke up.

“Are you done? I am hungry.”

Dora-chan and Sui were lined up right next to Fel.

《It’s going to be meat, got it? You’re not getting off with doing the same thing as this morning.》 As soon as I started to think that repeating what I did this morning would be fine, Dora-chan cut me off.

《Sui wants meat too~.》

You too, Sui? Thinking back to what I have left, it's going to be snake meat again, isn't it? It tastes a lot like chicken, so I can just make grilled chicken — no, snake meat with tomato and cheese that'll go well with bread.

After ordering all the stuff I'd need through my skill, like tomatoes and melty cheese, I started cooking.

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Cut the snake meat (I'm using black anaconda this time) into proportional chunks, season both sides equally with garlic salt, then cook in a frying pan as if you are sautéing chicken.

(By the way, the garlic salt I used is garlic powder, salt, and coarsely ground pepper all mixed together, so this single seasoning can be used for meat or fish. It is one of my favorites.)

Once the meat is cooked, layer on some round slices of tomato and melty cheese before putting it in the oven. When the cheese is melted and is just starting to get black spots, it's finished.

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This seems good in a sandwich, too. If that's the case..... Oh, there it is.

I fished out this world's black round bread from my Item Box. I split the bread into halves and made a sandwich with the meat.....

"The roasted snake, cheese, and tomato sandwich is done. Looks pretty good." I made several more sandwiches that all looked the same.

"Here, it's done." I served them a huge plate with the sandwiches piled high, and the three of them quickly tucked in.

"Hm, this is good. Meat really is best."

Really, you say? Dude, you only had to make do without meat for one meal.

《This white thing you call cheese is delicious. It goes great with meat.》

《Yeah! It's gooey and amazing!》

Now then, they'll probably want more, so let's make some before I get to my

own food. I really don't feel like eating meat right now, so I was thinking I'd make rice porridge or something to be kind to my stomach.

While I was making more sandwiches, I heard a voice from behind me. "Can we have some too, Mukohda?"

It's Elrand? I turned around, and..... "Feodora?"

Next to Elrand, who was smiling wide, for some reason Feodora was on standby as well.

"Man, I tried knocking several times, but you just wouldn't come out, so I came in. We were here in the morning too, but it looked like everyone was asleep....."

So these elves showed up for breakfast too, but because I was asleep, they just waited for lunch?

"It looks truly delicious, doesn't it?"

".....Food."

Both Elrand and Feodora's attentions were glued on the food Fel and the others were eating.

Wow, these elves are such gluttons.

"I'll make more now. Please wait."

Once I was done with the extra portions..... "Here you go."

I handed over the sandwiches to both Elrand and Feodora.

"Ohh, this smells like garlikke..... that really whets the appetite!"

"Garlikke?" Does he mean garlic? Well that's because I used garlic salt, the most universal of all seasonings.

Elrand bit into the sandwich. "I can't find words for this melted cheese. It's so good," Elrand said. Feodora beside him nodded fervently, still eating.

"Yeah, sure, but this smell is garlic?" It was spelled garlic when I saw it in stores in the market, too.

"Ahh, it's called garlikke in my hometown. Funnily enough, the two names

have their own territories. A long time ago there was a summoned hero that called garlikke ‘garlic,’ and it stuck or something. That’s why they call garlikke ‘garlic.’ Well, either way, it gets the idea across. There’s a lot of words like that.”

Hmm~, a hero that was summoned a long time ago? He was definitely Japanese. In fact, I came here through a hero summoning too, so it’s not unthinkable that something like that happened a long time ago. For us who are forced here, it’s nothing but trouble, though. Anyway, it’s not like there’s anything I can do about that now. Wait, just one won’t satisfy these elves, will it?

“Just one probably isn’t enough for you, so I’ll leave another one for each of you here,” I said, and Elrand piped up, “Uhm, if possible, I’d like one more.....?” Feodora nodded quickly in agreement.

Oh, fine. I put another one onto each of their plates.

“Hey, more.”

《Sui wants more too!》

Fel and Sui both demanded more. Dora-chan was apparently already full. I served up their extra portions, and just as I was about to make my food, the members of Ark and Shadow Warrior woke up.

“Urrghh~, I feel awful...”

“Urp.....”

“My head~...”

“Urrrgghh...”

It looked like they were all suffering from hangovers. Of course they would though, with how much they drank. I was the same, too.

“Mmmnnn, what a great way to wake up! Yesterday was the best, I got to taste so much good booze!”

Only one person was full of energy. *So you’re just fine Sigvard, even though you’re the one who drank the most...* I handed Sigvard a sandwich for the moment, and he started eating after a short apology.

I still need to do something about the rest of them, don't I? It was my fault for bringing out so much strong liquor, though. My bad. They all partied way harder than I expected, though.

I opened up my Online Supermarket while making sure no one could see, and bought some sports drinks and a tumbler set.

"This works on hangovers. Here you go." I handed over the sports drinks to all the people with hangovers.

"Urrgh, sorry about this....." Even Gaudino, ever the leader, couldn't keep up appearances in this state.

"Well then, the drink is in here, so drink more so you can flush the alcohol out of your system." I left him a tumbler with the sports drink in it.

I'm already making it, so might as well prepare enough rice porridge for them too. And if that's the case, might as well make Chinese rice porridge. I just happen to have one clay pot full of rice too, so let's use that to make a simple one. Normally making porridge from scratch with uncooked rice is best, but I don't really have time.

I bought all the ingredients I needed with my skill.

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First, take a pot and throw in some rice and more water than usual before turning on the heat. Once the pot starts bubbling over, add in the granulated Chinese dashi base and keep simmering.

Once the whole thing thickens up, adjust the taste with salt. Then, serve out the porridge in bowls and top with Szechuan pickles.

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This time I went with Szechuan pickles, but other toppings or adding in a dash of sesame oil works great as well.

"This is easy on the stomach, so eat up," I said, handing them some porridge. All the people with hangovers, looking horrid, quietly started sipping on it. I also started on my own bowl.

Yeah, this is pretty good. Most importantly, it's light and easy on the stomach,

so it's great for hangovers.

"Ohh—, this is so light. But it's still seasoned well because of this crunchy thing on top, so it's really good."

.....Elrand, why are you still eating? I didn't make that porridge for you. Wait, Feodora's sipping it too?! I guess it's fine, since it's just what was leftover in the pot, but still... These elves really eat a lot even though they're so skinny, huh?

"'Kay then, it's been fun. Thanks for the food. See ya!"

"Let's drink again if we get the chance. All right then, see you next time."

The members of Ark and Shadow Warrior all left. Except one.

"Hey, where's Feodora?!" I heard Gideon's voice from the other side of the door. Right after, he came back in.

"Sorry about that, Mukohda." Feodora, who had been sitting in my room as if it was perfectly natural, was dragged away by Gaudino and Gideon, who looked really apologetic.

"Gahahaha! Sorry 'bout that, Mukohda. Right then, later! Next time I'll find an even better bottle of booze, so look forward to it!" Sigvard got the last word in as he closed the door.

"Hahh, the storm's finally passed."

I'm not doing anything else today. I'm just going to laze around.

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Yesterday, after the members of Ark and Shadow Warrior left, I managed to spend the day quietly. Of course, that was except when I had to make food for my familiars. When it came time for that, I'd already recovered from my hangover and was feeling like a hearty meal full of meat, so I grilled some. It was still just the leftovers from the barbecue, though. There were quite a lot of skewers and sausages left, so I had some of the skewers with pepper and herb salt on them; it was really good.

This morning, I also had hot dogs made out of the leftover sausages from the barbecue. All of us, including Elrand, had breakfast together before the female

guildmaster of Aveling, Nadiya, showed up.

“Sorry for coming so early in the morning. I knocked but there was no response, and the door wasn’t locked, so I just let myself in. I hope you don’t mind.”

“Good morning, Nadiya. What’s up? I was going to head over after breakfast.” I’d already promised to go over today, so Elrand and I were planning to do just that after we ate.

“No, about that — I want to delay that until the day after tomorrow.”

According to Nadiya, after we beat the dungeon, it went back to normal. Since we — or rather, my familiars — killed so many of the monsters, and since the Adventurer’s guild just announced the end of the dangerous season the other day, adventurers going into the dungeon had been on the rise. Thanks to that, they’d been really busy.

Meanwhile, Nadiya and her sub-guildmaster had been looking over our loot, but there was so much stuff, and the guild wanted all of it. But apparently their budget wouldn’t stretch that thin.

“I’ve been spending every day talking with my sub-guildmaster, but we just can’t decide.”

After hearing that, Elrand nodded sagely, saying, “I understand.”

Oh yeah, Nadiya’s looking kind of tired, isn’t she? “Would you like to join us for breakfast, Nadiya?”

“No, not right now. I’m still busy.”

I quickly prepared a hot dog and handed it to Nadiya. “You won’t last the day if you skip breakfast. Please eat this.”

“You sure? Sorry ’bout that.” Nadiya said before biting into the hot dog. “Hohh, this is great.”

“I have more, so eat up.”

After finishing a hot dog, Nadiya downed some juice that I handed to her. I figured cola would be a bad choice, so I poured Nadiya some orange juice instead.

“So, back to what I was talking about. While everything was happening, the Merchant’s guild caught wind of the fact that you conquered the dungeon. So they want to get in on this, too.”

As always, the Merchant’s guild really does have sharp ears, don’t they?

“Normally we’d refuse, but given the amount of money on the table... We decided to let them in and now we’re pooling our resources to buy your stuff.”

“I see. Then it’ll take some more time to decide?”

“Exactly.” From how Nadiya was speaking, the Adventurer’s guild was trying to rack up favors with the Merchant’s guild. “So I want you to wait until the day after tomorrow for us to decide. Is that fine?”

“Of course I’m okay with it. What about you, Elrand?”

“Mgmg, mng..... Yes, of course I’m fine with it.”

Hey, actually, don’t you have to hurry up back to Dolan? “It’ll take longer for you to get back to Dolan; are you sure?”

“Ahh, you’re worried about that? It’s fine, fine I tell you. Nothing’ll change even if I’m a little late here. Also, Ugohl’ll handle everything.”

You sure you’re fine, saying that? All I can see in the future for you is Ugohl being incredibly mad. Well, it has nothing to do with me, though.

“Well now that I have your permission, I’m going to go back to work. Breakfast was great, thanks for the food.” Nadiya said before returning to the Adventurer’s guild.

But now I had no plans for today, leaving me entirely free. And Nadiya said the day after tomorrow, so that means I wouldn’t have anything to do tomorrow, either. If that was the case, I guess I should try my idea to get more meat. Since I got *that* from the dungeon, I wanted Elrand to teach me something, too.

“Since we’re free today and tomorrow, Elrand, want to come with me out of town? I want to learn something while we procure some meat.”

“Hm? Out of town? Of course I’m fine with it.”

Great, that means I can get lessons for free. I'm feeding you three squares a day, so you'll have to at least repay me this much.

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"That's right, that's right. Remove the joint there. Once that's out, this part slides, and you can cut it like so."

On top of a table I'd made using Earth magic, I used my mithril knife on a cockatrice under Elrand's instruction. Sui's special mithril knife cut so well; it was actually kind of fun how smoothly the knife sliced through the cockatrice's flesh.

We were in a forest outside of Aveling, and Elrand was teaching me how to butcher monsters. *Normally, Elrand is a useless elf, but he's good enough to butcher dragons, and his instructions are real easy to understand.*

I got the vampire knife from the dungeon, so I was thinking of learning how to butcher monsters. Since we just got both today and tomorrow free, I asked Elrand, and now we were outside to both get meat and learn how to butcher monsters.

Still, it really did seem impossible to take care of the larger monsters by myself, so I just asked to be able to take care of something the size of a cockatrice. But Elrand said, "As long as you learn how to butcher something like a small red boar, you can apply a lot of that technique to other quadrupeds." So in the end, I decided to try taking apart a red boar.

It's true that a small red boar is only around two meters long, so just learning how to do something like this expands my range quite a bit. After all, boar type monsters always appear in basically every forest, and there's not too much difference between quadrupedal monsters. So, as long as I can take care of a red boar, it seems like I'll be able to take care of most things if it comes down to it.

According to Elrand, "For these kinds of things, getting used to it is most important." So I just had to keep butchering for the moment.

I asked Fel and the others to get cockatrices, so right now I was learning from Elrand while taking the cockatrices apart. As for Fel and the others, after hunting down five or so cockatrices and leaving them here, they went off

hunting again. This time, I had Fel take the magic bag (extra-large) we got from the dungeon, so they probably wouldn't be back until they got hungry.

By the way, the vampire knife was really incredibly useful, and when I used it to stab into the cockatrices, it sucked out all the blood really quickly. While it was sucking blood, the vampire knife's blade would glow a brownish red, and it would go back to being blackish once there was no blood left to suck. Thanks to that, I didn't get soaked in blood while taking the cockatrices apart, and a lot of the goriness of it was averted, so even I was able to keep my composure while I did it.

As I thought, the worst part about doing stuff like this is having all the blood spurt out all over you and the pervasive bloody smell, isn't it? Just taking those parts out of the process lets me calm down a lot. This vampire knife is so useful! Just getting this made us going down into Aveling's dungeon worth it.

"You said that you'll eat the innards too, Mukohda. Are you sure about that?" Elrand asked, as I was splitting open the cockatrice's belly and finally got my hands into its stomach.

"Yes, of course."

It looked like nobody ate innards in this world, so it was all thrown away. As long as I was asking the Adventurer's guild to butcher cockatrices for me, it couldn't be helped... *But it's different if I'm the one doing the butchering. Of course these are different from chickens, so I have to make sure if they're actually edible. But I have a convenient skill for that.*

Appraisal, Appraisal, please make yourself useful!

【Warble】

The esophagus and trachea. A rare part with a firm and crunchy texture. Edible.

【Hearts】

The cockatrice's two hearts. Jiggly and somewhat tough texture. Edible.

【Liver】

The liver. High in vitamins, nutrients, and iron. There is no gamey taste, so it's easy to eat. Edible.

【Gizzard】

The gizzard. An organ exclusive to birds. No gamey taste, nice grainy texture. Edible.

【Kidneys】

The kidneys. A rare part that is high in fat and umami. Edible.

【Unlaid Egg】

A still-developing egg growing inside the body. Edible.

【Tail】

Meat from the rump, near the tail. Heavy in muscle development and high in umami, it is a rare part that even has fat. Edible.

Ohh, thank you, Appraisal. It's a monster, but its innards really are edible. They're all things I've seen as snacks in izakayas or sold in yakitori places, even though they're still innards, though. Cockatrices are large, so their innards are bigger than a regular chicken's. Although they're still each only worth about one or two skewers, I would say? There's only enough here for me... Well, I'm allowed this much right? Yeah. Some yakitori along with beer would just be the best, wouldn't it? Drool..... Wait, no. I'm in the middle of butchering something. I need to hurry and take out these innards.

I carefully removed each organ one by one, so as not to damage them. However, the kidneys had a part of them that was hard to remove. It wasn't going well, so I abandoned it. *Well, I'll just have to keep at it and get better.*

"Is it really that delicious? You're handling them really carefully, Mukohda,"

Elrand asked, as he saw me store the innards in my Item Box after carefully removing them.

"You see, it's really good if you skewer it and cook it over a charcoal fire." *Of course, with just salt as seasoning.*

I heard the sound of someone swallowing saliva. "M-Mukohda....."

"I know, I know." *But, you understand, innards are rare. I don't mind sharing some, but I come first, got it?*

After that, under Elrand's instruction, I cut apart the cockatrice that had its innards removed. Just about when I finished butchering, Fel and the others came back hungry.

Lunch was orc rice bowls that I had made before we left the inn. They were rice bowls with lots of orc meat on top that I'd thoroughly coated with a sauce I made by boiling soy sauce, sugar, mirin, sake, and water. After they'd filled up on pork bowls, Fel and the others went off hunting once again. Meanwhile, Elrand and I got to work on the other cockatrices.

"Whew, that's the last cockatrice."

"How was it? Doing it for real makes it much easier to understand, huh?"

Elrand was right. Actually doing it got me used to the act much faster. After finishing up the first one, I already mostly understood what to do. And for each one after that, I got faster and faster. *If it's going to be like this, I should be able to take care of cockatrices on my own.*

"Yes. Now I feel like cockatrices won't be a problem. Thank you."

"What about red boars? There's one that Fel and the others caught before lunch."

Among all the prey that Fel and the others brought back when they came for lunch, there were several red boars, which were still pretty big even though I had asked for a smaller one.

"No, if we do it now, I don't think we'll finish before Fel and the others come back, so let's do it tomorrow. More importantly, I'm thinking of using these

cockatrices to prepare dinner.”

“Oh, is that so?”

“Yes, I’ll be using the organs too. It’s only skewering and cooking, so will you help me?”

“I’m not good at cooking, but I think I can handle skewering meat.”

Great, he promised.

I filleted the meat, and had Elrand keep skewering them. I was going to make the grill myself, so I prepared longer skewers than usual, so that they’d leave an extra 1.5cm or so out the front.

While I was cutting the meat and Elrand was skewering, we’d made quite a number of skewers. For the innards, I skewered them myself after properly preparing them for consumption. My experience working part-time in a yakitori place was actually useful. I made skewers with meat alternating with spring onions, thighs, skin, and gizzards — basically every part of the cockatrice.

“Whew, I’m tired..... This might be more exhausting than fighting monsters.”

“Ahaha, thanks for helping. Look forward to dinner.”

Once we’d caught a breath, Fel and the others came back.

“Welcome back. How was it?”

“Hm. We did pretty well.”

《Yeah. Ah, we made sure to get actually edible ones.》

《We got a lot of big ones!》

I checked the magic bag (extra-large) that I had Fel bring with him, and..... *Ten wyverns, five wild bison, six golden sheep, a giant horn boar, and two rockbirds.*

“What amazing results.....” Elrand was surprised seeing what Fel and the others managed to achieve in a single afternoon. By the way, in the morning they had gotten twelve cockatrices (and four of their eggs) because I asked for them, as well as six red boars. Apparently, cockatrice eggs were pretty rare, and they found a nest, so they brought them back.

“Hey, there’s ten wyverns in here.”

“Indeed. I managed to find them just flying right past. We managed to bring down ten.”

《Yeah, yeah! And Sui and I cut off their heads.》

《Yeah~. Uncle Fel dropped them and Dora-chan and Sui beat them!》

I-I see... too bad for those wyverns.

From first impressions, wild bison were black and threatening cows that were almost three meters long. Golden sheep were just as the name implied, a sheep with golden fleece. They were a little bigger than normal sheep. Giant horn boars were huge boars that were as big as a light truck, with two huge tusks protruding from the lower jaw and an even bigger horn growing right out of the center of the head.

“Th-This is... Please, sell this to Dolan? If you can’t, at least the golden sheep.....”

According to Elrand, golden sheep wool was popular amongst nobles and was really expensive because of that. However, the wool has become much rarer recently, since way less of them had been hunted.

“Okay. At any rate, it looks like Aveling will use up their budget on the stuff we got from the dungeon, so I’ll save this stuff for Dolan.”

“Thank you very much!”

“Okay then, let’s go back to town.”

Just like that, we returned to Aveling.

Chapter 8: New Dungeon Info

“Not done yet?”

“No.”

All three of my familiars were posted right next to where I was grilling the yakitori, waiting with bated breath. Elrand was also waiting behind me.

Once we had gotten back to the inn, I had immediately started to prepare dinner. Of course, today’s dinner was cockatrice yakitori. I used Earth magic to make a stone grill in the room’s exclusive backyard. I made it to fit the skewer’s length while planning to grill a whole lot at once, so I also made sure it was at a perfect height so I could do it while sitting.

While sitting on a chair I also made out of Earth magic, I was currently slowly grilling the poultry over charcoal. There were lots of skewers with thighs or meat and spring onions.

“Right, it should be about done.”

“Finally, we can eat.”

“No. I’m going to coat it with sauce and keep grilling.”

Half would be with sauce, and the other half would just be seasoned. For the salted ones, I seasoned them before I started grilling. I also paid attention to what salt and pepper I used — natural salt from Okinawa, and organic black pepper that came in its own grinder. I tried the salt and pepper by themselves, and the salt was actually pretty mild in saltiness with a hint of umami, while the pepper had perfect fragrance since it was freshly ground.

Knowing that definitely heightens my expectations for the final product.

“Gnnrrrrr, I am hungry……”

Just wait a little.

Take this well browned meat that’s had all the excess fat cooked off of it, and slather it in this sauce I made by copying the recipe of the yakitori place I worked

at using soy sauce, mirin, brown sugar, and water.....

Sizzle

...Then start grilling it again until it gets small black spots from the charcoal fire. It'll pack in a lot more smell and flavor.

The smell of yakitori is so irresistible!

"Yep, this should be it."

I took the salted ones off first and plated them. For the ones with sauce I cooked them a little longer before doing the same.

《**Finally. I cannot stand smelling this anymore. Give it here.**》

《Yeah, yeah! Make it snappy!》

《Sui is so hungry! Sui wants to eat now!》

All three of them hurried me along.

"Just wait a second. I need to take them off the skewers, you know?"

I de-skewered the meat so that it'd be easier for Fel and the others to eat. "Here. This one's with salt and this one's with sauce."

I gave all three of them their own set of plates for each flavor, each one piled high like a mountain. They all jumped at the food.

《**Hm, this is delicious. Truly. Both the salt and the sauce are great. I like this,**》 Fel said telepathically, his mouth full of food.

《This is cooked perfectly! The good smell is making me even more hungry. They're both delicious, but I like the salt one more.》

《So good! Sui loves this!》

Everyone was eating while sending me praise like that through telepathy. Both flavors of the yakitori went over well. It was worth making them.

I'll need to feed this one that's been waiting for a while now, too. "Here you go, Elrand."

"I've been waiting! This one with the sauce on it looks so appetizing. I'm digging in!" Elrand bit into the skewer filled with meat.

“Oohhh, this was definitely worth the wait! The sweet and salty sauce with the perfectly cooked meat tastes divine~!”

Yeah, right? Right? Even though it’s probably not as good as what the boss of the yakitori place I used to work at could make, I recreated the sauce to an extent, and I think for an amateur, the meat was cooked really well too. Once I finish this next set of meat, I’ll eat too.

But first... I poured some ice cold beer I’d bought with my skill into the self-cooling cup I’d bought in Nijhoff. *With this, I won’t have to worry about it getting warm even if I leave it somewhat close to the grill.*

Glug-glug

“Kkhhh! So good!!”

It was probably because I was so close to the heat of the grill, but the cold beer tasted a whole level better than usual.

Right, the first is the meat-and-onion skewers, with the sauce of course. It’s gotta be sauce for that nostalgic flavor...

Yeah, this is the epitome of yakitori. This salty-sweet sauce is so irresistible combined with cockatrice meat that’s been cooked so perfectly over charcoal. The spring onions interspersed on the skewer give off some sweetness since they’ve been grilled too, and the cockatrice’s fats are soaked into the onions as well, so they’re to die for.

After finishing one skewer, I took another swig of beer.

Glug-glug

“Khhaaahh! Yeah, beer and yakitori’s the golden combo, isn’t it?” I said from the bottom of my heart, grabbing a salted thigh-meat skewer next.

Thighs are delicious... This simple flavoring brings out the cockatrice’s nutritious umami even more. Oh, crap, I can’t just sit and enjoy this stuff anymore. So as not to let it burn, I turned the yakitori on the grill.

Take the half that’s going to be flavored with sauce and coat it before putting it back to cook again.....

“Right. The next ones are up.” I added the meat to my familiar’s plates, and

they started eating again. I handed Elrand a portion too, and he happily dug in.

“Oh yeah, do you drink, Elrand? You didn’t drink last time.”

If I remembered right, he hadn’t drunk at all during the party.

“That’s right. Elves don’t really like alcohol. On the other hand, we’re really weak to good food like this, though. Haha!” he said, as he bit into one of the skewers that alternated between meat and spring onions.

I couldn’t help myself and bit into a thigh skewer too. Then, I took a long draw of beer. “Ahh~, so good.”

Alright, next I’ll grill up the skins and innards and stuff. Meat-and-onions, thighs, skin, warbles, hearts, livers, gizzards, kidneys, unlaid eggs, tails.

I prepared the meat-and-onion and the thigh-meat skewers the same as always, doing half with sauce and the rest with seasoning. Then the skins were all seasoned. And as for the innards, I used sauce for the egg-and-liver skewers, and seasoning for everything else.

Sizzle-sizzle

Among the fragrant smells, fat drips off the meat. This is *yakitori. Agh, I love it.*

“Right. This is good.” I took the finished meat-and-onion skewers and thigh skewers, and served them out to my familiars. And, finally.....

“These are innards, right?”

“That’s right.” For the innards, each monster produced two skewers, so Elrand and I had one of each kind of skewer.

“Which part is this?”

“That’s the heart. It’s tender but chewy — and delicious.”

Elrand seemed a little hesitant after hearing it was the heart, so I started eating first.

Yep. It’s good. As expected, it’s tender, but still chewy, and it’s free of any gamey taste even though it’s an inner organ, so it’s really good. I’d tried hearts before at the yakitori place I worked part time at, but this cockatrice heart has

stronger umami, so it's clearly more delicious. Seeing me enjoy it so much, Elrand also dug into his heart.

"Ohh, you're right. It's tender. But it has no gaminess to it, so it's easier to eat than I expected."

It seemed that Elrand was expecting something much gamier-tasting that would be difficult for beginners; they were innards, after all.

"Right? It's even more delicious than usual because it's fresh. I know you might be hesitant, but try eating this liver, too — it's highly nutritious, and the viscous texture and deep taste are just fantastic," I said, digging into my own liver.

Yep yep, it's awesome. It's fresh, so there's no gaminess to it. Like this, even people who normally hate innards can eat it.

"Just like you said, Mukohda, it's got a deep taste and umami. It's truly delicious," Elrand said while eating his own liver. Even Elrand, who had been reluctant to eat innards, found it delicious when he actually tried, and he started shoveling his food faster and faster.

While cooking the next set of yakitori, I was enjoying the gizzards when I thought I could hear a faint knocking sound.

"Hm? Is someone there? Elrand, did you hear a knock?"

"Well now, I didn't hear anything."

.....*Knock* ..... *Knock-knock*

"Ah, there is knocking."

.....*Knock-knock-knock*

The knocking got louder. Whoever it was must have gotten impatient.

"I can't just leave this grill alone, so can you go see who it is, Elrand?"

"Okay."

Bang-bang-bang-bang

"Yes, yes, I'm coming, just wait a second~," Elrand groused in annoyance as he headed for the door...

“Mukohda, you have a guest, or, how should I put it.....” I looked over since Elrand was being weirdly hesitant, and.....

“Huh? Feodora??” For some reason, Feodora was there, eyes shining like a predator.



“Food, please,” Feodora said, eyes still sparkling while looking at me.

Urgh..... What is that... the power in that look... Even though she’s a little disappointing, she’s still seriously pretty, so being looked at like that, I was a little... No, my heart is seriously racing.

“Food, please.” Feodora once again turned her shining, watery eyes to me.....

“Yes, with pleasure!”

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It looked like Feodora really liked the sauce I used. She alternated between taking bites out of the meat-and-spring-onion skewer in her right hand and the thigh-meat skewer in her left. The way she ate was actually fun to watch.

“Uhhh, sorry about my fellow elf.” It looked like even Elrand was kind of taken aback, as he apologized quite meekly.

“No no, it’s fine.”

Sure, she’s a little disappointing, but I just can’t hate anyone as beautiful as Feodora, especially if she looks at me with shining, sparkling eyes like she did. If I did, I’d be a failure as a man. Actually, my heart’s still really racing since she looked at me like that a bit ago. It’s true that she’s really weak to food, but Feodora, as an elf, is beautiful enough to make that weakness insignificant. If anyone asked if I’d go for her, I would. I definitely would. In the first place, I’ve never had a chance to interact with anyone as beautiful as her, even back in Japan.

I tried imagining Feodora as my girlfriend. *Feodora would lean into me, and I’d hug her by the shoulders..... Mmheheh, oh that would be great. The fact that she came all the way to my room means she doesn’t hate me, at the very least right? Aw, man, has spring finally come for me~?*

Such thoughts ran through my head as I continued to work the grill, when I heard another knock on the door.

Knock-knock-knock Knock-knock-knock

“Mukohdaaa, you theerree?”

This voice is... Gaudino?

“Elrand, sorry about this, but can you go see what’s up?”

“Ah, sure.”

The person that Elrand brought back really was Gaudino and the other members of Ark.

“So you really were here.....”

“It smelled really good, so I was sure she’d be right here.”

“I know that elves are really weak to good food, but to think that she’d barge in here. What a problem.....”

All three of them were looking with exasperated expressions at Feodora eating away at the skewers in both hands.

“Sorry about our Feodora.....” Gaudino, the leader, apologized, seeming truly sorry.

“Yeah, really. Sorry about this, Mukohda.” Gideon did the same.

“She’s first rate as an adventurer, too... But other than that..... Sorry...” Sigvard also bowed his head.

You can’t just go around causing everyone trouble like this, Feodora. But well, Feodora’s a candidate for girlfriend status, so let’s settle this peacefully. I mean, if she does become my girlfriend, she’ll have to leave Ark, so that’s even more reason to try and keep things smooth.

“No, no, it’s fine. More importantly, how about it? I’m grilling cockatrice over charcoal. I’m pretty confident it’s good.” I offered some of the meat that was just finished to Gaudino and the others.

Gaudino and the others wouldn’t touch the food I offered them, saying, “No, you treated us before too, so...”

So I just put all the meat onto a plate and handed the whole thing over. “Now here, eat,” I said, and they finally, slowly, reached out for the skewers.

“I did think this smelled really appetizing, but it really is good.”

“So good!! This is really really good!”

“Wow, this is tasty!! This’d go great with alcohol!”

As I’d expect out of that dwarf. You totally get it, Sigvard.

“Wait a second,” I said, before turning to my familiars and giving them more food. I also served more to Elrand and Feodora before turning around and making sure that the three guys from Ark wouldn’t see me buying more of S-company’s black label bottled beer that I brought out during the party. I popped open the bottled beer and poured it into cups for the three of them.

“This food goes really well with this. Here.” I handed over the cups full of beer.

“Sorry man, you keep treating us.”

“No no, it’s all good. Now here, drink up.” *For my future, I need to build up these relationships with some smooth communication.*

“Ah-ha, just as I suspected! It goes perfectly with this booze!”

“Kkkhhh~! Delicious!”

Heheheh, I get you. Beer and yakitori are perfect together.

“Mukohda’s right. It pairs great with this stuff. Oh, right. I just talked about this with Gideon and Sigvard; we want you to take this,” Gaudino said, handing me a deep green teardrop-shaped stone about 5cm across.

“This is?” I asked him, and Gaudino replied that it was a teleportation stone from a certain dungeon in the Ermann kingdom.

Huh. I was taking a closer look at the stone when Elrand came over.

“That shape, it’s Brixt dungeon’s teleportation stone, isn’t it? And that color is..... Why, isn’t that one that you can use over and over again that you find on the 30th floor?!”

“You know it, Elrand?”

“Of course I do! You see, there’s a town called Brixt in the Ermann kingdom with a dungeon in it. Your teleportation stone is from there, and it’s one of the most valuable among those.”

From what Elrand said, it seemed that Brixt’s dungeon was yet to be

conquered, and was considered one of the hardest dungeons. It was said to have fifty floors or more, and at the moment the highest anyone had reached was the 37th floor. And that was by a party of adventurers over 100 years ago.

"That'll let you go anywhere freely up to the 30th floor, and as much as you like, too. You got something good, Mukohda. It's really valuable. From the point of view of an adventurer going into Brixt's dungeon, it'd be worth an arm and a leg."

"What? It's that valuable?!"

"It is! The dungeon in Brixt has stones that are consumable or reusable. The consumable ones can only be used once. The reusable ones don't have a limit and can be used forever, but they're really rare, so there's almost none of them around. And for ones that go all the way to the 30th floor....."

According to Elrand, that dungeon's teleportation stones rarely got dropped by floor bosses every five levels, and ones that you could keep using are even rarer. The consumable types could only be used once, but that could be for either going someplace or returning to the surface. For example, a teleportation stone gained from the 10th floor could be used to go back to the surface from a certain magic circle on that floor, or it could take you from the surface to that magic circle on any floor up to the 10th.

Of course, any way you used it, if it was consumable, it disappeared. On the other hand, there were reusable stones. That meant, for example, with this stone that I got that goes up to the 30th floor, I could go up to the 30th floor and back as many times as I liked. With this, I'd be able to teleport to the floor I wanted immediately, and I could use magic circles to go back in an instant.

By the way, the teardrop-shaped teleportation stones were unique to the dungeon in Brixt, and the color indicated what floor it could go to, as well as what floor it was dropped in, since it would only drop every five floors. Whether the stone was consumable or reusable could be discerned by how dark the color was. That was apparently how Elrand could tell that the teleportation stone I got was from Brixt, and that it could go to the 30th floor.

"So from what Elrand said, I know this is really valuable, but is it really fine for me to take it?"

Would this be really expensive if I were to try and buy it? Can I really just take something like this?

Gaudino, the source of my worries, said, “It’s fine. You’ve really taken care of us, Mukohda. And on top of that, you’ve given us so much good food, and good alcohol too. If we didn’t pay you back, we’d be a disgrace as A-ranked adventurers.”

“Yeah, yeah. The leader’s right. Also, we’re lucky. To tell you the truth, we have another one just like it. This one was something Sigvard had before we all teamed up.”

“Indeed. It’s as Gideon says. I got it several years ago when we went to challenge Brixt’s dungeon. And a single party doesn’t need more than one. Take it, as a sign of my thanks.”

If they’re going that far..... “All right then, I’ll take it.”

“You do that. Since you came and conquered this one after Dolan, that means you’ll be going to Brixt eventually, right? It’ll serve you well.”

No way, Gaudino. I have no plans to go to any dungeon.

“They probably do plan to go to Brixt, but in Mukohda’s case, wouldn’t the dungeon in Rosenthal be first?”

No Sigvard, I have absolutely no plans to go anywhere near a dungeon. Actually, where the heck is Rosenthal and its dungeon?

“The meat dungeon? Gahahah! That’s true!”

Meat dungeon? What? Gideon?

“Hahahah! Meat’s real necessary for them, isn’t it? Thinking about it, the meat dungeon would be perfect for them.”

Even Elrand’s saying this?

“Uhhh, what’s the meat dungeon?” I asked, and all of them told me.

The meat dungeon was apparently one of the dungeons in this country, located in the town of Rosenthal. It had twelve floors, and though it was a really easy dungeon, it was also really popular, they said. That was because.....

“Basically all of the drops in Rosenthal’s dungeon are meat. That’s why it’s nicknamed the ‘meat dungeon.’”

“It’s something that’s consumed every day, so it’ll never go out of demand. You’ll always get at least a decent amount of money, and in the worst case you can just eat the meat, you see. For adventurers it’s a perfect dungeon.”

“Well, even though there’s not much profit to be had, it’s still a stable income. That’s why there’s a lot of adventurers with families there.”

“Also, thanks to the meat dungeon in that town it’s become a mecca for food. It’s just as lively as this town or Dolan.”

From what they said, that was also the origin of sausages. I remember thinking it was weird when I saw salt-pickled intestines for use in sausages when in this world they didn’t even eat innards. Apparently the white sheep bowels I was using in my sausages were dropped from this dungeon too. Almost all the sausage meat sold in shops were from the meat dungeon, and Rosenthal’s sausages and dried meats were famous.

Hmm~, I see. A meat dungeon, huh? It might be fine to go someday to get meat. The dungeon seems alright enough.

“If you like, we can go to the meat dungeon after this?” Elrand said, grinning wide.

What the hell are you spouting? “Elrand, you really do need to be getting back to Dolan. Ugohl will get mad at you,” I said.

His face scrunched up somberly as he replied, “True, if I delay any more than this, even Ugohl...”

Hearing our conversation, the three of them all laughed, saying, “You need to do your job as guildmaster!”

That’s right. Do your damn job.

“Dolan.....”

The female voice resounded like a bell. At some point, Feodora had gotten close to us.

“Hey, Feodora, you’re not saying we should go to Dolan, are you? I’m saying

this now, we can't. We're going back into the dungeon here tomorrow."

"Gaudino's right. We were just at Dolan. On top of that, we were there almost a year."

"Yeah yeah! The leader and Sigvard are right! In the first place, we only went to Dolan since you said you wanted to see your grandchildren, so we changed our plans for you. We can't just be catering to your whims all the time, you know!"

.....Hm? Did... I just hear wrong? I swear I just heard him talking about grandchildren.....

"Ohh, so your grandchildren are in Dolan, Feodora?"

"Yeah. Feodora's got four kids, and the oldest girl lives in Dolan with her family."

It really was grandchildren..... And four kids, on top of that.....?

"Your daughter's family, huh? Could it be, they're adventurers?"

"No, both the daughter and her husband are doctors, so they might not have that much interaction with the Adventurer's guild."

"I thought I might know them if they're adventurers, but I really wouldn't know doctors."

"Feodora got a letter from them for the first time in a long while, and it talked about her grandchild, so she said she wanted to see them. That's why we went. At first, we planned to go to the dungeon while we were there, and we planned for three months, but Feodora....."

I stopped really hearing Elrand and Gideon's conversation in the middle.

"Feodora has..... grandchildren.....?"

I finally managed to mutter, and Elrand said, "Oh, yeah normally people would be surprised, wouldn't they? We elves grow slowly, but even then we're adults by thirty and we can marry. Then, for around 300 years we basically don't age at all, and even once that passes, we only start to grow older, slowly. So even for someone who looks like Feodora, it's pretty normal to have grandchildren. By the way, I'm 334 years old. I'm still totally spry! Hahaha!"

“That’s right. She may look like that, but Feodora’s the oldest one in our party.”

O-Oh..... Hahahaha, haha..... aaagghhhh! Just when I’d thought it was my Springtime..... Four kids, and even grandchildren? No matter how pretty she is, that’s just impossible for me. Sorry. Even in another world, Spring won’t come for me.

Goddammit.

◇ ◇ ◇ ◇ ◇

In the Divine Realm...

“So that’s the end of it? Well, I figured that’d be how it turned out. This guy... his overall luck isn’t that bad, but his luck in love couldn’t get any worse.....”

“BWAHHAHAHAH! No kidding! This dude’s love luck is in the single digits!”

“Come on, Agni, don’t laugh when it’s so sad. Well, he does have that kind of face, though. People like that exist, don’t they? Ones who end up as nothing more than a nice guy.”

“They definitely do. They’re just too...normal, or how should I put it.....”

“Even though those guys are the ones that need to show off and leave an impression the most...”

“But do you think this otherworlder boy can even try to show off his good points?”

“It’s impossible, isn’t it? This guys’ so indecisive, and he’s so stuck in the idea of needing to keep the peace at any cost that I don’t think it’s possible for him.”

“Ahahahahaha! Meaning, love isn’t all about luck, right?”

“Especially in this world, the types that go for it more aggressively are popular, I think.”

“Exactly. Basically, it’s almost impossible for there to be a situation where he’d be popular...”

“No faith in him at all, huh? Well, I’m the same though.”

“.....Yakitori.”

“.....Women sure are cruel huh, Blacksmithing God?”

“.....You know it, War God.”

Extra: Gourmet Hunter F

W-What the hell?! This is mega delicious!

Apparently it was something called a ‘fry,’ where fish from Berléand was coated in breadcrumbs and cooked in oil. The crispy coating of breadcrumbs and the soft meat inside concentrated with umami came together, and the taste was perfect. It was truly delicious.

Just that would be a great feast, but the white sauce that came with it (apparently called tartar sauce) was also amazing. It was salty and sour, but still somehow mild. *Anyway, it’s so good with this fry stuff.*

Actually, in the first place, why am I even eating seafood from Berléand in Aveling?! And we’re inside a dungeon, too! Ahh~ whatever already. It’s so good!

It really was the right choice to go back to being an adventurer, even though I only did it because I was bored since my youngest daughter grew up and became independent, and my husband died.

Adventurers travel everywhere, so they have a lot of chances to eat good food. It’s really nice since you can have great meetings like this, too~.

With those thoughts running through my head, I went to put the next piece into my mouth..... At some point, all the food on my plate had disappeared.

Just as the depression started to sink in since all the food on my plate had vanished, I heard the voice of Dolan’s guildmaster, an elf like me.

“Ohh! This sauce goes great with this lightly flavored fish, since it’s got such complex flavor, instead of just being salty. That last white sauce with the acidity and mellow taste was extremely delicious, but this sauce also can’t be ignored...”

I looked, and he was happily enjoying the seafood with a brown sauce.

Huh? What’s that? Why is it only you that gets more? It’s unfair! Just because you know him! And that sauce is different from the white one I had, isn’t it? I

can tell. That's definitely delicious. Kkhh~, I want some too!

My friends, Gaudino, Gideon, and even Sigvard looked like they wanted some too. *Please, give us more!*

He must have noticed our silent pleas, since the cook, Mukohda, asked us, "Want more?"

Of course! I was waiting for you to ask!

Entranced, I nodded at Mukohda. Thanks to that chance, I got to try the brown sauce (apparently it was called Worcestershire sauce).

This dish with the brown sauce is also great! Dolan's guildmaster was right, what a complex taste! But it still goes really well with this food. Both the white and brown sauces go well with this stuff, it's great. They're so good, I can't decide which one I like better.

While I was busy feeling moved by the brown sauce, I once again caught Dolan's guildmaster speaking.

"This soup is perfect, too. The food you make is really delicious, Mukohda. You could make it to the top of all of the capital's first-class restaurants."

Whoops, that's right! There was a soup too. I almost forgot, since I was so enamored by the fish. Mukohda made such good seafood in the form of that 'fry,' so no doubt his soup will be good too.

Still, Dolan's guildmaster says some great things. I've also eaten at a top-class restaurant in the capital before, and Mukohda's food here is definitely better than what they serve there. I'll declare it in front of the king if I have to. I'm really picky about my food. And I'm saying that, so it's just that good.

I blew on the soup before... *Slurp*

Mmmnnn~, this soup really is delicious! It's a milk soup with lots of vegetables and shellfish in it. This might be the first time I've ever tried a milk soup with shellfish in it. Milk itself is pretty rare, so it's not something people can eat every day. Still, milk really goes well with shellfish, doesn't it? I didn't know that. The umami of the shellfish, the unique flavor of milk, and the sweetness of vegetables. It all comes together superbly to make an incredible soup.

Beside me, enjoying my soup, was Gaudino, who said, “I thought it was good, but if you, the elf, are saying it then there’s no doubt.”

“Even Feodora, who’s a really picky eater, is really into it,” said Dolan’s guildmaster, but I didn’t mind.

It’s true that I’m picky, and it’s true that this soup’s got its hooks into me. Actually, the only elves that wouldn’t be picky would be children. Elves live a long time, so we always end up eating a lot of different things. That’s why we always end up picky, and the longer we live, the more we start to enjoy basic things like eating.

Om-nom Glug-glug Gulp

Whew~, this really is good soup. Oh, it’s all gone already. This isn’t enough. I still want more soup, but.....

Just when I started feeling sad because all the good soup was gone, Mukohda asked me, “Do you want more soup?”

Of course! You’re really attentive, aren’t you? Great! You’re amazing!

I handed my bowl over to Mukohda, and he poured out a generous helping of soup. Looking at the hot soup giving off steam, I couldn’t stop myself from smiling. I enjoyed the delicious shellfish and milk soup a second time.

At first glance, he’s a plain guy who doesn’t seem like he’d be a good adventurer. So he’s Mukohda, huh? I’ve got it all memorized. I’m not great at remembering names, but it’s different for people that make food this good.

Also, my sixth sense, that detects delicious things, is pinging like crazy. This person definitely knows more delicious dishes, and he seems like he’ll give them to me, too.

Heheheheheh, I’m not letting you go.

Feodora’s glinting eyes were locked on to Mukohda.

Afterword

It's Eguchi Ren. Thank you, truly, for buying, "Campfire Cooking in Another World with my Absurd Skill Volume 6: Meat Soboro Rice Bowls and The Holy Seal"! I'm truly sorry for leaving such a big gap from the release of volume 5. Finally, I managed to carry volume 6 to its release. Thankfully, this will be the 6th volume. It always amazes me that I've gotten all this way thanks to all of you readers. I appreciate it so much, and I have nothing but gratitude for all of you.

The 6th volume is once again a dungeon story. Unlike last time, Mukohda's party is joined by someone who loves dragons. Rather, he forced himself in there (lol). Of course, he's after Dora-chan. It'd be nice if you enjoyed the exploits of Fel, Dora-chan, and Sui, as well as that other person(?). Also, as for the level ups after the dungeon, I'd be happy if you looked forward to it, there's going to be a new tenant!

And guess what, along with volume 6, the main comic's volume 3 as well as the first volume of the spinoff where Sui is the main character, "Sui's Great Adventure" are also releasing! Both the main comic as well as the spinoff are really fun so please try those two out as well.

To Masa-sensei, who handles the illustrations for the novel, Akagishi K-sensei, who does the art for the main comic, as well as Futaba Momo-sensei who draws the spinoff comic, my editor sir I, and everyone at Overlap — thank you all so much!

Lastly, please continue to enjoy the laid back otherworld adventures of Mukohda, Fel, Dora-chan, and Sui in "Campfire Cooking in Another World with my Absurd Skill" in all its versions: web novel, light novel, main comic, and spinoff comic!

I'm praying to meet you all again in volume 7.

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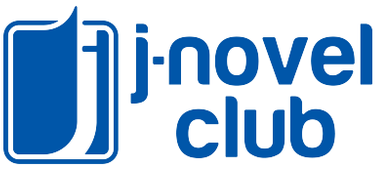
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Campfire Cooking in Another World with My Absurd Skill: Volume 6

by Ren Eguchi

Translated by Kevin Chen Edited by Brandon Koepp

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