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Lazy Dungeon Master

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"W-WELCOME..."
Dog Loli
NIKU
Gluttonous Girl
ICHIKA
"THANK YA, AND WELCOME TO THE DANCING DOLL INN!"


"Mm... H-Haku, sister... you shouldn't touch me there..."
Dungeon Core Number 695
ROKUKO
"Ufufu, this is how people strengthen their bonds in real bathhouses, you know."
Dungeon Core Number 89
HAKU


GRAAAAAH! SHOW ME WHAT YA GOOOT!
"ALRIGHT, LET'S GET THIS SHOW ON THE ROAD."

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Prologue

I was building something in front of my dungeon, having moved past my victory over Haku in the Dungeon Battle. To put it simply, I was building a safe place for me to relax and sleep. I could have just made a room inside the dungeon, but it'd be hard to sleep knowing an adventurer might come charging in at any moment. In which case, I decided that constructing an entire building outside of the dungeon might actually be safer. And so there I was, doing exactly that.

I used the {Create Golem} spell to turn wood into Wooden Board Golems. I then pulled those boards up and connected them to make a block. Construction! {Create Golem} was mainly a spell used for creating golems, obviously enough, but it could be used for construction as well with the right twists. As long as I didn't give any special orders, the spell allowed me to freely morph any material around like clay. Very convenient. I didn't even need to use nails to connect things. I could just fuse touching parts together. And by the way, a single part bent around would end up weaker than several parts fused together.

I was using Stone Floor Golems in place of concrete, so the building was turning out impressively sturdy. Halfway through, I experimented with making an Iron Core Golem from an iron ingot and putting it in those stone golems in an attempt to make some kind of rebar. But despite all my amateurish experimenting, making some pillars and then surrounding them with walls was all it took to make a building that looked nice enough. Add in how sturdy the {Create Golem} materials were, and eh, I figured things would turn out okay.

"Fuaaah... What's up, my duuude?"

"Yo. Morning."

The newbie exited the cave... the dungeon, with her large tits bouncing. She had a very fine body that was meaty where it counted and extremely proportional. It was safe to assume that she never let a lack of money get in the

way of a good meal. Which would explain the crushing debt she ended up with.

But putting those issues aside, she was a truly splendid girl. Particularly her legs and feet. Like, she was absolutely jaw-dropping from the curves of her thighs all the way down to the tips of her toes. Anyone with a foot or leg fetish would lose their mind around her, easily.

“Maaan, never thought I’d see the day where I go to bed inside of an actual dungeon. Not even a Safe Zone, either.”

“Like I told you, this dungeon is my home.”

“Right, right. You’re a Dungeon Master. Eeeh... Yeah, that’s just like, totally not normal.”

She’s singling me out, but c’mon. There’s nobody normal here. I’m from another world, Rokuko is a Dungeon Core, and Niku was basically born a slave. On the other hand, this girl is a former adventurer. She’s normal and knows a ton about this world, which is perfect for me.

“By the way, I can’t let you leave now that you know that I’m this dungeon’s master. Just accept it. Though, you won’t be able to escape even if you don’t accept it.”

“...No friggin’ way... I’m gonna be a slave for the rest of my life? This monstrous master is gonna do whatever he wants with me until I die...?” She started pretending to cry. Though it was so exaggerated, nobody could miss that she was just joking around.

“Well, if we’re bein’ real here, I’d help you destroy this whole friggin’ planet if it meant getting more of those [Curry Rolls].” She held her hands up in the air and grinned. *Looks like she wants another curry roll for breakfast today.*

“You’re totally fine with that, right? C’mooon, you scratch my back and I’ll scratch yours, ’kay...?” She rustled her skirt around to show me a few glimpses of her healthy thighs. *Too bad for you, but I’m a foot fetishist! Thighs definitely play an important role in how sexy a girl is, but they aren’t my critical weak point!*

“I’m guessin’ you’d prefer these two girls instead? Geez, you sure are a handful. Go ahead, touch ’em if you want.” She held up her chest to emphasize

her boobs in a psychological attack. *Whew, now I can't see her feet. I'm gonna survive her seduction attempt unscathed.* But somehow, she sensed what I was thinking. I was sitting on the ground, so she came from the side and wrapped her legs around mine. Since she was scissoring my lap with her legs, her feet were put into clear view. *Ngh! Th-This... might be a little too much for me!*

"Heh heeeh. You like feet, don'tcha, Master? Hey, what do you think about my feet? Do you... like'm?"

"Alright, alright, I surrender. But I'm doing some important work right now, so get off me." I bought a curry roll with DP and gave it to her. She took it and obediently freed me from her legs. *I... I miss them already.*

"Mmm, being able to summon food from nothing sure is sweet. How's that work, anyway? Not like I'm complaining, I'm just curious."

"I don't really get it either, so let's just not think about it."

"Right on." She tore through the plastic and started eating the curry roll right away. Despite having eaten one for the first time yesterday, she already knew exactly what to do. *How many of them did she end up eating yesterday, anyway? I can't talk, though. I'm the one who let her have that many.*

"So, what're you doing anyway?" She leaned towards me and emphasized her chest again while asking that. *I guess she just does that unconsciously. Must be a habit.*

"Huh? You can't tell that I'm building something?" I was making walls with {Create Golem}, having normal golems prop them up, and then connecting them. It was really tedious work, so I wanted to finish it all at once. My ultimate goal was to finish the entire inn within a single day.

"Alriiight... {Create Golem}." I made a door from the wood. Making the hinges was pretty annoying, but nothing impossible.

"...Eh? What're you doing...?"

"Huh? Like I said, building something. You don't want to keep sleeping in a cave, do you? I'm ashamed it took me this long to get around to doing this." I placed the door on the wall and... realized I had forgotten to leave a hole for the door. A problem quickly fixed with {Create Golem}. *I should probably make*

some blueprints to follow or something... Eh. Sounds annoying. I'll just keep doing what I'm doing. It's been working out well enough so far.

"Wait, wait, wait. Hold up, my dude. {Create Golem} is a spell that just makes Clay Golems. How're you making holes in walls with it?"

"Huh?"

"Don't try to huh your way out of this. I can see Wood Golems right over there, man."

"I mean, the spell's called {Create Golem}. Why couldn't it make Wood Golems too?"

"No way, no no noooo way. It can only make Clay Golems, seriously. Listen up bud—" ...It seemed that {Create Golem} could normally only make Clay Golems and nothing else. It was never used to build things like I was doing.

"...And that's all common sense."

"Really? Well, thanks for telling me. I appreciate it. Keep on warning me whenever I do something that's not normal. Aaand, {Create Golem}."

"I mean, this entire place isn't normal at all, y'know?! And why aren't you chanting first?!" I continued building the inn with {Create Golem} while listening to her go crazy. Like I said, I wanted to finish this up in a single day and then sleep like a brick. I've got no time to spare here! *Oh... Right, right. Before bed, I should buy another curry roll and ask her to wrap her legs around me again in exchange for it.*

Chapter 1

Day 37

Haku had given us 150,000 DP as a reward for defeating her in the Dungeon Battle. Since we had 30,000 DP left over from the battle itself... minus the 10,000 DP I gave to Rokuko to do whatever she wanted with... we had in total 170,000 DP to do with as we pleased. I figured it would be best to use all that easy money (DP, actually) to prepare for the future.

First, I expanded the dungeon boundaries to encompass all the forest near the entrance to the cave with plans to turn the land into a large farm. I then bought ten [Sugar Beets (10DP)] while waiting for golems to till the land. Naturally, I could turn sugar beets into pure sugar after growing enough of them. I would steadily increase the size of the farms, keeping a good distance from the dungeon itself, and make a lot of high-quality sugar. I would then sell that sugar. A get-rich-quick scheme, basically. It would have been easier for me to just buy sugar with DP directly, but that wouldn't be sustainable. I'd get more money, but not more DP. Though, it seemed like fifty coppers together were worth 5 DP, so earning DP from sugar was possible if it sold very well. Just not very likely. *I'll have to give that a try if the sugar beets turn out bad or something.*

I also tried buying several kinds of magic scrolls:

Low-Rank Earth Magic. [Stone Scroll (700 DP)]. A spell that makes a stone that you can send flying.

Low-Rank Water Magic. [Water Scroll (500 DP)]. A spell that makes a ball of water that you can send flying.

Low-Rank Wind Magic. [Air Voice Scroll (400 DP)]. A spell that makes wind that you can carry your voice on.

Low-Rank Fire Magic. [Fireball Scroll (500 DP)]. A spell that makes a ball of fire that you can send flying.

Low-Rank Light Magic. [Light Scroll (500 DP)]. A spell that makes a ball of light that you can float around.

Low-Rank Darkness Magic. [Blind Scroll (600 DP)]. A spell that makes a ball of darkness that makes it harder to see.

Bottom-Rank Space-Time Magic. [Wallet Scroll (600 DP)]. A spell that lets you store and withdraw money.

I bought three of each. One for me, one for Rokuko, and one for Niku. I just wanted us all to learn something from each element of magic. It might be useful one day, somehow. *Though, uh... I went with a Bottom-Rank spell for Space-Time Magic, but why's the spell called "wallet?" I mean, it apparently just lets you use an alternate dimension as a wallet, but still. What're you doing here, Mr. Auto Translator...?*

I also bought the useful-looking Mid-Rank Space-Time [Storage Scroll (10,000DP)]. It was pretty expensive, but since I didn't want to be stingy with our easy money, I bought three of those as well. Handily enough, it seemed that time stopped for whatever item you had stored. I immediately stored away my [Heavenly Pillow]. *Yeah... Looks like I've got about a closet's worth of space in here.* I put my [Futon] in there as well. Now I didn't need to worry about any inns with hard beds.

And so, I used about 40,000 DP in total, leaving us with 130,000 DP. That seemed like a lot, but I was planning on using most of it to expand the dungeon further. *Yeah... I'm starting to feel really nostalgic for the times when using a bunch of DP meant having literally zero left over. Now anything less than 10,000 is just rounded out. I'm like a minor celebrity.*

Oh, right. Perhaps thanks to expanding the dungeon so much, our natural DP intake had risen to 100 DP a day. I think Rokuko said something about that being DP absorbed from the ground. *Ten times as much, huh...? That seems like a lot, but our dungeon is way more than ten times as big as the single room it used to be. I wonder if there are like, special DP spots that boost daily DP income or something? Power spots. Y'know.*

Hmmm... I feel like 100 DP a day is enough for me to sleep soundly. That's like earning 10,000 yen a day for doing nothing, okay? My income for doing nothing

is 300,000 yen a month. I could handle living peacefully with Rokuko and Niku for that much money. Sounds good to me. Ah, but wait. I can't do that. Adventurers are gonna come. Crap.

Anyway, I looked at the DP Catalog after the Dungeon Battle and realized that there was a new trap... or rather, a new contraption available. The [Monster Spawner]. It cost one hundred times as much DP as the selected monster, but it would regularly spawn that monster in return. According to Haku, new items and options would be unlocked within the menu by fulfilling certain conditions with our dungeon. I figured that the [Monster Spawner] was unlocked by the overall number of monsters summoned. After all, we had summoned a lot of monsters for that Dungeon Battle.

Oh, and monsters born from the spawner couldn't leave the dungeon. They wouldn't earn us DP after they died, either. Though they would leave behind corpses like a normal monster, so making a golem spawner would net me an infinite amount of any material I wanted. Iron Golems would be perfect for this, but a single one of those costs 500 DP. That means the spawner would cost 50,000 whole DP... *Might be worth it for all that iron, though.*

Anyway. I intended to turn our dungeon into a place that people would regularly visit and relax in for a while, earning us both DP and money. In other words... I intended to build an inn within our dungeon. Or rather, outside the dungeon, but within the dungeon boundaries. That was my ultimate plan. *Heheh. Adventurers will pay to sleep the night and I'll still get DP from them. Two birds with one stone, hell yeah. Huh...? I'm being cheap? Aw, c'mon. Let me have this. If I stand out too much, heroes... Soldiers of God will start investigating my dungeon. And remember, I'll die if the Dungeon Core gets destroyed. I can't sleep if I'm dead. And before you say anything, I don't count eternal sleep as real sleep.*

I wanted to at least build up the dungeon to be strong enough that I could sleep peacefully even with Soldiers of God hanging around. The best example I could think of a dungeon like that was the [Ivory Labyrinth], with its surrounding capital city. I had never been there myself, but the [Ivory Labyrinth] seemed like a clear case of success that would be worthwhile to aspire towards. People gather in cities, and that means more DP. DP can be used to expand the

dungeon. More people would gather in the city in search of the dungeon's treasure. And that's that. It would be an infinite loop of profit for me.

The only problem would be that as more people came, so too would Soldiers of God. I needed a dungeon as strong and powerful as the [Ivory Labyrinth] to fight back the Soldiers of God. According to Haku, the [Ivory Labyrinth] was at least over one hundred and fifty floors deep. 150! That's three whole digits. Our dungeon still only had four floors. One digit.

To take things a little further, it was important to consider that the capital city of the Laverio Empire was in fact part of the [Ivory Labyrinth] itself. That effectively turned every human in the city into a hostage — destroy the [Ivory Labyrinth's] Dungeon Core and all those innocent people would suffer. Plus, Haku was actively using her knight platoons to hunt other dungeons in order to please the Soldiers of God. That's how far I would have to go to be safe from them.

Honestly, the dream seemed so distant and the road to get there so treacherous I felt like I'd die before I reached it. So, I decided to start off with a miniature version of that. I'd build and manage an inn. Or more accurately, I'd build an inn and make other people manage it. I planned on staying inside one of the inn's rooms and sleeping all day, which was especially why I wanted to build a really nice inn.

But no matter how nice the inn was, nobody would come all the way out to the middle of nowhere just to stay in it. Well... There was a dungeon nearby. But it was a pretty shabby dungeon. In order to make our dungeon attractive to potential customers... Yeah. I would need to place some [Monster Spawners] and such around. *Eh. If it turns out becoming a Dungeon Master has made me immortal or something, then I'll shift my sights to reaching the [Ivory Labyrinth's] level.*

* * *

"Oh crap. I totally forgot about him." While laying in bed and visualizing how I wanted the inn to turn out, I suddenly remembered that I had told the Tsia gatekeeper that I'd be back in two or three days. A week had already passed since then. *W-Well, coming back a little late shouldn't be a problem. I'm just a*

newbie adventurer from nowhere to them, after all. Wait... do I even need to keep pretending to be an adventurer? I guess it'll still be useful for getting into town, and it's not like it hurts to be an adventurer. Plus, Haku may have taught me a ton of things, but I still know way less about this world than I'd like to.

"...Guess I should pay a visit to town." While I was there, I would have a chance to get some help for the inn. Not help with constructing the inn; golems could do all of that physical labor no problem. What I needed was a *person*. A person that could interact with customers. Right now, my squad consisted of me, two lolis, a bunch of golems, and a ton of rats. We weren't equipped to deal with customers.

For starters, I had no intention of sitting behind a counter and dealing with customers. At the same time, customers wouldn't take the inn seriously if they were greeted by receptionist lolis. Customer service was too complicated for golems, and rats were just out of the question.

To make things worse, our inn was in truth part of a dungeon. There were countless secrets we needed to hide, and we couldn't just tell a normal person to keep those secrets. Then how was I going to find help? Yep, you guessed it. Slaves. I would buy a slave. I would need to feed and shelter the slave, but thanks to Contract Magic, I didn't need to worry about them spilling secrets or avoiding work. Niku was proof that a well-raised slave would become an excellent worker.

"So, I'm going to town, and I'm planning on buying a new slave while I'm there."

"A-Am I not good enough?!" Niku raised her voice in panic. That may have been the first time I had seen Niku really assert herself.

"I-I learned how to read and even use magic! I-I... I'll be even more useful to you, Master! E-Even at night, I'll... I'll be an even better dakimakura for you, so please!"

"Er, uh, thanks. I really appreciate that. Self-improvement is always a good thing. Good luck. And while you're at it, spend some time thinking about how you'll help your fellow slave get used to how things work here."

"Wh-What? Y-You're... You're not going to sell me?"

“Of course not. I won’t sell you. So calm down. Why are you stripping? Why?”

I calmed the panicky Niku down and stopped her from stripping.

Listen to me. Don’t strip your clothes off. Especially not your socks. Keep those on. Taking off socks is a signal that a nighttime “battle” is about to start. Let’s not cross that line.

“I wouldn’t have taught you magic if I planned on selling you to begin with. Plus, you know way too much about our dungeon and what’s going on behind it. At this point, I’m gonna have to keep you here forever.”

“...Th-Then, I get to be your slave for the rest of my life, right?!” Niku spoke happily while wiping away her tears. *Yeah, pretty much, but uh... Well, whatever. If she’s happy about that, I’ll just be happy for her.*

“Hey, just so you know, there are ways to keep being his slave even after you die. The King-Rank Darkness spell called {Necromancy} can help with that.”

“Yes, please use that on me!” *Rokuko, come on. Did you really have to say that? And... according to the catalog, a [Necromancy Scroll] costs about 800,000,000 DP. We’re not buying that anytime soon...*

Day 38

I exchanged 10,000 DP for one hundred silver coins and put them into my {Wallet}. *I hope one gold coin is enough. I’ll bring the cash the bandits died with too just in case. Worst scenario, I just buy an apple or something.* I also decided to bring an actual coin bag to disguise when I was casting {Wallet}. *Huh? They’ll notice me chanting? Nope, {Wallet} doesn’t need a chant or anything. It works without a word being spoken, which makes it easy to use stealthily. I dunno why that’s the case, but it is what it is. Whoever created the spell probably put in overtime to make it silent after realizing that walking around chanting “{Wallet}” made him look like an idiot who had lost his wallet somewhere.*

Either way, we had 120,000 DP left over after that. *I-I’ll start being more frugal soon.* Rokuko came up to me pouting while I was in the middle of packing for the trip.

“Hey, Keima. You’re really going to that town again?”

“Huh? Yeah. Sorry, but you’re gonna have to hold down the fort while I’m gone. I don’t wanna leave our dungeon alone with just a bunch of golems and rats protecting it.”

“Okaaay... not! Did you really think I’d be okay with this?! I’m going too!” *Uh, I mean. Do you really wanna leave our dungeon alone with golems and rats?*

“There are goblins too!”

“Why do you always overrate goblins so much?” *What’s so good about them?*

“...Would it really be so bad for me to go with you? I mean, nobody’s going to come by while we’re gone.”

Well, she’s got a point. And if someone does come, they’ll probably just be a low rank adventurer. No A-Rank adventurer other than Haku is gonna be rushing down here to explore [Ordinary Cave]. Plus, the Guild is still protecting our dungeon, so... Yeah. I’ll put the Dungeon Core as deep into the dungeon as possible for safety and order the golems to protect it no matter what. We should be safe for a day or two that way.

“...Alright. You can come with us.”

“Yay! I’ve never been to a human city before!” Rokuko instantly gave me a bright smile.

So, after finishing packing, I went to Tsia City again with Niku and Rokuko. I briefly wondered if the living avatar of a Dungeon Core would be fine leaving their dungeon, but then I remembered that Haku was walking around outside without any issue. Apparently, everything would be okay as long as that shining rock stayed inside the dungeon.

We arrived at the city and, coincidentally enough, the same gatekeeper as last time was there.

“Oh, you’re alive, huh?” He called out to me, having also remembered me. Seemed like it was pretty common for adventurers to come back later than planned. *This is a world without any trains, after all.*

“...Hm? And who is that other girl with you? I’ve never seen her before.”

“Aaah, she’s... a friend of mine. She wants to become an adventurer too, so

we'll go ahead and lend you the insurance money." Niku and I showed our Adventurer Guild cards. Rokuko paid him five silver coins instead. *I'll have to get that back later.* After paying an additional three coppers as a toll fee, we were inside Tsia.

I decided to start things off by heading to the Guild, where I could both register Rokuko as an adventurer and get info on where I could buy a slave. Rokuko looked curiously at the food stands on the way there, but eating could wait.

The same receptionist as usual was sitting behind the Guild's front counter.

"Oh my, I see you're still alive. Welcome back."

"Yeah, some things happened and it took longer to get back than I thought it would. Oh, right. Do you have any dungeon-related quests that I could take?"

"Umm, I'm afraid I do not at the moment. We're planning to put up a few soon, however." By the way, Haku had finished up the investigation quest before the Dungeon Battle began. *I guess she can just submit complete quests in the Imperial City no matter where she got them.* Apparently, she reported that there was nothing suspicious about our [Ordinary Cave]. She may have abused her authority to pull that off, but either way, I was thankful. She had bought us some time.

"Okay. I'd like you to register this girl as an adventurer."

"Hold on a second, Keima. Why're you calling me 'this girl?' I have a name."

"You two seem to be close. Very well. I will give her the interview." Rokuko quickly finished the interview and became an adventurer with no issue. She was a G-Rank adventurer on her own, but she'd be treated as an F-Rank adventurer due to being in a party with Niku and I. *Nice. Now Rokuko has an excuse to be hanging around humans too. We did lose some of our slave-buying funds, though.*

"Oh, right. I want to buy a slave. Do you know where I could get one?" I tried asking the receptionist about the slave market. I could probably rely on the Adventurer's Guild introducing me to a good place to buy slaves. It was apparently fairly common for adventurers to use slaves. This receptionist would

definitely know of a good place or two.

"...It depends on what you wish to use the slave for. Do you have any plans for them?"

"Yeah, a few. I want one with a lot of life experience. Preferably a smart one, too. And... Right. They have to be a girl." *Hey, don't look at me. I'm just following Haku's instructions. She was really serious about me not buying a male slave. It was pretty obvious that she didn't even want* ***me*** *close to Rokuko. I wouldn't mind either way, but Haku's a pretty important patron. I don't want to get on her bad side. Trust me. I'm not trying to make a harem here. I swear. I have no interest in the carnal desires of flesh. I'm not exploiting this situation to get my hands on a girl slave with beautiful feet. I want to lick her feet. Ah, crap, the truth slipped out.* My thoughts were interrupted by the receptionist shaking her head in exasperation and telling me what I wanted to know.

"If you have enough funds a slave market within the city is preferable, but if not, you could also try finding a black market slave trader in the slums. Though the Guild will not be able to introduce you to such a trader."

"I have a little under one gold to spend on a slave."

"In that case, I recommend Docosp's Slave Market within the city. And by the way... If you are looking for an *experienced* slave, you could try checking the local brothel to see if they are selling any of their slaves today."

"Ah, no, I didn't mean it like that." The receptionist seemed to be misunderstanding something, but since I couldn't exactly go around talking about our dungeon, I just brushed it aside and asked her to point out Docosp's Slave Market on the map. *Between you and me... I actually am interested in that kind of thing. I'm just not planning on saying so in front of Rokuko and Niku.* We left the Guild and immediately went to Doscop's Slave Market after dropping by the gate to get our insurance money back. Rokuko stopped by several stands on the way, so it took a long time for us to get there.

"Look, look! Keima, they're selling magic stones! I wonder what for?"

"They power magic tools, apparently."

"Oh wow. Magic tools like that, um, shiny thing we have, right?"

“Yep. Some tools shoot out fire, water, and other stuff. I might buy some of those for our inn.”

“Eh? But there are traps and contraptions that do the same thing, right?”

“...Oh yeah. I remember seeing [Water Sources] and [Flamethrowers] in the catalog.” And so, we reached the slave market without buying anything on the way. We needed our money for the slave, after all. I looked the place over and... *Yep. They may be selling slaves, but this place just looks like a normal old brick building.*

“...This place is very different from where I was.”

“Huh, you really were sold to those bandits. What kind of place were you kept in?”

“Um, it was a really dirty place outside the gates.” *I guess that means Niku came from the slum’s black market. Can’t say that’s surprising. She was bought by bandits, after all.* It crossed my mind that it might be better to check out that slave market instead, but what I needed was someone who knew a lot about the world. Someone who would immediately be very useful. I could check out the slums later.

Nothing was gonna happen if we just stood around, so I went into the building with Rokuko and Niku. *Alright. It’s shopping time.* The moment we entered the building, we saw a counter with a slave standing behind it.

“Welcome to our establishment. What business do you have with us today?”

“Er, I would like to buy a slave.”

“Please excuse me, but may I ask who introduced you to us?”

“The Adventurer’s Guild.” The slave left the counter, asking us to wait a moment. Soon enough, she came back with a buff-looking middle-aged guy.

“Welcome. I am the owner of this establishment, Docosp. Valued customer, I heard that you would like to buy a slave on this fine day.” The shop owner gave us a smooth business smile. He looked like a reputable salesman, which made sense given that he ran a shop right in the middle of town.

“Yes. A member of the Adventurer’s Guild told me that this is a good place for

buying slaves.”

“That is indeed correct. There is not a slave I own that isn’t the best of the best.” He chuckled confidently.

“So, what kind of slave are you looking for?”

“Mmm, first of all, I want a girl with really pretty feet. I have lots of things I’ll want her to do, so her being smart would be a huge plus.” Rokuko punched me in the side after she heard me casually include “pretty feet” as a criteria.

“Hold on, Keima. Why did you mention pretty feet? And as the first thing, too.”

“...Sorry, my friend, but could you keep quiet while I’m negotiating? This is actually an extremely high-level bartering technique. It’ll play a very important role in us finding the slave we need.”

“Really?”

“Yeah. I’m too busy to explain how right now. So please keep quiet for a bit.” Rokuko nodded, though her expression was conflicted enough that I couldn’t tell if my answer had satisfied her. But either way, it looked like she’d stay silent for me. Perfect.

“And my budget is one gold coin. What do you think?” Since we had the Guild backing us here, I doubted the slaver would try to rip us off too hard. I hadn’t fully grasped the economics of this world yet, but his business would be effected both by whether customers came back to buy more slaves and by what kind of reputation they developed through word of mouth. Plus, he would definitely find a slave within our price range. The receptionist recommended this place after I told her our budget, after all.

“Hm. May I ask you to be a little more specific about what you want? You are here from the Guild. I would like to find the absolute perfect slave for you if possible.”

“Alright. I’ll be using her for basically chores, so she won’t need to know any skills. Preferably she’d be of adult age. Plus, of course, the cheaper the better.”

“And even better if she has pretty feet, yes?” *Looks like he remembers the*

request I accidentally let slip out at the start. This guy's good.

"Hm. So you are looking for a slave to do chores. And if you're fine with a cheap slave, that must mean you'd be fine with a non-human slave. I will bring several candidates for you to look over." The slaver stood up, left, and came back after a brief while with four women in tow. Judging from their collars, they were all slaves. *Yep... They all have fantastic legs and feet, every one of them. Spectacular.*

"Are these slaves to your liking? They respectively cost eighty silvers, one hundred ten silvers, ninety silvers, and sixty silvers." The fact that he brought out a slave a little more expensive than one gold coin, despite that being my budget, just showed how experienced of a salesman he really was. But anyway. Starting from the left, the slaves were a bear-eared beastkin, a fox-eared beastkin with a fluffy tail, a vaguely unhappy elf, and a normal human. For whatever reason, they were all eyeing me over as if they were the ones buying me, instead of the other way around.

"Wait. Why's that sixty silvers slave so cheap?"

"Aaah, erm, how should I put this... She has a, shall we say, troubled history. I brought her out due your request for a cheap slave. Shall I take her away?"

"Nah, that sounds interesting. I'd like to hear what that troubled history is." You could usually count on people with 'troubled histories' being the exact kind of people you want on your side.

"Very well, I will explain."

To summarize what the slaver said:

・She had fallen into slavery after being unable to repay a loan she took out for gambling and extravagant foods.

・Her last owner returned her after she wounded him.

...The man who bought her said that he'd give her "a real tasty meal," but then came back the next day saying that she had bit his, uh, member. The slave herself, when questioned, would only say "It tasted like total garbo. Gimme my money back." *I'm pretty sure that's what the guy you bit should be saying.* In the end, his wounds were healed with Restoration Magic and that settled that.

“But wait. I thought slaves were incapable of harming their masters?”

“The fact she managed to break that rule is why I called her history troubled. It seems that she sincerely considered the... thing presented to her to be food, rather than a part of her master. Naturally, her collar activated after the deed was done. The... conflict arose due to the fact that her master had promised her a good meal, and then thrust out his member while saying ‘Come on now, eat it.’ Have no fear. There is no issue with the Contract Magic cast upon her. It was just a series of unfortunate coincidences.” *Ah. In other words, he basically gave her permission to bite him. There’s no helping that.* Since it was so important to slavers that their products be restrained by Contract Magic, Docosp had apparently taken her to the Merchant’s Guild and used lie detecting magic tools to determine the exact truth of what had happened. That’s why he knew the exact statements they had said to each other.

“...That said, we’ve naturally been struggling to sell her again due to that. We paid a large sum of money for her, however, so we’ve been hesitant to get rid of her. Especially since she has an appealing appearance. We’d at least like to make some of our money back. So... What do you think? I believe she is quite the steal.” She certainly did have a nice and shapely body, with healthy curves where you’d want curves and a narrow waist to boot. Her hair was blonde with a hint of red, as was common in this area. Visually, she was a feast... though I was satisfied with her beautiful feet alone. And to be honest, having a busty receptionist with a pretty face was more than ideal. The biting thing wasn’t even a major problem to me. I just had to avoid sexually harassing her.

“I want to hear what she thinks first. So? What’s on your mind?”

“I let that turbojerk buy me ’cause he said he’d give me some tasty food. Can ya blame me for doing what I did when he shoved that nasty thing in front of me the second we got back to his place? I was super hungry and really looking forward to whatever good stuff he had ready for me. Really, like, did I have any other choice but to give it a bite and see if it really did taste good? But y’know, trust me, if he actually gave me a good meal and filled up my belly first, I definiiitely wouldn’t have pulled any tricks like that. You scratch my back and I’ll scratch yours, ’kay?” *What the hell? This slave sure has a big personality.*

“I care more about food than my own life. I’ll like, die if it means eating a

good meal. For real.”

“I see, I see.” I would do basically anything for the sake of sleeping, but even I would hesitate before saying I’d die for it. *Yeah. I like this girl. She’s not bad at all. And her cheap price just makes things better. She might have a gambling addiction so intense she literally took out a loan for it, but that also means she lived an active enough life to know the things I’ll want to know. I guess it’s settled, then?*

“Rokuko, Niku. What do you two think? I like her.”

“Well, she’s the cheapest one, so I feel like buying her would be smart.”

“I think so too. Plus, our food is really good. She’ll like that.”

“Oooh, really now! Are you gonna share that tasty food with me?” A slave with a “troubled history” that butts into conversations without permission, huh? She let out a tiny choke, probably due to her collar squeezing her throat a little. *I guess that just goes to show how much she cares about food.* I asked the slaver to give her permission to continue speaking.

“I don’t know if you’ll like it, but yeah, you can eat the same food as us.”

“Really?! Just so we’re totally clear, I’ll bite your thing off if you’re lying, okay?! You don’t wanna make a gourmand angry.”

“Yeah, I promise. As long as you promise to work well for me.”

“I like this guy! Hey, hey, Mr. Doscoooop, would you be super duper nice and lower my price for him? Please? I’m actually worth like forty-five silvers, aren’t I?”

“Hey! Don’t say that! Ah... Uuuh, my valued customer, this is... I mean...” The slaver paled and stumbled over his words. Seemed like this girl really was a bit of a handful. But she seemed smart. After sensing my intent to buy her, she tried lowering her price to help solidify that decision. She even knew what her actual value was. That all could have been an act planned by the slaver, but even if it were, I’d have to praise the sincerity of her acting. *Yep. I’m buying her.*



“Alright, I’m willing to pay fifty silvers for her.” I threw the slaver a bone by adding five silvers.

“...Thank you very much.”

“Hell yeah! Trust me, my dude, you have made a fantastic purchase today. Oh whoops, I’ve gotta start calling you Master now, huh? Haha!” The slaver was shrugging his shoulders. Although he was earning less than he wanted, he had finally sold a major pain in his side for a decent sum. Though he did make sure to inform me that he wouldn’t pay me anything if I came to return her. That was all, though. *I’m glad the negotiations were short.*

I paid the slaver fifty silver coins (or rather, five big silver coins) and watched him cast new Contract Magic on her. While I was at it, I bought her some new clothes as well. They shamelessly charged me a whole silver for a single dress and pair of underwear. I didn’t mind too much, though, since I was still way under budget. I had paid only half of what I intended to. And so, I left the store with a new slave.

“Oh yeah, I never asked what your name is. What do people call you?”

“Wha? The heck’re you talking about? Masters name their slaves after buying them. Am I right, Niku♪?” She shifted the conversation to Niku as if she was saying something obvious, but all she got was a confused head tilt.

“I didn’t know about that.”

“Wha? How didn’t you? This is like, ultra common sense. Just think about it. What if you bought a slave with the same name as your mom? No matter how much of a sexy babe she is, it’d be awk as heck during nighttime festivities if you know what I’m saying. So, people get rid of their names after being enslaved.” *Ah. Makes sense.*

“Hey, Keima. What are ‘nighttime festivities?’”

“Uhhh, nothing. Nothing at all.” I patted Rokuko’s head. Dirty jokes were a no-go around her. I didn’t even want to know what Haku would do to me if I started teaching Rokuko about dirty jokes.

“...Well, it’s not like I totally forgot about my name after getting rid of it. I

could tell it to you if you really want... aaah, but I've actually made a looot of enemies, so like, I'd way prefer a new one. I'm not picky, give it your best shot."

"Uuuh. What did people call you before today?"

"Hm? Well, they called me 'Niku' too, y'know?" She responded after licking her finger, as if thinking about the flavor or something. A shudder ran down my spine after I realized it might have been the... thing she bit. *Huh. I wonder if Niku is just a common name for slaves? Like how a ton of people call their dogs 'Poochie' or cats 'Mr. Scruffles.'*

"It'd be really confusing if they shared a name. Let's think of another one for her, Keima."

"Yeah... You like eating a lot, don't you? I could name you after some food... How about Apple? Or Kebab?"

"Apple isn't the worst name I've ever heard, but Kebab? No thanks... How about, like, Melons? Actually, I really wanna eat some melon right now. Could you buy some for me?"

"I'll let you eat something like that soon enough."

"Woah, really?! Geez, I'm really gonna have to work hard for you, huh?" She cackled happily with her own large melons swaying side to side. She was hardly acting like a slave at all.

"Oh, right. Whaddya think about 'Ichika,' boss man?"

"Huh? What's that mean?"

"It's a name I ripped off from the God of Food. They're named Ishidaka, and they're also the God of Oceans. So, mixing their name with salt, since salt comes from the ocean, we get Ichika. Super cool, huh?"

"Oh wow. That's really clever. We definitely bought the right one, Keima." Rokuko nodded, impressed, but I had no idea how she got "Ichika" from "Ishidaka" and "salt." Probably had something to do with the auto-translator messing up. *Yeah, I'm used to this now.*

"Alright, Ichika's good with me. Here's to a long and fruitful relationship."

"Hehehe, you got it♪" From nameless to Ichika. We shook hands again. But

Ichika was looking somewhere else while we shook hands. I followed her gaze... and saw that she was staring at a kebab stand.

* * *

We all headed to the Adventurer's Guild, each of us holding a kebab.

"Mmm? I'm pretty sure the Guild is over here, yeah?"

"Yep. The Guild introduced me to that slaver. I feel like I should probably give them the heads up that I went through with it."

"Woah, you're an adventurer? What's your rank? D? C? Oh dude, are you a B-Rank?"

"Nope. F-Rank. I just became one like a week ago, so yeah. Oh, but Rokuko here is a G-Rank."

"Wha? F-Rank and... G-Rank? I'm hella impressed you had the cash to buy me... Are you a noble? Or maybe a trader?"

"Don't worry about it. I'll tell you everything soon enough." The fact that Ichika immediately started thinking about how I could have gotten that much money without just shouting "That's impossible!" was yet more confirmation that I had bought the right slave.

"Do you want me to register you as an adventurer too, Ichika? Having some ID would be pretty useful."

"Aaah, I used to be a C-Rank adventurer before falling into slavery, sooo... I really don't wanna start over from G-Rank. Plus, this collar works as ID just fine." Ichika pointed to the slave collar around her neck. *Oh yeah. Slaves can use their collars as ID, right. Niku and Rokuko are both adventurers, I guess that's good enough for now.* By the way, slaves were treated as items and could go with their masters on any quest regardless of their own rank. *Wait, wait. She used to be C-Rank? Isn't that really good? Hell yeah. Always buy things with a "troubled history."*

We returned to the Adventurer's Guild. The same receptionist as always was behind the counter.

"...Oh my, you've already bought one. And she's even a human... that's very...

big...” The receptionist looked directly at a certain part of Ichika’s body while saying that. Or rather, two certain parts. Bigger was better for some people, but I liked a nice middle ground. A girl’s feet were what really mattered anyway.

“I see you can appreciate girls that are small, average, and large. Congratulations?”

“...You’re talking about her height, right?”

“Nah dude, she’s talking about my tits.” *Seriously? I went out of my way to play dumb and that’s how you repay me?*

“...By the way, just how much did she cost?”

“Uhhh, well, I got a pretty good discount on her. She only cost fifty silvers.”

“That is... quite a steal, no doubt. At a glance, she seems to be easily worth at least twenty or thirty gold coins.” *Woah, what? Twenty golds? That’s stupid expensive.* The receptionist looked at me with doubt clear in her eyes. *H-Hey, I didn’t do anything wrong, okay? Seriously, you can trust me. I may have gotten the money through dungeon points, but apparently all the money in the capital comes from DP-produced money anyway, so that shouldn’t be a problem... I-It’s not counterfeiting, I swear...!*

“Aaah, yeah, I was totally worth twenty gold coins at first. It’s just, y’see, I have a liiiittle bit of a troubled history.”

“Hm. That must be... quite the history, then.”

“Honestly, between you and me, I should be dead as crap right now. But thanks to Mr. Docosp doing me a major solid, I got off with just a price drop. Hence me being cheap as heck. So? We all good?”

“...Well, the Guild will independently verify that story. You did visit him on our introduction, after all.”

And so, we finished our report. I thought about just going straight back to the dungeon, but it was late enough that night would fall on the way back. Worst case scenario, we’d end up camping outside for the night before getting home. In which case, it would probably be better to just do some simple quests and relax at an inn for the night.

“Ah, speaking of which. We have received a quest addressed to you specifically.” The receptionist took out a quest slip as if just remembering its existence. I thought it’d be another one requesting us to clean toilets, but I was wrong. It was a rabbit hunting quest.

“It seems that the meat you sold to the kebab stand ended up extremely popular, with customers stating the kebabs tasted delicious without smelling poor at all. He sold out before the afternoon was up. From now on, he’ll buy up to six rabbits any day you bring them to him, with a maximum reward of twelve coppers each. If possible, he would also like you to tell him your secret.” *Oh yeah... The kebabs we got a second ago were from a different stand. I didn’t realize that until just now. Either way, this seems like a good quest to me.*

“Oh! Tasty kebabs, huh?! We gotta do this one! Right, Master?!” *Oh. Ichika’s sure enthusiastic about this. Looks like we’re definitely gonna be taking this rabbit hunting quest. That’s fine. We didn’t need to leave right away or anything.*

“Would you like to take a goblin extermination quest as well? There’s even a boar extermination quest available as well.” The receptionist suggested even more quests after we accepted the first one, speaking entirely like a cashier from a certain fast food chain. It was possible to complete the requirements of an extermination before taking the quest itself. Apparently, this happened often with regularly scheduled extermination quests. The quest was completed by showing proof of your kills, and it didn’t matter whether you got that proof before or after you took the quest. The only difference would be that you didn’t need to pay money to go through the city gates, and you didn’t need to worry about someone else taking the quest while you were out hunting.

So, it was recommended to take extermination quests “on the side” while doing other quests. Goblins were troublesome monsters that damaged crops. The sprawling farmland to the north of the city had to be protected from them at all times. There was some farmland within the city walls, but the quality of soil outside was high enough that the risk was worth farming out there. Only goblins and boars ever came after the crops, so ultimately it was cost-effective to farm outside while paying adventurers to hunt them every now and again to cut down their numbers. Apparently.

Additionally, although the boars were significantly less common than goblins, their meat tasted delicious and depending on their size they could be worth anything from one to five whole silvers. Their noses were used as proof of each kill, but apparently that was the most delicious part of their body. Since carved up goblin corpses could technically serve as fertilizer, it was standard to cut off their right ear for verification and just leave their corpse in the fields. *Uh... They won't become undead goblins or anything, right? Right?*

Plus, both the goblin extermination and boar extermination quests were F-Rank and available all the time. You could bring five goblin ears to the Guild at pretty much any time to clear the quest and get thirty coppers. You would get ten coppers for a boar nose, though you could keep the nose and get only one copper. If you chose to keep the nose, they would cut it into three parts before giving it back. That way you couldn't turn the nose back in over and over. The extra third cut was because sometimes the boar's nose would get cut in half normally during battle. Basically, boars were pretty tasty in more ways than one. I could use [Storage] to carry them back, too.

And so, we were heading out to the east to hunt basically everything we saw. Ichika was brimming with enthusiasm to hunt boars... or at least, I thought she would be. In reality, she didn't seem too excited at all. *I wonder what's up with that?*

"Well, y'see, I hunted boars like crazy back when I was an adventurer. They're probably so uncommon now because... well, nevermind. Aaah, but I can definitely vouch for them being totally delicious." *Guess I'm a little late. Her boar enthusiasm's all dried up.*

We left through the east gate to go rabbit hunting. The gatekeeper didn't charge us anything since we were on a quest. I didn't even have to pay for Ichika. *I feel like I could abuse this system somehow.* But anyway. I knew I could expect great results from the master of hunting, Niku, but I was mainly interested in seeing how Ichika did. She was a former C-Rank adventurer, after all. Surely I could count on her kicking butt and taking names, especially when delicious food was on the line. Though leaving her bare-handed would probably get in the way of that, so I lent her my sword.

"Oh, thanksies! Well, I'm gonna be real for a second, I can just use my bare

hands for this. Rabbits' pelts are worth way less when they're covered in blood. It's just like, common sense to kill'm without cutting them up too bad."

"Huh? But you can't bleed them without cutting them."

"Bleed them? What're you even talking about, dude?" *Huh? She doesn't know about bleeding animals after hunting them?*

"If you drain the blood from an animal corpse, the meat won't smell so bad later. It'll taste better, too. Raw meat smells so weird because of the blood."

"Wow! I totally didn't know that. You sure know a lot for someone with no common sense. Huh, meat tastes better if you drain their blood... Yeah. I feel like that's gonna make a lot of meat more tasty for me, geheh." Ichika immediately started drooling while imagining the taste of delicious, blood-free meat. *This girl really is a food monster.*

"Hey, Keima, what about me?" *Oh yeah. I never gave Rokuko a weapon or anything. But... Wait. She's wearing a sword on her hip.*

"...Is that sword just for show?"

"Uh-huh! It's just for show!" She just said it like it was. *Welp, that settles that.*

"Hold up, are you saying you want to fight too? Forget about it. I'm not letting you fight anything, no friggin' way. Remember: if you die, I die. That decorative sword will be good enough for you."

"That's true. We are connected in body and soul." *Yep, but you'll be fine even if I die, so it's kind of a one-way thing.*

"Oh wow, look at you two being all lovey-dovey. Guess I won't need to be taking care of you at night, Master." *Sorry, Ichika, but we're being literal here. Dungeon Masters die when the Core of their dungeon dies, that's all. Nothing romantic here.*

"What does she mean by 'taking care of you at night,' Keima?"

"Uhhh, like, being my dakimakura. The thing Niku does." Rokuko asked a tough question so I deflected as best I could.

"Hmmm. I see." *Seems like she bought it. Well, it wasn't a complete lie, so no worries.*

“Oh double wow. You’re doing that kind of thing for him, Niku?”

“Yes, basically every day.”

“...He has a girlfriend and he’s still doing that? Honestly, I’m pretty dang impressed. Wait... I guess that means you’re gonna make me a member of your harem, huh? You like all sizes, big and small? Kyaaah♪” *Hey. Quit misunderstanding things. And I may have some weird fetishes, but I’m not interested in having my you-know-what bitten off.*

“Oh. What do you do to drain the blood, anyway?” Ichika changed the subject for me, having guessed that I didn’t want to talk about that kind of thing in front of Rokuko if I could help it. *I’m glad she knows how to read the mood.*

“Right, right. A little demonstration should show you all you need to know. Niku, go hunt a rabbit for me.”

“Understood!” Niku dashed into the forest. And thirty seconds later, she came back with a rabbit. She had sliced its head clean off. I grabbed it by the feet and held it upside down, causing blood to gush out onto the ground.

“Ew, there’s blood everywhere. It stinks, Keima.”

“Hey, the blood’s gotta get out somehow. It’d make the meat stink if we didn’t do this... So? What do you think, Ichika? Blood starts gushing out after you cut off its head and hang it upside down. You keep hanging it upside down until no more blood comes out. That’s it. Simple, right?”

“Totally. Looks super simple... but like, I’m kinda distracted by how a tiny bean sprout like Niku managed to hunt that rabbit. Like, girl, bagging a rabbit in only thirty seconds is crazy fast. Were you a hunter before becoming a slave? Finding rabbits inside a forest is no joke.”

“Eh? It’s really simple. I can smell them.”

“Right, right, you’re a beastkin. I totally get it now. But like... still, hunting with thin arms like yours must be hard as heck.” Ichika was getting caught up in admiring Niku’s skill, but it was her turn to hunt. I wanted to see just how skilled she was, so I left the bleeding rabbit to Niku and followed after Ichika. Rokuko waved goodbye as I left.

Ichika advanced through the forest, brushing aside branches and occasionally pausing to listen. After about five minutes, she suddenly flipped her blade around in her hand and slid the blade across the ground in a fast backhanded swipe.

“Yo, how’s this? Oh, woah, it’s bleeding like crazy.” Ichika lifted up the headless rabbit by its feet. *Looks like she killed it with one smooth blow. Just what I’d expect from a former C-Rank adventurer.*

“Yep, you’re pretty strong. You cut off its head in one slice... I can tell you’re skilled with blades.”

“Yup, you bet. But I used to be a scout, so I’m more used to daggers... well, like, kitchen knives. I can use bows, too, ’cause I gotta hunt birds to eat’m.” *She uses kitchen knives as her main weapon? I dunno if that’s just her being way too proud of loving food or what, but sure. I’ll try making her some when we get back to the dungeon.*

“I can cook too, so yeah. You definitely scored big with me. Didja know I cost twenty golds at first? Like dang, why’d my price drop to fifty silvers just cause I bit one little thing? I dunno, I just don’t know.”

“I remember you mentioning that at the Guild, and I’m pretty sure biting what you did is some pretty solid reasoning for dropping your price that far.” *I still shudder just thinking about it. Sheesh. And whether that guy deserved it or not, a slave harming their master just isn’t something any customer’s gonna be happy about.*

“Y’know, I wonder if goblin meat will taste good if you bleed them first. Lemme tell you, they taste preeeeeetty garbo, so I’m pretty sure it won’t help. But still.”

“You’ve eaten goblins...?”

“Well, see, I tried fighting in the capital’s underground arena to pay back my debt before becoming a slave and all, so... Well, I’ll only tell you this since you’re my master now, but that arena had little shows where fighters had to eat monsters, so yeah. It was like, you fight living monsters with a bunch of dumb rules mixing things up, and it was a literal dog eat dog kinda thing. Eat or die. I’ve eaten every part of a goblin except their bones. Eugh... Goblin balls

tasted like toootal garbo, seriously...” Ichika laughed awkwardly, embarrassed. *There are underground arenas, huh? I’ve been interested in what kinda things people do for fun in this world, but that kind of arena just sounds like some kind of shady black market thing.* We headed back to Niku and Rokuko with the rabbit in tow.

“Ah, welcome back, Master.” Niku was standing where I had left her, with the rabbit still in hand... plus five goblin corpses scattered around her. All five of them had their heads cut clean off. By the way, Rokuko’s head was covered with red blood. For a second I thought for sure she had been hurt really badly, but apparently it was all goblin blood that had sprayed onto her. I looked around and, piecing all the clues together, concluded that the goblins had been drawn to Niku by the smell of the rabbit blood and attacked her thinking she was just a little girl, only to be completely slaughtered in return...

“Aaah, yeah, I knew it. I definitely felt that there were some goblins sneaking around. Well, whatevs. Not like Niku would’ve had any problems taking them down.” Ichika said that as if it were obvious that goblins had been sneaking around, but I hadn’t noticed them at all.

“Keima, cast {Purification}, pleaaase.”

“Right... here.” I cast {Purification} on Rokuko. A big bubble engulfed her and cleaned off all the blood. *But why was Rokuko covered in blood and not Niku? She’s completely clean.*

“Oooh, looks like you killed’m all at once, huh? How’d you do that, Niku?”

“They were surrounding me, so I held the rabbit in one hand, and used my other hand to, um, spin around.” Niku reenacted what she did by holding the rabbit in one hand and spinning around on her tippy-toes like a ballerina while holding her Golem Blade out. The blade was about on the same level as a goblin neck. She was wearing her Wearable Golem, but I never taught it any moves like that. *Huh... I guess she’s using her golem to strengthen her movements, instead of just making it do them for her.*

“That’s not the kinda move any old F-Rank adventurer can pull off. What kinda training do you do?”

“...None?”

“By the way, I did this to defend myself!” Rokuko crouched into a small ball by Niku’s feet to get out of her way and covered her head with her hands so poorly it was a little sad. *Ah. That’s why she got so much blood onto her. And it looks like Niku has some blood on her feet, too. Whoops.* I went ahead and cast {Purification} on her as well. It must have tickled, since her tail wagged like crazy. *Anyway, it looks like we’ve finished the goblin extermination quest before the rabbit hunting quest. Nice.* I cut off the goblins’ right ears to show to the Guild later.

“Alright, I’ll leave hunting the rest of the rabbits to you two. Thanks.”

“Oh? You’re not gonna come with, Master?”

“...I’m not that good with a blade. The customer wants top-quality meat, so it’ll be better for me to just stay here and focus on bleeding the rabbits. Rokuko’s out of the question, obviously.”

“Really now? You seem pretty well-trained, though I’m just guessing from how you walk and stuff.” *Ah, yeah, that’s my golem clothes helping out. Hm? I’m not really helping with these quests? Well, let me tell you, the best kind of food is the kind you don’t have to work for! Ahaha... Well, I guess bleeding rabbits technically counts as work.*

“Hey, Keima. Do you want me to hold a rabbit too?”

“...Sure. We’ll take shifts.”

Ichika’s Perspective

“I smell meat.” The moment Niku found a rabbit, its head was sent flying off the very next second. Niku was hunting so effectively that even Ichika, a former C-Rank adventurer, was struggling to keep up.

“...Wait a sec, Niku. Is that maybe a Magic Blade?”

“I don’t know. Master gave it to me.” She flicked her sword, causing the blood on its blade to cleanly fly off without any need for {Purification}. That was proof of both the sword’s high quality and of Niku’s skill with blades. She immediately returned to hunting, clean sword at the ready. Ichika was holding the rabbits that Niku had hunted. Between the two of them, Niku was more skilled at

finding rabbits. Ichika knew from the fact that Niku could sniff out rabbits despite the thick smell of blood in the air that her partner wasn't relying on a skill to manage. It was raw talent.

"Y'know, Niku, you sure know a lot about hunting and stuff for a niku."

"A niku? What do you mean?"

"Eh? Well, I mean... Your name's Niku. That means you're a slave all about nighttime servicing, yeah?"

"Um, I do sleep with Master every night as his dakimakura, but...?"

"No, no, no. Y'see, here's what the name 'Niku' actually means." Ichika told Niku what her name meant. After a brief pause, Niku nodded to herself while digesting the significance behind her name. She then found a new rabbit and sliced its head off on the spot. More meat for the pile.

"Ichika. Thank you very much. For the first time in my life, I know what my name means."

"Eh? But um, don't you have like, a real name?"

"No. I don't remember anything from when I was little." Ichika swallowed the urge to make a joke about how Niku was still a tiny little girl.

"I want to know more about nighttime servicing. Would you please teach me, Ichika?"

"Oh yeah, for sure. You can count on me. I'll teach you all sorts of special techniques." Suddenly, Ichika remembered something important. Beastkin had a deep, innate instinct to greatly value the names given to them by their parents. A beastkin she had been in a party with in the past told her such. He himself had been given a name taken from a past Hero, and he took such pride in it that he spent each day working as hard as he could. Beastkin are individuals that hold pride in their name and try to live a life that won't bring shame to it. Even those who fall into slavery and are forced to abandon their name will still live true to it. They may pretend to abandon it, but they never truly do.

Ichika was sure that even slaves born into slavery still received a proper name from their parents. And even those who never got one would still name

themselves on their own after getting old enough. If their slavers forcibly gave them a name they didn't like, they could just think up a new one for themselves. And yet, Niku seemed to be quite fond of her name. She was smiling slightly to herself as she chopped off the head of the sixth and final rabbit. Perhaps she was happy to have finally found meaning in her life. A reason for existing. Niku tended to be expressionless, so that slight smile was a clear sign of her being extremely pleased.

"A young girl like her, getting serious about living as a niku, huh? I've got a baaad feeling about this..."

"Hm? Did you call me, Ichika?"

"Nope, nope. Not at all."

Keima's Perspective

I hope we can just leave these goblins lying around here... We're not in the fields, but yeah. Should I throw their corpses into the forest? My thoughts were interrupted by Niku and Ichika exiting the forest, headless rabbits in hand. *That was fast.*

"Master, I brought back the meat." Niku was smiling a little, maybe due to her innate dog girl instincts being stimulated by all the hunting. *She seems satisfied.* But either way, we all bled rabbits together for a while and threw them into a sack after they ran out of blood.

"Oh, right. Wanna take the magic stones out of the goblins? I mean, it's prolly not worth it... like at all... but they're a nice source of extra cash for F-Ranks like us."

"Goblins have magic stones?" According to Niku, goblins had magic stones buried within their brains. I asked her to dig one out, just to see how it was done. She split open a goblin's skull with my sword and stirred its brains up... Yuck. Eventually, she dug a small magic stone (even smaller than the ones I could buy for 10 DP) out of the gray mess. *I guess about five of those would be as big as a single 10 DP stone?*

"They're called monsters cause they have magic stones in them, y'know.

Sometimes they'll be super tiny, but any monster's gonna have a magic stone somewhere inside their body, always. If rabbits had magic stones inside them, people would start calling them monsters on the spot. Mmm... This stone's probably worth about a single copper, yeah." It would just be a waste of time to dig out magic stones worth one copper when five goblin ears together would equal thirty coppers. Using that time to hunt more goblins would be more efficient. *I'll just abandon these corpses here. Don't wanna waste too much time.* I took the trash magic stone from Ichika just in case I wanted to try making a golem with it or something later.

After getting back to town, we immediately took the rabbits to the kebab guy from last time.

"Heya. Didja hunt some more rabbits for me?"

"Yep, here they are. Take a look." I took out the headless rabbits so he could estimate their value. Of course, they all scored top marks and thus earned us twelve coppers each. Six rabbits, so seventy-two coppers in total. The Guild handled the payment, so the kebab guy didn't give us that money himself, though. Mixed in with the goblin quest reward, we had earned one silver and two coppers. *Hell yeah, a whole silver. We're in the big leagues now.*

"Good work. And... I'm guessing those two girls are new companions of yours?"

"Yep. That one's just a slave, though. And... looks like she thinks your kebabs smell pretty good."

"The name's Ichika, my man. And you bet I think these kebabs smell good! Mmm, yum. I wanna eat one of these kebabs. Would you buy one for me, Maaaster?"

"Ahaha! You don't wanna let her down, do you? I'll give you a little treat if you buy now."

"...Alright, I'll have four."

"You got it!" I handed over twenty coppers and took the five kebabs he held out. Seemed like his treat was the extra kebab. I gave two to Ichika and one

each to Niku and Rokuko.

“But you know, you sure are surrounded by a bunch of hotties, aren’t you? Even the little girl’s gonna grow up to be a nice woman, judging by how fast she’s eating that kebab.”

“Hahaha. They’re all pretty into food, yeah. They can be a real handful sometimes.”

“Heh, then seems like it’d be smart for you to drop by my stand pretty often. Oh, right. The meat you brought me last time tasted a lot better than most rabbit meat usually does. People loved it. I’d appreciate it if you brought me some rabbit meat pretty regularly.”

“Mmm, I dunno, I can’t just keep hunting rabbits forever... I did rank up earlier.”

“Oooh, congratulations. You don’t have to hunt rabbits, then. Boars, rabbits, whatever has good meat. You bring it to me and I’ll buy it. I’m actually a butcher, y’see. This stand is just a side job. I’ll take care of any meat you bring me.”

“Alright. Luckily, we just killed some goblins.”

“Hahaha! Goblins taste bad no matter what you do with their meat. Boiling, cooking over a flame... nope. Nothing works.” *Yeeeah. Figures.*

“So, would you mind telling me what’s your secret to making the meat taste so good? I’ll pay you twenty silvers if you tell me.”

“Woah, for real? That’s like, a ton. Go ahead and tell’m, boss man. We’ll get to eat lots of good meat whenever we want that way.” If Ichika thought it was a good deal, it probably was. Twenty silvers seemed pretty good, so I decided to tell him.

“Alright, I’ll tell you for those twenty silvers. See, there’s this thing called ‘bleeding the meat,’ and...” I explained how bleeding meat worked to the stand keeper, but he just shook his head sadly and said that would be too dangerous for rookies. *Makes sense. Rokuko and Niku ended up surrounded by goblins, after all. If Niku hadn’t been there, those goblins would definitely be having some adult fun with Rokuko right about now... wait, now that I think about it,*

wouldn't Rokuko actually be happy about that? I mean, we're talking about goblins here. But either way, the guy was nice enough to still pay me the twenty silvers. The Guild would be handing us that money as well. They would even treat the whole exchange as a special quest. *I really appreciate that.*

We went to the Guild, reported our completed quests, got the money, and went to an inn for the night. They paid the twenty silvers with two big silver coins, each worth ten silvers. It was quite a sizable chunk of change for newbie adventurers like us.

In any case, our inn was the Sleeping Songbird Inn, the same one I stayed at last time. To save money, we got one room for all four of us... *Wait, hold on. I'm a guy, y'know? I'm the only guy here. Can we at least get two rooms?*

"You're my partner, Keima. It's definitely important for us to sleep in the same room."

"I'm your dakimakura, Master. I'll sleep together with you."

"I don't wanna be all on my own, so like, I'm just gonna watch and take notes." *Take notes? Please. I'm not gonna do anything funny.* Of course, I bought a normal meal for everyone. No slave meals. The one I bought last time was the only one I ever planned on buying. Ichika grinned as she looked at the food in front of her.

"Yup, looks like you really are gonna feed me well. I'm like, super duper happy."

"Food's really important to you, isn't it? I know how you feel. I want all the people who work for me to feel good about their jobs."

"Oooh, you want us to feel good, huh? Y'know, the moment I saw how healthy Niku looked, I knew you were a major score. So yeah. I'm not gonna complain about anything as long as you keep feeding me this well, 'kay?" Seemed like she was thinking of me as a score as well. She gulped down the vegetable soup and wiped up the remaining drops with her bread, leaving nothing behind. *She's not wasting anything.* She didn't even waste time, saying "Hold up, lemme test this for poison," and starting to eat before me. "Ummm, I don't think this tastes very good. Ichika, you can have my share."

“Oh? For real? I knew I could count on you, my queen Rokuko! I’ll follow you for the rest of my life!” Rokuko, however, didn’t eat her vegetable soup. She must’ve gotten picky thanks to how good melon rolls taste. In my opinion, the vegetable flavoring in the soup tasted pretty nice. Though it wasn’t a big deal since Dungeon Cores didn’t need to eat anyway. *Also, Ichika, don’t swear to follow someone for the rest of your life over a bowl of soup. Remember, I’ve got a contract making me your master, alright?* “Thankie thankiiie. Sooo, what’re we gonna do now? Just sleep?”

“Yeah, that sounds good to me. You can use the bed if you want, Ichika.” Ichika had asked that after getting onto all fours while looking up at me sensually and emphasizing her sizable cleavage, but I ignored her.

“Wha?” Ichika tilted her head, as if not understanding what I meant. *Ah, right. There’s only one bed, so she doesn’t know where Rokuko and I will sleep if she gets the bed.* I took my [Futon] out of {Storage} and spread it out onto the floor.

“I’m gonna be sleeping on this. Rokuko, spread out yours too.”

“Okaaay. Ahaha, sleeping outside feels really exciting, doesn’t it!” Rokuko took out her [Futon] from {Storage} and spread it out as well. Niku was my dakimakura, so she didn’t need one. Only after both of our futons were ready did the stunned Ichika finally snap out of her shock.

“Hey, hold up! What’s with those crazy good-looking beds?! That’s the kinda thing super expensive hotels use! Aaah, I’m hella surprised here, I can’t believe you two have beds this good... and like, what? You two can use {Storage} too? Weren’t the scrolls super expensive?”

“Just like you’re dead serious about food, I’m dead serious about sleep. Okay...? Listen up — whatever you do, don’t interrupt my sleep. I’ll say it again. No matter what. Do not. Interrupt. *My sleep.*” I emphasized “sleep” when I said it. Ichika let out an “aaah” of understanding.

“Dude, I hella get what you’re saying, for real. I’ll never wake you up unless junk gets really serious... I swear upon my breakfast, boss man.” Now that was a vow I could trust. I nodded in satisfaction.

Day 39

“We actually did just sleep... What the heck...?” Ichika left the hotel while murmuring some nonsense to herself. I had gotten used to casting {Purification} after staying overnight at inns, so I cast it before we left. This time, I intentionally cleaned the entire room. *Hey! I know what you’re thinking, but no, that wasn’t an accident! I was planning on cleaning the whole room from the start! Aaah... But sheesh, my legs still hurt. Muscle pain is no joke. This suuucks. I only got to sleep for nine hooours. I should’ve been more careful, accidentally casting {Purification} on the whole room really tired me oooout. Eh... I’ll stop talking to myself now. I’ve got work to do... Actually, wait, I don’t. I bought the slave I wanted to, so yeah, I’m just gonna head home now.*

“Wha? We’re not gonna go to the Guild? But we’ll miss out on all the juicy quests.”

“I’m not really interested in becoming an adventurer for real, so that’s fine. Though it’d be pretty useful to be a high enough rank to enter dungeons.”

“You’ll def want to get up to C-Rank, then. Most dungeons are locked by rank, so yeah, that’s like the bare minimum you wanna be.” The Guild locked dungeons by ranks, or in other words, required adventurers to be a certain rank before allowing them to enter certain dungeons. Well, the low-ranked adventurers could still go into the dungeon on their own and die if they wanted to, but the Guild wouldn’t give them detailed information on the dungeon or anything like that. Things got more serious when it came to dungeons managed by the Guild, however. Adventurers that went in without being a high enough rank might even be viewed as poachers. They’d have their loot confiscated after emerging from the dungeon, plus a fine.

“Hey, do you know about the imperial capital’s [Ivory Labyrinth]?”

“There’s not an adventurer who doesn’t, my dude. It’s a dungeon in the middle of the capital that C-Ranks and above can get into. I’m pretty sure it has a lotta unrestricted dungeons around it, but most of’m are under the Guild’s control.”

“Wow. My sister’s really doing well, huh?”

“Yep.” To quote Haku’s book *Intro to Dungeonology*: “Dungeons are natural phenomena and grow by the day. Once they grow large enough, new dungeons begin to form around them as if they are creating children.” Those new dungeons were in fact branch dungeons with Dummy Cores like the one Haku made for our Dungeon Battle. The book also said: “Sometimes, a dungeon will rapidly grow, or perhaps rapidly shrink in size. This is known as a Paradigm Shift.” Beside that section was a small note written in clean letters, stating that “This is referring to Dungeon Battles.”

“I wanna go hang out at the [Ivory Labyrinth] sooner or later, so I guess I should at least try to get up to C-Rank.”

“Oh wow, ‘hang out,’ huh? Look at Mister Confidence over here. Y’know... Back when I was an adventurer, I think we had gotten down to floor fifty-two. I wonder if they’ve gotten any further since then?” *The [Ivory Labyrinth] apparently has over 150 floors, so they’re about thirty percent deep into it at best... wait, hold up. People have been challenging that dungeon since the imperial capital itself was founded. How many friggin’ years did it take to get to floor fifty-two? That dungeon must be just unfairly hard, wow.*

“So, where we going?”

“Our base is outside of town. We’re heading there.”

“...Mmm, and you don’t mean it’s in the slums, right? No need for an inn if it were. Must be pretty far away then, huh?”

“Yeah, basically. It’s right by a mountain. It’ll take us about half a day to get there if we run.”

“Yeah? You might wanna drop by the Guild anyway just to tell them what’s up. They prolly won’t care too much about what a bunch of F-Ranks are doing, but yeah.” *Huh. I never thought about it like that. I guess communication and such with the Guild is important even for F-Ranks. Last time I was in a hurry to get back so I just left on the spot, but the situation now isn’t that urgent. Dropping by the Guild should be fine.*

“Alright, cool. Thanks for telling me that, it’s a big help. I’m kinda not used to how things work around here.”

“Okie dokie, I’ll tell you what’s up if I ever notice you about to make a fool of yourself, boss man.” *Yeah, I knew having an actually smart partner with a lot of life experience would be a huge help. Rokuko’s a Dungeon Core and basically doesn’t know anything about humans. Niku was raised a slave and never taught much about the world. Haku... knows a fair amount about humans, but she’s not someone I can just casually ring up and ask for advice. I mean, let’s be real. That woman’s spooky.*

“So, what’re you gonna do?”

“...Good question.” *She said she should be putting out the [Ordinary Cave] exploration quest again, so I might as well look for it.* And so, we headed to the Guild.

We arrived at the Guild and saw that the morning train... I mean, the morning quest board rush was in full effect. It was ridiculously crowded. *Maybe we should leave and come back later?*

“Oh wow, there’s a lot of humans here. These are all adventurers?”

“Yeah, probably.”

“Master. Do you want me to get the quest for you?” *Uhhh, I think I’ll just have her look for the [Ordinary Cave] quest. I don’t care about any of the other ones.*

“Alright, go check the board out. If you see the quest, take it and bring it back to me.”

“Understood!” Niku slid into the throng of people. Ten seconds later, she came back. In her hand was the quest slip for the [Ordinary Cave] quest. Fantastic. Seemed like it had just been put out on the day we went. *Great timing. Our dungeon may be buff as hell now, but I don’t want any adventurers dropping by before I’ve finished building the inn.* The requirements were two or more F-Rank adventurers and the reward was one silver. *That’s probably the same details as last time, I guess?*

“Oooh. Good job, Niku.” I rubbed Niku’s head, causing her tail to wag.

“Hey, let me see that too. Wow... The reward is a whole silver coin. Is that a lot?”

“Well, since it’ll take two F-Rank adventurers over a day to complete, nah, not really.”

“Yuppers. This quest is small-time even for small-time F-Ranks.” *Well, we’re still gonna take it.* Niku and I were both F-Rank adventurers, so we met the requirements. I took the quest slip and lined up in front of the receptionist.

“You know, I really think they could up that reward a little...” Rokuko was grumbling to herself. *Yeah, figures. She must feel like the Guild is saying she herself isn’t worth much. But I wish she would be more secretive in public like this. She’s lucky that this time it just sounds like she wants more money for the quest.*

My turn finally came and I gave the quest to the same receptionist as always. *This girl’s always working, huh?*

“...Well, the recent report stated that all was normal, so I imagine you won’t find anything out of the ordinary. But if you do, remember to tell us. And be careful not to harm the Dungeon Core under any circumstances. Dungeon Cores are very valuable sources of information for dungeonology, and this one is under our direct protection. And... a certain A-Rank adventurer has stated that they will personally hunt down and eliminate anyone who harms this Dungeon Core in particular.” *Ah, I think I know who you’re talking about there. She must be using her status as an A-Rank adventurer to threaten anyone who might harm Rokuko.*

The time limit for the quest was one week. That was plenty of time to finish the inn and come back to town. Even if I didn’t finish the inn on time, I could just say that everything was as expected. The lie detector wouldn’t register that as a lie, since I did indeed expect to see the expanded dungeon and the under construction inn... maybe. If that got dicey, I’d just improvise.

On top of all that, we were made to swear to not harm the Dungeon Core. Seeing Rokuko vow “I won’t harm the Dungeon Core!” with a serious look on her face was bizarre enough that I couldn’t help but laugh. *Anyway, back to the dungeon.* We headed to the west gate.

“Hey, are you like, totally sure we’re packing enough for a mountain trip? I mean, I know you have {Storage}, but still.”

“I don’t really wanna use that too much in public, so yeah, I guess preparing a little better would be smart.” I handed over two silvers to Ichika.

“Could you buy enough stuff for us with this?”

“For four people? Mmm, for sure, if three days of food max is enough.”

“Yeah, it is. We can stock up at our base, so that’ll be fine. I’ll be waiting for you at the central park, napping. Oh yeah, and take Niku with you.”

“Roger that. Cya later, boss man. Can I buy some snacks while I’m at it?”

“...Sure, but at least tell me everything you bought and how much it cost, alright?”

“You got it♪!” *I’ve got a bad feeling about this. But she’s a former C-Rank adventurer, so I’ll trust her with this.*

“What do you wanna do, Rokuko? You can go shopping with Ichika if you want.”

“Mmm... I’ll be nice and take a nap with you, Keima.” *Sweet. But I dunno know if there’s any benches that could fit two people on them.*

* * *

“This meat sandwich is super good. Mmm, the fresh vegetable taste is like, mixing with the meat’s fat and making an explosion of flavor! Some kinda genius cook must have made this! It even feels good to bite down on. And this subtle flavoring... it’s cheese! This thing’s got cheese in it! Holy cow, talk about tasty. This is what I’m talking about... Yum!” The moment I woke up, my appetite was hit by a terrorist attack in the form of Ichika’s raving. *Ngh, now I’m hungry.*

“Doooon’t worry, I got some for everyone else too, Master! Let’s all eat, my dudes!” I glanced around and realized that Rokuko and Niku were each holding a sandwich as well. Ichika herself, however, was biting into her second sandwich. *Crafty girl.* I took a look at what Ichika had bought... while eating my sandwich.

Let’s see here. Flint, tents, food, water flasks, blankets, food, knives, food, water flasks, food... Hey, what’s with all the food?! “What’re you getting so

worked up about? We gotta bring lots of food if we don't wanna go hungry, dude." We didn't need any changes of clothes thanks to {Purification}, it was warm enough that we didn't need to worry too much about the cold, and a Survival Magic spell called {Heat} would boil water for us. If we wanted actual fire, we'd just need to use flint or the magical skill {Ignition}. In other words, thanks to Survival Magic, the main thing we needed to survive in the mountains was food. Plus a knife that would help with a ton of random things, and blankets to sleep on when camping outside. *But y'know... These blankets are really white and fluffy. I'm pretty sure these are made out of rabbit pelts. We're not gonna get cursed by anything, right?*

"I also got this bag we can put a ton of junk into. Prolly won't need it, though, since you guys have {Storage}..."

"So, how much did everything cost?"

"Get this! These crazy-good sandwiches only cost eight coppers each! What a total steal!"

"That's not what I'm talking about. I meant everything, not all the sandwiches."

"Well, obviously I spent all the money you gave me. Aaah, I'm so glad I bought these sandwiches!" She beamed, making it clear she wanted me to praise her for her efforts. *Well, honestly, I did only give her two silvers. That's basically asking her to buy three days worth of food and supplies for four people with only twenty-thousand yen. Not any easy feat. In which case, yeah, she did some impressive work.*

"And Niku actually helped me a ton, y'know? A lot of the shopkeeps cut their prices for her. No way could I have paid for these sweet sandwiches without her, for real. Oooh, and it sure was lucky that the sandwich stand was run by a guy. I got him to sell me the sandwiches at half the price since he stared at my tits like an idiot♪" *Is that even legal?*

"Guess children and attractive people just have it easy sometimes, huh? Well, still, you actually did a good job. You too, Niku."

"Oooh, calling me attractive, are you? Flattery won't get you anything from me, 'kay? 'Cause you already got my everything when you bought me." *Yeah...*

I'll treat them to some melon rolls and hamburgers or whatever when we get back to the [Ordinary Cave].

"Hold on, Keima. What about me? I took a nap with you, remember?"

"Yeah yeah. Thanks, Rokuko. I'll give you a headpat."

"Eheheeeh..." *I know I'm the one who offered to pat your head, but really? Are you really okay with this, Rokuko?*

And so, with our preparations complete, we headed to Tsia Mountain. The guard didn't suspect anything. He let us through for free after seeing our quest slip and that was that. We were outside. *Y'know, I feel like I haven't been doing anything like an actual Dungeon Master. I'm pretty sure that it's not a Dungeon Master's job to go to human settlements and do adventurer stuff or whatever. I'm starting to feel nostalgic for when I first got here. I slept all day inside the Core with bandits outside... The good ol' days.*

After we got some distance away from the town, I put all the stuff Ichika bought into {Storage} and started running down the mountain road carrying basically nothing. Ichika was the only one among us without a Wearable Golem helping her out, but as expected of a former C-Rank adventurer, she kept up just fine. The sun started to set on the way there. Ichika gave some good advice, suggesting that we start setting up camp, but I ignored her and kept racing towards the evening mountain. By the time we reached the [Ordinary Cave], the sun had completely set.

"Niku, how long was that?!"

"Eh?! How long did it take us to get here?! U-Um... Six hours and thirty-two minutes, Master!" Niku took out her Golem Watch and gave a proper answer. I... I was just making a joke, but she took it seriously. *And wait, she checked the time before we left?*

"Aaah, dang. Cutting out the breaks we took, it seriously takes six hours to go back and forth. What a waste of time. If only we had bikes... Actually, I guess bikes wouldn't be too good on mountain roads." *Wait... I don't need to worry about using bikes at all. Couldn't I just have golems carry us?* Suddenly, my thoughts were interrupted by Ichika complaining.

“Maaaasteeeeeer. I’m super hungry. Can we, like, start setting up camp?” *Oh, whoops. I gotta let her inside before I start thinking about that kinda thing. And now that I think about it, I never even told Ichika where we were going.*

“Nah, we don’t need to set up camp. We’re here.”

“...This is your base, Master? I totally though you were talking about a whole village or something...” I had been planning on explaining things once we reached the dungeon, but now that we were there, I wasn’t sure what exactly to say.

“Um, this actually is our base.”

“This is a cave, dude.” Rokuko just told the truth straight up. Ichika replied with her straight up feelings. *Yeah, can’t blame her for thinking that.*

“Let’s just go inside.” Tired as I was from running for so long, I wanted to sleep as soon as possible. We entered the cave and soon the rocky floors turned into paved stone passageways with [Dungeon Lighting Torches (50 DP)] casting bright, flickering lights along the path. As an aside, these [Dungeon Lighting Torches] would never ever go out as long as you didn’t move them from their initial position. They were probably using mana as fuel or something.

“Woah woah woah! Hold up! This is totally a dungeon, isn’t it?!”

“This is a dungeon.”

“What happened to this being your base?!”

“Um, it’s also our base?”

“This is a freakin’ DUNGEON!”

“Yeah, it is a dungeon. Oh, look out. There’s a pitfall right over there.”

“Holy CRAP there is! What the heck dude?! This is freakin’ dangerous!” Ichika dodged the pitfall with an exaggerated leap.

“Haaah, holy cow. I used to be a scout and I still didn’t notice that pitfall... Wow, Rokuko. You sure aren’t phased by these pitfalls. Aren’t you like, G-Rank?”

“Well, it’s me we’re talking about.”

“That’s some hella confidence.” Rokuko gave a smug smirk. *Yep. It’s you. The dungeon itself.*

“Oh, wait a sec. This is the [Ordinary Cave], isn’t it? I asked the Guild about it... but this is totally not like what they told me. It should be super small with nothing in it...”

“That’s because the Guild has outdated info. They were talking about the [Ordinary Cave] from a month ago.”

“Ohhh, which means... things changed since then. This dungeon prolly had a Paradigm Shift. We gotta tell the Guild about this.” A Paradigm Shift was a dungeon rapidly growing or shrinking in size, as discussed in *Intro to Dungeonology*. *Though that’s just fake information meant to disguise the effects of Dungeon Battles.*

“You sure know a lot, huh?”

“Well, knowledge is power, my dude. I heard about it from a guy I knew who was studying Dungeonology.”

“You’re definitely gonna be a big help to us.”

“Leave everything to me! Though... Er, Master? Didn’t you buy me for like, chores and stuff? Is one of those chores gonna be asking me to be a meat shield while exploring this dungeon?” Ichika, watching Rokuko and Niku advance ahead of her, wasn’t sure what she should be doing.

“Nope. I’m gonna have you work in the inn, not help out the adventurers... Oh, don’t touch that. Spears shoot out of it.”

“GAAH! H-Holy freakin’ cow! Ah... W-Wait up, Master! I guess this dungeon really is your base.... No way would you be moving this fast if you weren’t used to the place.”

“Master doesn’t lie.” Niku was speedily advancing through the dungeon right in front of Ichika. She too had perfectly memorized the location of each trap.

...Suddenly, it hit me that I could probably just ask Rokuko to withdraw us into the Master Room. *Huh. I guess all this exercise has tired my brain out a little bit.*

“Hey, Rokuko. You can withdraw us, can’t you? Sweet, thanks. Take us away

to the Master Room.”

“Eh? Oh, ah, that’s right. We don’t need to go all the way to the Core Room. I’ll just withdraw us here.”

“Hm? Whaddya mean, withdraw us?” My vision was engulfed by a bright light the moment Ichika asked that. My vision blurred and I felt a little floaty. Before long, I was in a familiar old white room. The Master Room. Our base within Rokuko’s true body.

“Aaah, I’m so tired. Hey, Keima. I’m going to just go ahead and sleep right now.” I turned just in time to see Rokuko plopping down onto her [Futon]. *Wait, no, that’s mine. What gives? She has her own futon.*

“Wh-Wh-What the heck? Where are we? Did we step on a teleportation trap or something?”

“...Oh, did I not tell you about this already? I’m this dungeon’s Core.”

“Hold up hold up, I’m not keeping up with this. You’re a Dungeon Core? You’re not a human, Rokuko?” Ichika was rubbing her temples.

“Does this mean... Rokuko is a human-type boss monster Dungeon Core? I’ve never heard about something like that... Wait, have I...?” It looked she was thinking about this as hard as she could, using all the knowledge she had. Unfortunately, the knowledge she had was intentionally spread misinformation, so she was basically doomed. I decided to call out to her and help her along.

“Hey, Ichika.”

“AAAH! Master, are you... a Demon King?!” *Where did that come from?*

“And Rokuko is a boss monster Dungeon Core, a human-type one. If you’re a Demon King, everything makes sense.” In truth, Ichika basically had the right idea. According to Haku, the Demon Kings of this world are all Dungeon Cores belonging to the Demon King Faction (one of many Dungeon Core factions), with a Great Demon King on top ruling over lesser Demon Kings who in turn ruled over the rest of the Dungeon Cores belonging to the faction. In other words, since I had gained control over Rokuko the Dungeon Core, I was basically a Demon King... maybe. That would make Haku the Great Demon King. Metaphorically. She wasn’t really the Great Demon King.

By the way, Dungeon Masters don't exist in Dungeonology. Instead, there are things known as Dungeon Bosses. Sometimes it was a strong summoned monster, sometimes it was the Core itself — Rokuko was a human-type Core, but apparently there were many other types, including dragon-types. It would be rational to call Rokuko the Dungeon Boss from that perspective.

"So. What would you do if I am a Demon King?"

"I'll do anything as long as you feed me the good stuff! Are you planning on destroying Tsia City? Ah, that'd be a waste of food. Let's conquer it instead." In front of me was a woman willing to betray humanity without a second thought in return for good food.

"Nah, I wanna stay on good terms with that city. I don't wanna die, either."

"Huh, 'kay. But think about it for a sec. If you conquered the world, we'd be able to eat as much tasty food as we want. How could we *not* do it? You'll at least give it a shot eventually, right?"

Correction. In front of me was a woman actively attempting to betray humanity and conquer the world for her own benefit.

"Conquer the world... Th-That sounds really nice! Keima! How about we make our ultimate goal world domination?!" There was also a Dungeon Core eager to join in.

"No thanks. Think about what we'll have to do after conquering the world. Ruling involves a lot of management and other tedious things. All I want is to build the dungeon up until I can sleep peacefully. I don't want to push my luck any further than that."

"But you'll do it if you get strong enough, right?"

"I'll get killed if I stand out too much. So, no." *If I stand out, it won't be long before Soldiers of God — Heroes — come for my head. They'll probably have some cheat powers from that god or whatever, so the basic math is that Heroes equal me dying pitifully. I don't wanna stand out. I wanna sleep.*

"I'll tell you what's really going on here. Don't tell this to anyone else, but I'm the Dungeon Master of this place."

“Dungeon Master?” *Oh, right. Haku’s misinformation campaign is hiding the fact that the term Dungeon Master even exists.*

“This dungeon is under my control. In other words, this dungeon and everything in it belongs to me.”

“Oooh... You’re not a human either, Master?”

“No, I’m a human. But I wasn’t raised here, so I don’t know much about this world. Which is why...”

“You went and bought me.” *That’s it.*

“Well, anyway. Getting back here really tired me out, so I’m just gonna go to sleep now.” I heard a stomach growl loudly right after I said that. It wasn’t mine. It was Ichika’s.

“...Whoops, almost forgot. Let’s eat.”

“Oooh, finally! Wait... This is just an empty room, yeah? Where’s the kitchen?”

“Heh, perfect timing. I’ll show you what my true power is! HAAAAAH!” I pretended to gather power in my fist and bought a [Roll Set (5 DP)]. Now that our dungeon was earning 100 DP a day, money was no longer an object. Er, I mean, dungeon points were no longer an object. Anyway. I waved the [Roll Set (5 DP)] around, flaunting it.

“What the heck...? Is that... bread?”

“Heh heh heh. Niku, my friend. Go ahead and feed her.”

“Understood!” Niku ripped the plastic off a curry roll, freeing it. The distinctive, spicy scent of the curry roll and the sweet scent of cooked oil filled the air, stirring my hunger.

“What the?! I-I can’t stop drooling... Wh-What kind of bread is th—mgh?!”

“It’s a [Curry Roll]. It’s a little spicy, but it tastes really good.” Niku shoved the curry roll into Ichika’s mouth as she flailed a little violently.

“Nooo, th-this... Ammn, nom... fuaaah! O-Oh no, th-this scent... is making my brain tingleee...!”

“Don’t hold back. Eat as much as you want. This is Master’s gift to you, remember?”

“Nmm, mggh, nom... nnn, aaah! Sh-Sho goood! Thish tashtesh, sho amashiiing...!” Perhaps due to the spiciness or perhaps due to the tasty flavor, Ichika smiled blissfully with teary eyes. For some reason, I was starting to feel kinda weird about the whole situation.


NOM
CRUNCHY
CRISPY

“I was born to meet this food... For suuure...♪”

“It tasted good, didn’t it? Listen to me. If you serve Master well, he’ll let you eat a lot of food just as good as this.”

“I-I’ll... I-I will... I’ll do anything Master says, anythiiing... So please, moooore!”

“Do you want to give her another one, Master?” Seemed like she had already eaten the whole thing. *I-I knew she’d be happy with the food, but I definitely didn’t expect her to go this crazy over it. I’m honestly pretty weirded out.*

“...I’ve got other kinds of food, y’know? Bread rolls aren’t the only things I have.”

“Aaah... This just isn’t fair... Now that I’ve tasted something this good, normal things just won’t satisfy me...”

“You’re talking about food, right?! The rolls?!”

“Ichika, I’ll split my hamburger with you, okay? I like hamburgers a lot.”

“Reaaaally? Aaah, I feel like I’m gonna go crazyyy... Eheheh...” *Am I the only one who thinks she’s already gone completely crazy?* I glanced at Rokuko and saw that she was eating a melon roll while ignoring us.

“...I-I’m not giving her any of mine.” *Ah, yeah.*

Day 40

And so. Tomorrow afternoon, the next day. *Huh? You think I would wake up in the morning? No way. I went back to bed.* I decided to shift gears into making the inn for real. Due to the investigation quest, I had about one week to finish building it. The location I had chosen for it was right next to the cave’s entrance. Before going to bed last night, I had ordered some of the worker golems to dig a big hole in the ground. I had a lot of space set aside for construction; I was building an entire inn, after all. *Ah, Niku. I don’t mind you exercising, but I’m trying to make an inn here. Could you do that somewhere else?*

“Alriiight then... Time to start with the foundation.” I wouldn’t be able to sleep in the inn if the foundations weren’t solid. *I’m basically making my own house here. Let’s take this seriously.*

I took out some stone from {Storage} and set it beside the clay and wood lying around. I had more materials than I could ever use.

“Mass of stone, change your shape and become a servant that obeys my every command — {Create Golem}.” I poured mana into the stone while casting the {Create Golem} chant that I had said countless times during the Dungeon Battle. I didn’t need to chant or anything, but for some reason, I used less mana when chanting and overall it just made the whole process much easier. Though doing the chant was so tedious I forgot to sometimes.

What made {Create Golem} really amazing was that I could morph basically any material into whatever shape I wanted. I could make stuff human-shaped, board-shaped, and so on. My mana would make the material pliable like clay, allowing me to use my hands to physically change its shape directly. I could turn a bunch of copper coins into a copper ingot if I collected enough, but... it’d just be cheaper to buy the ingot directly.

Whatever I made through {Create Golem} did end up becoming a golem, but only in name. It would be a normal object if I didn’t give it any orders. Here, I was pouring the stone into the giant hole and making a single giant stone slab. I didn’t know much about real construction, but I figured that the stone would fulfill the role of concrete well enough. In place of rebar, I just made a pillar-shaped iron golem and jammed it into the stone mixture. Making pillars first and then moving onto walls seemed like the smart thing to do. *I want to make baths too, so I’ll need to think about making a water system. Well, everything’s gonna be a golem, so I can just open up holes later. I might even just make more space for a bathing area and build one from the ground up. I don’t have an exact plan for it, but I’ll be careful building it so it doesn’t collapse or anything.*

After that, I started building flat board-shaped Wooden Golems and connecting them with the assistance of Clay Golems. I was building the inn kind of like how you would make a gingerbread house. Though, since materials morphed by {Create Golem} can fuse together with a mere touch, I didn’t need any nails or anything to combine them. Plus, since they fused entirely, the resulting structure was quite sturdy. Though just to be safe, I made some golems into the shape of nails and hammered them in just for appearances.

After working for a while and getting most of the outer walls set up, Ichika

came sleepily walking out of the cave.

“Fuaaah... What’s up, my duuude?”

“Yo. Morning.” *Hey, wait a second. Did she sleep better than me? What’s up with that?*

* * *

I ignored Ichika screaming about how unnatural my {Create Golem} was and just focused on building.

“...But uh, dude, I didn’t see anything like this when we got here? Were you like, hiding it from me or something?”

“Nah, I started building it today.”

“...Dungeon Masters or whatever are builders, too...?” *Well, the menu powers we Dungeon Masters have don’t include construc—Oh wait, there’s a [House (50,000~ DP)] in the DP Catalog. Seriously? That exists?* There was probably an [Inn] I could buy hidden away within the catalog, waiting for me to fulfill some requirements to unlock it. Unfortunately, my pondering was interrupted after I noticed I was getting close to running out of wood.

“Heeey, Niku. C’mere for a second.” I called over Niku, who had been swinging her Golem Knife around and practicing magic.

“Understood!”

“Niku. I’m about to run out of wood, so would you mind chopping up some fresh logs for me?”

“Right away.” Niku nodded and trotted off to the woods near the cave.

“Hold up, Master. How’s she gonna cut down a tree? I don’t see an axe or anything near here.” I silently pointed behind Ichika. She turned around and saw Niku brandishing her knife at a tree with a trunk about thirty centimeters thick. She pushed the blade against it and started cutting right through the tree as a loud screeching sound filled the air, much like a chainsaw. She gave it two chops after that, and on the third chop cut in deep enough for the tree to fall over. After that, the golems just carried the log to me.

“Holy cheeseballs... I’ve never heard of using Magic Blades to cut down

trees.”

“Convenient, huh?”

“I-I mean, I guess... But it’s just wrong. Magic Blades are too good for that... Don’t blame me if it breaks, ’kay?”

“Ah, yeah, a few of them actually did break. Now that she’s used to cutting trees that doesn’t happen anymore, though.”

“For real?! Holy cow, what a waste!”

That said, Golem Blades are kind of like (fake) Magic Blades. They aren’t the real thing, so to speak. Their only function was vibrating and sharpening a little. They were nothing compared to, say, the real Magic Blade (Spear) that Chloe had used in the Dungeon Battle. Golem Blades couldn’t cast spells with just a keyword. However, they were super cheap and didn’t take much material to make. I could repair them for free if they broke, too. And I would never run out of the material to make them, either. Even if the blade snapped in half, it’d only take about ten seconds to put it back together.

“Wait a sec. How many of those Magic Blades do you have?”

“Niku and I have the only full-on metal versions. I think I have around... ten weaker ones made from stone?”

“That freakin’ many?! Do you think I could have one of those too?” *Oh yeah... I need to get Ichika a weapon too.*

“You mentioned that you used kitchen knives as weapons, right?”

“I’m pretty used to short swords, spears, and all sorts of traps, but yeah. My main gig was kitchen knives.” *Kitchen knives, kitchen knives... Yeah. I can make kitchen knives. A butcher knife should be good here.*

“Ichika. Go get me a good tree branch.”

“You got it. But like, what for?”

“I’m gonna try making you a weapon.”

“...With a tree branch? I mean, I’m not picky or anything, but I’m not all about clubs and wooden things.”

“The branch is just part of the equation here. I don’t need a particularly big one. I’m just making it into the handle.”

“Mmm, ’kay. I’ll be right back.”

I took an iron ingot out of {Storage} while Ichika was off getting a branch. *Ma’am, I’ll be using {Create Golem} today. I’m just going to make a Golem Butcher Knife from this iron ingot. Don’t worry, it’ll only take a second.* By the time Ichika came back with a branch, I had already finished forming the iron into a blade.

I cast the Survival Magic spell {Dry} to remove the water from the branch, used that to make a golem in the shape of a butcher knife handle, and then finally combined the blade and the handle. Behold, a butcher knife. To finish it off, I made it such that the blade would vibrate rapidly when mana was poured into it. And so, the Golem Butcher Knife-type Magic Blade was complete. It took thirty seconds to complete. And if I do say so myself, it was pretty well-made. *If I’m not careful, I might just fall in love with myself.*

“Alright. Is this knife good enough?”

“Eh? Ah, s-sure.” Ichika, who had been watching me finish up the knife, took it from me with her mouth wide open.

“Wha? Eh? The heck did you do? How? Is this some kind of special Dungeon Master power?”

“Heh heh heh, this is the power of my own magic spell, {Maker}...!”

“Wh-What the, I’ve never heard of any magic like that...! Is that a Unique Skill?!” *Oh, whoops.* I said that as a joke but Ichika took it totally seriously. She was sincerely shocked. I hurriedly went and corrected myself.

“Sorry, sorry, I was just acting cool. It’s just a slightly customized version of {Create Golem}.”

“Whaaat?! Hold the freak on! {Create Golem} can’t do anything like this, no way! That’s magic for making freaking golems!” *Weird. I set things straight but she just got more mad.*

“Huh? But that knife is a golem. Just one shaped like a knife.”

“L-Listen up, Master. Golems are like, human shaped. They’ve got hands, legs, a head, a body... uhhh... Wait, you were making those walls with {Create Golem} too. I don’t even know what’s going on anymore... I know you said you didn’t have much common sense, but this is just insane...!” *I guess normally you can’t customize skills. Weird, it seems like a really natural thing to do.* “You can kinda customize skills... but only like, by mixing things together. Like throwing a {Fireball} at water to make hot water, or something. Customizing the skill itself and making it into a new one? Dude, that’s something only expert mages and dedicated skill researchers can do. Not to mention, it can take your whole freaking life to make a new skill if you aren’t careful... Yeah. Master, trust me on this. Stop calling that skill {Create Golem} and roll with {Maker}. For real. You can pass it off as some kinda Unique Skill passed down from an ancient tribe of locals or something that way.” *Huh. I guess that’ll be important for keeping a low profile. I don’t really intend to use this skill in front of people, but if I ever need to, I’ll remember that.*

Wait... But wouldn’t I need to change the incantation for that? The chant for {Create Golem} is “Mass of clay, change your shape and become a servant that obeys my every command,” so... Oh, and that’s when I’m working with clay. It’s slightly different when I’m working with wood, stone, metal, or so on. I’m just working with clumps of a single material to keep things easier for myself, but it’s nice that if I say the name of what I’m working with in the chant, it takes less mana to do things with it. That works both ways, though. It takes a lot more mana to work with stone if I call it a “bundle of wood” or something.

...Oh, right. If fiddling with the chant a little is fine, changing the chant entirely should be fine too. Let’s give it a shot.

“Bundle of wood, change thy shape and obey me. {Maker}.” *Sweet. Looks like it’s working.* I poured mana into the wood and morphed it, making the outer layer of skin into strings to attach to a belt. I then successfully turned the rest of the wood into a sheathe (Sheathe Golem).

“Magic really is pretty fast and loose with the rules, huh? This is pretty cool, but {Create Golem} feels like it takes less mana, so I’ll just keep using that. Though maybe that’s just because I’m more used to it.”

“Woah woah woah, back the freak up. I said to call it {Maker} but I didn’t say

anything about changing the freaking chant and crap! Like, how did you even do that?! What the crap was that weirdo nonsense chant?!" *What?*

"Weirdo nonsense chant...? You didn't understand what I said while chanting?"

"I-I mean, I've heard that chants are like, derived from the language people use in the ancient civilization of magic, but I can't understand a single word of it." *Ah. Aaah, yeah, okay. I get it now. I can probably just tell what the chants mean because my friendly little auto translator is working really hard for me. Not only that, but when I start chanting, it translates my words into proper ye olde Magic Language. Whew. I guess the "understand languages" power that god gave me is actually a cheat skill. Y'know... I feel like that may be enough for me to make a pretty easy living in this world. Wait, no. I'm a Dungeon Master, so that'll just make me stick out like a sore thumb. Nope, nope. I'm gonna keep this cheat skill all to myself.*

"Oh, how's that knife? I can fix it up a bit to fit your hand better."

"...This is the first time I've ever held it, but all the bumps and bends and stuff are perfect, like it was literally made for my hand. The heck is up with that? Are you a master craftsman or something? Like holy cow, dude. I'm impressed." I had just mimicked what I remembered kitchen knife handles feeling like, but Ichika loved it. Advertisers on TV hyping up the *ergonomic design* of their knife handles weren't all talk after all. (In this world, people apparently just wrapped leather around cylindrical handles when they wanted to modify the grip.)

"Oh, and if you don't mind, pour some mana into the knife and chop up this branch for me."

"Eh? Mana...? No freakin' way, is this a Magic Blade?!" Ichika let out a stunned cry. *Woah, no, you've got the wrong idea. That's obviously just a (fake) Magic Blade.* Ichika poured mana into her Golem Knife, making it vibrate. She brought it up to the two inches thick branch next to me and slowly swung it downwards.

"Woah! I didn't feel, like, any resistance there."

"Alright, let's try that again, but with three branches this time." Sure, she cut through one branch easily, but how about three—The mana-powered knife cut

through them all like butter.

"This... This is totally a Magic Blade, dude..."

"You think so?"

"Magic Blades are just any weapons that do something when you pour mana into them, so yeah. Sometimes that something is getting sharper... but like, I've seen a Magic Blade like that and even it didn't get this much sharper." *Oh my goodness. My Golem Blades are actual, genuine Magic Blades. You may stop calling yourselves (fake) Magic Blades, my children. I'm ever so happy for you.*

"Wow. Magic Blades are surprisingly easy to make, huh...?"

"GAAAAH! No FREAKING way! You can normally only ever get Magic Blades inside of dungeons! It's not impossible for people to make their own, but they're way less effective than normal ones and it takes a skilled blacksmith-mage team several days to make just one! They're totally, TOTALLY not something you can just snap your fingers and make in a spare minute, my freaking dude!" *Oh geez. I, uh... Wow. I'm sorry.*

"Ngggh, if I had this knife when I was an adventurer, I definitely could've gotten up to B-Rank... You could make a lotta money selling these, y'know? They'd def be way more than how much I cost you. We're talking gold coins here, for real." *Now that's some good info. In other words, I can make something worth a lot of money for basically free. Maybe I should put some of these around the dungeon as treasure or something. Or I could just sell them myself... ah, wait, no. I'd really stick out if I started bringing in a ton of Magic Blades to sell.*

By the way, I checked the DP Catalog for Magic Blades and saw that they started at 10,000 DP. They had tons of different effects, with the upper tier ones costing an absolutely mind-blowing absurd amount of DP, like literally hundreds of millions of DP, but one with an effect similar to a Golem Blade only cost about 20,000 DP. *Well... If it's not an especially fancy Magic Blade, maybe it won't be a problem for me to mass produce and sell them? Oh! I could make Golem Shields too, that might be nice. I could make them... vibrate constantly, such that... they can... deflect attacks better? I dunno. I don't think that idea's gonna work out. Either way, it's pretty great that I can make a product worth*

big bucks at the snap of a finger. Hopefully I can start making Golem Blades with all sorts of different effects. Having the blade cast a spell would be a nice start. I should start experimenting later to see if I can get golems to cast spells. Yeah, later. Eventually. I'll try not to forget about this.

...Ichika said these Golem Blades would be worth a lot of money, but I wonder exactly how much. Golem Blades likely still had some major flaw I hadn't noticed yet, but there was something else I was more concerned about. I was making weapons equivalent in power to Magic Blades worth 20,000 DP out of stone. Could I not make Golem Blades out of stone and then turn them into DP to make infinite cash?

No, I could not. Golem Blades were only worth two DP. Naturally, things wouldn't go that well for me. I mean, it was nice that I had a definite way to turn raw materials into DP, but the time and effort to reward ratio was just way too off.

I put aside the Golem Blades and got back to work on the inn. Things were going pretty well with it. There was even a room on the second floor that had glass windows. I had made them using leftover potion bottles, though there were so few bottles I only had enough glass for that one room. *Maybe I'll really make this room fancy and turn it into a kind of luxury suite. But first, let's see what my lovely companions think.*

"Master, where the heck is the kitchen? The dining room?"

"Good point." Neither was necessary since I could just make food out of nothing with DP, but not having a kitchen would look suspicious. *Time for some extra construction.*

"U-Um, Master. There's no bathrooms..."

"...I'll add some with the water system."

I totally forgot about those. I'll make the toilets flush-able. And Rokuko can take care of the septic tank when it gets full.

"Keima! Give me my own room, please!"

"I'll make a dog house off to the side for you." There was a lot of extra construction I had to do.

“Hey! Why are you just being mean to me?! We’re partners!”

“C’mon, don’t be dumb. I’m only joking around with you like this ’cause we’re partners.”

“O-Oh, okay! I don’t mind then!”

I continued building the inn to ever greater heights with the advice of my companions as a guiding light. And so, right before the sun set, I finally finished the inn.

Day 41

...The inn was far from finished. It didn’t have a bathing area. A mountain inn needed an onsen, plain and simple. No ifs, ands, or buts about it.

And so, I entered the second day of construction. I may have finished the main building already, but finishing the whole inn within a single day was naturally unreasonable. I added a small building behind the inn with plans to turn it into a full bath. To be more precise, I had surrounded an area with wooden walls, then put a few pillars and a roof in the middle of it—the groundwork for an open-air bath. Since the design was more simple than the inn’s, it only took an hour to make.

In this world, cleaning one’s body amounted to {Purification} and nothing else, aside from maybe rubbing yourself with a wet towel if things were really bad. Therefore, according to Ichika, baths were treated as an extravagant luxury. Which meant that simply having a bath at all might be a big bonus. But about the hot water...

I checked the DP Catalog and saw that it had both a [Water Source (1,000 DP)] and a [Heat Source (500 DP)] in it. Maybe the [Heat Source] was so cheap because we were by a mountain? Either way, we wouldn’t be buying one. I had my golems start digging holes, looking for a real source of hot water instead. Tsia Mountain seemed to be a volcano, so it would definitely have some heat sources inside of it. If there was an underground stream of flowing water nearby, digging into it would get us hot water then and there. That would definitely be more efficient than just digging around randomly looking for heat

sources. Though... Finding the water stream was up to luck, too.

I developed Drill Golems in order to dig all those holes. The Drill Golems were a work of genius, if I do say so myself. Instead of making golems with pickaxes or shovels for hands, I made golems that had their entire bodies built for excavation. I think they would be called a shield machine or something back on Earth? Either way, they had a drill dedicated to efficiently digging through tunnels without an ounce of waste. Modern Japan would have trouble dealing with all the dug out dirt and stone, but we of the dungeon faction could just withdraw all that junk without any problems whatsoever. Basically, Rokuko would expand the dungeon limits and withdraw the excess material as the digging advanced further. And that's the secret behind how I had a thirty centimeters wide Drill Golem digging steadily into the ground in search of heat.

...Seriously, why didn't I think of this earlier? I could've made the underground labyrinth floor a lot easier if I had figured this out back during the Dungeon Battle. This should have come first, way before making drones out of glass bottles. I missed out on a lot of sleep time because of this. I replaced the pickaxes + golems team expanding the goblin room with a new Drill Golem + golems team, speeding things up immensely. The goblin room team had originally been put there just to mine materials, which I didn't need anymore, but at that point I figured I may as well just dig straight through to the other side of the mountain. Maybe I could charge a toll fee for passing through the tunnel after completing it. *Heheh. The future is looking bright. Sometimes, the dreams I have while awake are pretty nice.*

By the way, I had Rokuko and more golems digging underground to expand the dungeon further downwards. Thanks to my know-how from the Dungeon Battle, we were digging much more efficiently than before. All that empty space meant that we were gonna be making some massive floors. I could just fill in the walls with golems and DP later, so all that mattered now was securing a lot of space.

Yeah... We're getting kinda tight on DP now. It costs five thousand DP to add a new floor, which is rough, but... I really wanna expand the dungeon before we open up the inn. We had two above ground floors and three basement floors (two of which were part of the labyrinth), which meant five floors in total. I

wanted at least two more floors, and including the contents of each floor, they'd cost 10,000 DP per floor. In other words, I would spend 20,000 DP. Which would leave 100,000 DP total. *That's really low. I'm really gonna have to straighten up now. Might not be long before I have to start worrying about the single digits column again.*

* * *

I made a Wearable Golem for Ichika. This time, I based the design around a [Navy Blue Maid Outfit Set (500 DP)]. That was what came up when I looked through the Catalog for some clothes fitting for an inn receptionist. It was less a real maid outfit and more a cosplay thing, but it came with gloves, socks, a hairband, and even underwear in addition to the maid outfit itself. Now isn't that just cheap for something that only costs 500 DP? *Oh, and of course, it came with knee socks and a garterbelt. Those two are very important to me and I won't accept any maid outfit without them. I'm talking function-wise here, okay? Trust me. The golem can't assist her properly unless it's covering her legs up past her knees.*

It was kind of embarrassing to turn panties and knee socks into golems, but I managed to force myself to sew (bury) Magic Stones into them, successfully turning the entire outfit into a golem. You might be wondering if this kind of outfit is normal in this world, but when I asked Haku about the butler outfit her companion was wearing, she told me that maid outfits existed as well. Of course, the fabric and whatnot all consisted of materials that existed in this world as well. There was no problem with her outfit... probably.

"Holy cheeseballs, this outfit is hella awesome! You're really letting me have this?!"

"Yep, be sure to wear it."

"Awww. That looks really nice. Keima, give me one of those outfits too."

"I'm gonna play you off as the owner of the inn, so I'll be making you a dress like the one Haku wears."

"Yay! Thank you, Keima! I can't wait!"

"Niku, I'll get you a matching outfit, since you'll be an inn employee too. Start

wearing it most of the time from now on.”

“Okay!” Somewhat worried about whether or not I’d be able to get a maid outfit Niku’s size, I handed Ichika her uniform.

“Oh dude, I’ve never seen lace panties before. You’ve got some good taste, Master.” Ichika went out of her way to spread the underwear apart with her fingers and show it off to me.

“Sorry, but my tastes lie a little bit lower than that.”

“...Riiight, you’re one of those dudes into feet. Back at the market, did you ask for a slave with sexy feet or legs or something?”

“You know, I remember him talking about my feet like that too.”

“Oh hoooh.” Ichika grinned after hearing Rokuko mutter.

“Heeeey, Masteeer. Do you wanna see me... put these socks on?”

“...Wh-What did you just say?” *She’s going right for my weakest point...! Clever girl!*

“...Y’know, I’m your slave, Master. You don’t need to hold back aaat all.” *Holy crap. I wanna see it. I wanna see it right now. So much.* I reflexively ended up staring at Ichika’s feet, but she noticed something while rubbing the socks and stopped her teasing.

“Hold up. Why’re there magic stones in these clothes?”

“Huh? Well, so that they can help out even when you’re not in the dungeon.”

“Sorry, I shoulda asked this first. Is... Is this a set of Magic Equipment?”

“Magic Equipment?” I had never heard that word before, but apparently it referred to equipment that had special properties activated by pouring mana into it, just like Magic Blades. *Makes sense. Magic weapons exist, so Magic Equipment existing isn’t weird at all.* If a sword could become a Magic Blade just by getting sharper, equipment that increased the wearer’s strength and assisted their movement was more than worthy of being called Magic Equipment. Naturally, such equipment was as difficult to make as Magic Blades were, and Ichika had apparently never heard of normal clothing being Magic Equipment. *Well... If nobody’s ever heard of it, nobody will figure it out.*

Probably. Alright, I'll just interpret this as it being fine for them to wear these clothes all the time.

"Oh, by the way, Keima. You're making new clothes for all of us, but what about yourself?"

"My plan is to lend these slaves to you and have them work under you, while I use the resulting money to rent a room and pass myself off as an adventurer that sleeps like a log all day, so yeah. This outfit's good enough for me."

"Oh boy, Keima. That really makes you sound like a failure of a human being. Well, a lot of people with slaves end up like that too, but still." *Yeah, I think so too. I won't argue because it's the truth.*

"I'm fine as long as I get to sleep. People can say what they want about me. My reputation in Tsia's probably already terrible, anyway. I left Niku alone after we went on that bathroom cleaning quest."

"I dunno my dude, slave owners making their slaves do all their work is hella common. But wow, you made Niku clean a bathroom on her own? Harsh. That's actually a pretty rough job. Totally normal for slaves to do, but yeah, dang."

"Nah, I actually cleaned the whole bathroom with a single {Purification}. I didn't do anything that would make Niku hate me... and thus, I can sleep peacefully with a clear conscience. Perfect plan, huh?"

"I-I would never hate you, Master!" *Heheh, that's right. I couldn't sleep at night if my own dakimakura hated me, after all. I'll take good care of you.* I rubbed Niku's head. Her tail wagged side to side in a really cute way.

"She cares more about her master sleeping well than her own rep on the streets, huh? Cool, cool. I guess you just had Niku stand by the toilet with a bunch of cleaning tools, then? That's some pretty easy money."

"Yep, with a bunch of cleaning tools." *Wait... Actually, I don't think I gave her any tools.*

"...Niku, you said someone came by while you were waiting for me, right? Did he ask you about what you were using to clean the toilet?"

"Yes, he did."

“What’d you say?”

“I told him I was using my hands, feet, and mouth just like I should!” Niku responded, her tone filled with pride and confidence. *Oh crap.*

“Hold on, that’s way too intense. Why’d you say that?”

“Eeeh? I-I shouldn’t have? I’m sorry!” Niku paled and panicked a little. Ichika, seeing that, figured something out.

“Aaaah, Master, lemme make a guess here. Did you get Niku from the slum’s slave market?”

“...She used to be the slave of some bandits, so she probably came from the slums, yeah.”

“Figures...” Ichika nodded to herself, with a somewhat sad expression. She then looked Niku in the eyes.

“Niku! Normally, you use brushes and stuff when cleaning bathrooms! You can use water from wells too! And this is the most important thing: your body isn’t a cleaning utensil!”

“Eh?!”

“What?!” I was stunned after hearing Ichika say that with a deadly serious expression on her face. But it seemed that Niku truly didn’t know that. *Holy crap, just how terrible are the slum’s slave markets?!*

“Uh-huh. I didn’t notice until now because she’s so clean and well-dressed, but yeah. Slum slave markets treat their slaves worse than garbage... And beastkin slaves are treated even worse than that. Most of them die before they even get sold, for real. Anybody raised in a place like that will get a messed up perspective on the world... Niku, you’ve worked really hard, haven’t you?” Ichika hugged Niku tightly and patted her head... though she ended up smothering her face with her boobs.

“A lot of slaves get sick from cleaning toilets and just die... And beastkin or not, kids just don’t have the strength adults do. To make things worse, slavers kick and beat up the slaves for fun. They use them as punching bags to test out skills. Lots of slaves have their limbs cut off for no reason. Beastkin children are

worth a couple of coppers at best, so slavers just view them as toys to play with. Even those lucky enough to survive have no chance of being bought by anyone respectable. Not in the slums. Their lives are hell from beginning to end.” *Just listening to that is enough to make me feel like crap. Ouch.*

“...Niku, you suffered a lot more than I have, huh?”

“R-Rokuko?” Rokuko hugged Niku from the opposite side of Ichika.

“I’m kind of a weak dungeon and get bullied a lot, but Haku has always been there for me, so things never got worse than that. Mhm. I’ll be a little nicer to you from now on. You’re welcome.”

“Rokuko...”

“I-I’ll even give you some of my [Melon Rolls]. Just a bite, though.” *I... I guess this is Rokuko trying to be nice? But anyway. The slum slave markets may treat their slaves worse than garbage, but I’m not planning on trying to destroy the slums, or free all beastkin slaves. I don’t want to do something I couldn’t take responsibility for, and people will absolutely try to have me killed for doing something like that. I’ll leave that kind of stuff to goody two-shoes, invincible Heroes. The best I can do is free Niku before she suffocates to death in Ichika’s cleavage.*

“Ooooh, whoopsie-do! Sorry about that, Niku. You okay?”

“Y-Yesh...” Her legs looked a little shaky, but she’d be fine.

“Ah, right. Keima. We kind of got off topic, but really, what were you talking about a second ago? Really, you need to tell us all the details about this inn. We’re still in the dark here.”

“You’re talking about me lending you my slaves and just sleeping all day as an adventurer, right? Alright then.” I started telling them about Operation: Inn.

I first decided to build an inn to secure safe sleeping arrangements for myself, but consider this: the safe little [Ordinary Cave] suddenly exploded into a decently-sized dungeon, and it even got an inn built in front of it out of nowhere at the same time. What would people think about that?

Answer: They would be suspicious as hell.

So, I decided to try and make everything fit together logically so I could somehow explain things to the Guild. Not to mention, Haku was actually helping me out with this.

“The owner of this inn will be Rokuko, little sister of the A-Rank adventurer Haku. The inn was built by one of Haku’s associates, who did so in no time with their skills. Are we all on the same page so far?”

“My sister would definitely know someone capable of making an inn in a single day, or at least bringing one from somewhere else. After all, you did that yourself, Keima.”

“That’s it. Well, be sure to keep the fact I made it myself a secret. It’d probably be annoying if people found that out.” They all agreed with me so far. Haku herself suggested that we focus on presenting Rokuko as the little sister of the “A-Rank adventurer Haku.” It would be good for them both for Rokuko to have a recognizable identity. There might end up being some people taking out their anger for Haku on Rokuko, but that’s what the dungeon was for. If things got dangerous, she could just escape to the Master Room. We had lots of options.

“From there, I just happened to meet Haku, and one thing or another led to me lending my slaves to her little sister and owner of this inn. Bam. My role will be acting like an adventurer that stays in the inn and sleeps all day.”

“Aren’t you just going to do that because you want to...? That’s not a role, that’s just you being yourself...”

“What’re you talking about, Rokuko? I’m actually the Dungeon Master, remember? This is an important role for me to play.”

“Oh, right! I get it now!” *I mean, I’m not gonna say I’m NOT a Dungeon Master, so technically I’m not lying! And if you think about it, slaves working to make their master’s life easier is basically common sense. Though, there’s so much inn and dungeon related stuff only I can do, I’ll probably end up working anyway...*

“Wha? But why’s your role gotta involve you sleeping all the time, dude?”

“It’ll be a lot easier to hide a bunch of things if I’m supposedly in my room all

the time. Not like I can do Dungeon Master stuff in front of people."

"Yeah, I totally see your point." *Well, even so, there's probably gonna be a lot of things that people will find suspicious. But all those minor contradictions can be washed away with one simple sentence: I mean, we're talking about an A-Rank adventurer here!*

"It's perfect!"

"I know, right?" I glanced at Ichika, wanting to know if my plan wouldn't fly in this world for whatever reason.

"My dude. Do you and Rokuko really know Haku the White Winged Goddess? Like, for real?"

"That's what you're worried about? Yeah, we do. And she gave us permission to say these things. She said we could use her name all we wanted if it meant helping out Rokuko."

"L-Like, seriously? I mean... With her backing, we can say whatever we want and nobody will question us, dude. The White Winged Goddess is an A-Rank adventurer and a major higher up in the imperial capital. Plus, she's partners with Chloe the Black Winged Demon and four other hella strong adventurers known as the Four Braves, forming the S-Rank party the *Dungeon Busters*. She's got so much authority and power nobody's gonna question her. Nobody." In other words, Ichika was backing up my plan. By the way, I asked Haku before any of this started if we could frame the inn as something she selfishly wanted for personal reasons, and subsequently entrusted to Rokuko due to wanting a reliable family member managing it in her stead. I had planned ahead after winning the Dungeon Battle.

Framing it that way had the extra benefit of allowing Haku to come to this backwater city without drawing suspicion. No one would blame her for wanting to see her little sister. Though, Haku had figured that out immediately... or rather, Haku had more or less set up things to be that way. After the Dungeon Battle, Haku had asked me what I would be doing. I told her I might set up an inn, to which she said, "Oh, and I presume Rokuko will be presented as the owner? In which case, you will certainly need my help. Very well. I will permit you to use my adventurer identity as you wish. But in return, do a good job,

understand?” Yeah, I hadn’t thought that far ahead at all. I knew I wanted to make an onsen inn, but I hadn’t thought up any ideas for how to make people not suspicious of an inn popping up out of nowhere next to a massively expanded dungeon. And yet, the approval of an A-Rank adventurer fell straight into my lap.

And you know, thinking about it, Haku’s really doing whatever she wants as an adventurer, huh? She’s got two names and a strong party called the Dungeon Busters. Does she destroy dungeons in her spare time? What? I doubt she’s gonna come after our dungeon or the Ivory Labyrinth, but still.

“Buuut y’know, it’s super funny that we’re gonna be claiming that the leader of the Dungeon Busters is the older sister of an actual Dungeon Core. Like, talk about irony, amirite?” *Hahaha, yeah. The real irony is that that she’s also a Dungeon Core herself. Ah, yeah, I’m still hiding Haku’s true identity from Ichika. Slave or not, that information isn’t something I should be spreading around lightly.*

“...Wait, wait. Is this really okay? Is this actually gonna work?”

“What’s with you, Keima? It’ll definitely work. We have my sister on our side.”

“Yeah, my dude. We’ll be totally fine.” *Uhhh, y’know, I was hoping that since you’re the only one here familiar with how this world works, you’d kind of help me work out the finer details and stuff. I mean, I’m one to talk, but this plan is just ridiculous. It’s filled with holes. Could you throw me a bone here? I’ve developed the backstory for a mage called Narikin who’s an expert in earth magic and is an old friend of Haku’s. I guess we won’t need him? I guess not. I, uh... I made a cool mask in case we needed him. Are you sure we won’t?*

Day 42

It was day three of me building the inn... or it would be, if I hadn’t taken the day off to restore some mana. To be honest, I didn’t actually need to restore mana or anything. I had used {Create Golem} so much while chugging mana potions back during the Dungeon Battle that it barely took any mana at all to make golems at this point. I just wanted a day to rest since I had been working really hard lately. Feelings are important. Also, golems were digging out the

onsen while I was resting, so yeah.

There were still a lot of things I needed to build, though. Although I could buy food with Dungeon Points, people would get suspicious if I didn't have fields and crops. So I would need to make some. Luckily, the sugar beet fields I had some experimental golems and Testle build were coming along nicely, so I could just add a vegetable field near them. Though even then, I could just buy the vegetables with DP and have golems take care of the rest. The only thing I personally needed to do was build a wall surrounding the fields, more or less.

Ichika and Niku had cut down a surprisingly large number of trees over the past two days, so I let them take the day off with me. I dried up all the logs at once with the Survival Magic spell {Dry}, which stunned Ichika. According to her, wood splintered and became useless if you tried drying it with {Dry} too quickly. It all melded back together when I used {Create Golem}, though, so it wasn't a big deal to me. And then, while I was lazing around on my [Futon] in the Master Room, Ichika suddenly said something.

"...Wait a sec. Aren't you an F-Rank, Master? This dungeon's definitely gonna be an E-Rank dungeon, for sure. If you're not careful with those Magic Blades it might even end up as a D-Rank dungeon."

...I hadn't expected that at all. Naturally, it'd suck if I couldn't go into my own dungeon. The inn was located with the dungeon regions, so I wouldn't be stuck outside of it or anything, but it'd still be a definite problem. The simplest solution would just be to raise my rank. Going up to E-Rank from F-Rank just took completing ten F-Rank quests and a combat test administered by the Guild.

"The combat test is something simple like killing goblins, right? If so, the main problem here is the ten quests... The only F-Rank quest I know of is that goblin extermination one."

"I mean, what's wrong with hunting goblins, my dude? I ranked up just from hunting boars." And so, I got to work summoning goblins and collecting enough right ears to fulfill the quests...

...Not. Naturally, I'm not enough of a monster to summon a bunch of goblins and then cut off their ears. Feral goblins in the wild are one thing, but I owe a

lot to summoned goblins. Heck, Gobsuke sacrificed himself to protect the Dungeon Core. Even I'd feel like garbage summoning them en masse and mutilating them.

"Guess I'll go hunt some wild goblins..." Rokuko tilted her head in confusion.

"If you want goblin ears, why don't you just buy them with DP?"

"Huh? What are you on about, Rokuko? We can't do that... can we?"

"There are [Dragon Claws] and stuff in the treasure section of the Catalog, so I don't see why not." Why not indeed. I checked the treasure section of the Catalog, but there were no goblin ears. *Makes sense. It's kinda hard to call goblin ears treasure.* But I didn't give up there. I checked the other sections and... found right goblin ears under the materials section. Right goblin ears. One for six DP. Five for thirty DP, which would earn us thirty coppers. They cost just as much as the quest's reward.

"Why is it selling specifically right goblin ears? And what are they a material for, anyway?"

"This is just a total guess, but maybe that's 'cause the Guild recycles the ears into fertilizer with a special recipe?" Although they didn't have to be right ears, the Guild apparently made a recipe using right ears after struggling to deal with all of the ones given to them as a part of quests. If they just threw them away, adventurers would pick them up and try to turn them in again, so they had to do something with them. *Man, I can't believe someone who would do that actually exist... Oh wait. I'm trying to do basically the same thing. These may be fresh ears, but it's hard to say I'm following the spirit of the quest. The whole point is to encourage adventurers to take care of goblins hurting crops, after all. But whatever. This is fine. I care more about my time than that. The quest says to bring ears, and that's it. I'm not breaking any rules here.*

"But tiny little rules are nothing to a mighty Demon King like you, right, Master?"

"I'm not a Demon King, seriously." *For the last time, I'm a Dungeon Master. Big difference.*

"Let's see, we've already done the quest once, so... We just need forty-five

more. That's 270 DP." In other words, about two days of our currently daily DP income. *Oh, right. Since Ichika's boosting things up, our daily DP income is now 160 DP a day. 60 DP in one day means she's at least as strong as three tough bandits, doesn't it? Dang. Just what I'd expect from a former C-Rank adventurer...! She's strong!*

In any case, the problem then became explaining where we got all the ears from. The solution, however, was simple. I placed a goblin spawner within the dungeon. Apparently, one goblin spawner could summon up to five goblins at once. It would spawn a new one each time one of the existing five died, as long as it had enough mana stored up.

Also, I placed a jelly spawner next to it as a food source for the goblins. Jellies were cheap, pitifully useless monsters with no function in combat whatsoever. A single one had a cost of only 1 DP, so even the spawner only put me down 100 DP. They looked like blobs of bowl-shaped gelatin with tendrils growing out of them. They were basically the weak slimes of this world. You could easily defeat them through magic or a well-placed punch. By the way, a strong slime would be immune to physical damage.

"...Do they taste good?"

"They don't taste like anything. Like, they're basically just water, so yeah." I gestured a summoned jelly over and touched it. My finger sunk into its squishy... flesh? It felt nice. Though, judging by how my fingers were getting wet with water, I definitely wouldn't want to use one as a pillow.

I went ahead and put golem spawners on the second and third basement floors—the labyrinth. Each one was 10,000 DP. They also could summon up to five golems each. And since golems were monsters, they had magic stones in them. That had obvious implications. These golems would likely end up as a nice source of income for adventurers.

All in all, I put five goblin spawners and ten jelly spawners on the first floor, plus three golem spawners on each of the labyrinth floors. I was in the middle of building the fourth and fifth basement floors, but... I didn't need them just yet. I wasn't even sure if any visitors would be making it that far in the first place.

...With all that done, we had 60,000 DP left. *Oh man. We're already down this low? Losing funds isn't good for one's mental health. I've gotta slow down on the spending. Anyway, we have the stuff to get up to E-Rank now. I'll ask about what we need to do to rank up again just in case our dungeon ends up being restricted to D-Ranks and above.* "Ichika, do you remember what we need to do to go from E-Rank to D-Rank?"

"Um, I think it was... One hundred total quests done and a combat test at the Guild. They'll wanna see how good you are at fighting other humans. No need to sweat that, though. You and Niku would crush that junk, trust me. Dunno about Rokuko, though." *Fighting other humans, huh...? I might need a backup plan for that. Luckily, we've got a former C-Rank adventurer on our side. If I can teach our Wearable Golems the combat techniques Ichika's built up over the years, we should be able to power up fast and hard. Even Rokuko would be able to take care of herself in a fight.*

"You got all the way to C-Rank without ever learning a skill, right? That must mean that you're pretty strong. Do you think you're about as strong as a knight captain?"

"I dunno, dude. I might be stronger than a weak-ass captain, but I'll probably lose to most of them... Eh. The best I can do is hold my own in a one-v-one with a minotaur." *I guess that's how strong you have to be to get to C-Rank, huh? Wait, no. If she had a skill, I guess she'd be able to beat the minotaur on her own too? There are definitely skills unrelated to magic. Like {Slash}, which initiates a very strong... slash. It might be smart for me to learn some of those skills too.*

"Ichika, would you mind helping me train? And by that I mean, help train Niku."

"What about you, Master?"

"I'll be watching. That's a very important job, y'know." It really was important for me to watch their movements through the dungeon monitor to record them, and then teach the golems the same moves through repetition. I wanted to make more human-like golems in the shape of mannequins that would be useful sparring partners. There would be no downsides to doing so.

“Ah, but y’know, it’s not like you gotta worry about boosting everyone’s individual rank. It’ll be a lot easier to just get your party rank up. There’s this rule like, ‘When all members of this party are together we recognize their collective rank to be higher,’ or something like that. Rokuko will be fine if you and Niku are in her party, for sure.” *Party rank. I guess that’s like a system where you jump through hoops to get special benefits. Oh yeah, I remember hearing about Haku’s Dungeon Busters party being S-Rank when all the members are together. Party rank probably exists to help out those who aren’t so hot in actual combat, like mages and others in more indirect, supportive roles. Not to mention nobles. Like, if some rich kid wants to explore a dungeon for whatever reason, he can just join a party with his strong bodyguards and get into C-Rank dungeons that way. Or from the opposite perspective, since parties take written tests together as well, smarter party members can back up meathead warriors to secure their help in the dungeon. In any case, we won’t be having any problems ranking up with the former C-Rank adventurer Ichika on our side.*

“Well, Niku’s definitely way stronger than your average C-Rank, so yeah. Uh-huh.” *Wait... Am I dragging her down? I’ve been kind of worried about that, honestly...*

Day 43

Day four of constructing the inn. It was already mostly complete, and I had already made one of the rooms mine. The onsen was the only thing left, more or less. I had enough wood to finish that on my own, so I had Ichika and Niku spar in the meantime. Niku was in her Wearable Golem Mark 2, whereas Ichika was in her Maid Outfit Golem. For weapons, I had prepared them wooden versions of their normal weapons. The wooden weapons were blades in shape only.

“Woooah, holy cow! What’s with these clothes?! I’m not using my muscles at all but I feel hella strong... Wow, I guess this is Niku’s secret. I’ll definitely be able to pull off some crazy tricks with these babies.”

“I want to try out a lot of moves today, for Master’s sake.” My job was to

watch them spar... or more accurately, to open up the dungeon monitor and film them. I had put my Wearable Golem on a much more human-shaped Mannequin Golem. By having it repeat what was happening on screen, it would master the perfect moves for assisting me and thereby become the first truly complete Wearable Golem. This was a lot easier than what I did before, since I didn't have to teach it the motions myself. If it were a robot, I would have to program in detail the exact angle to move my legs, arms, and so on. No thanks.

In any case, it was very convenient that my party rank would go up without doing anything if my party members were strong enough. Very convenient, very nice. I didn't even want to be an adventurer in the first place. I just wanted to have a nice time and sleep all day. *And yet, I get the feeling I've been working all the time lately. What's up with that? Well, no more! It's time for me to buckle down and get to snoozing!* I dove into the [Futon] spread out on the floor of my inn room while still recording Niku and Ichika sparring.

"Keima! We finally hit an underground water source! And it's warm!" *I try to sleep... and this is what I get? I mean, I'm not gonna complain about finding water for the onsen, but c'mon...*

"Alright. I'll start connecting it to the bath and all that, I guess."

"Um, by the way. I probably should have asked about this earlier, but what's an onsen?"

"Just a warm pool of water you sit inside. It feels pretty good. The warm water helps your blood flow, too, so it's healthy."

"Wow. Can I get into it too?"

"Sure, but I dunno if it'll be all that special for a Dungeon Core that doesn't need to eat, sleep, or even use {Purification}."

"I own this inn, so it's important for me to check this stuff!" Rokuko got all noisy. *I'm glad you're motivated. Work hard in my place, friend.*

"Oh. Sometimes they stink, depending on what's in the water."

"They stink?! Humans sure are weird. Who would want to get into stinky warm water? Mmm... Do you think {Purification} would get rid of the smell?"

“.....” *Sorry, sorry. Honestly, the only thought that crossed my mind was the fact it’d be nice to sleep after spending some time in an onsen. I didn’t even think about the smell.* Some people actually like the smell of sulfur, but as you would expect from a smell most commonly likened to that of rotten eggs, a lot of people had a hard time getting used to it. A sulfuric onsen might have a negative impact on weapons and such, so one of those would be pretty bad for an inn marketed towards adventurers. *Well, either way, I gotta see what kind of onsen it is before making any decisions.*

I checked the map and saw that they had hit water at around one hundred meters underground. That was more shallow than I expected. I expanded the dungeon bounds around the water source and withdrew some of the hot water, which I then placed into a bucket-shaped Wood Golem. I had made the bucket after deciding that onsens really did need buckets.

“...It’s clear. It doesn’t smell, and it’s pretty dang warm too.” I didn’t go as far as taste testing it, but the water was clean enough that it’d probably be fine to do so. *Hm? Wait, I think I remember Ichika saying she’s an expert at taste-testing poisons or something. I won’t tell her to drink this stuff, but she might still be able to tell if it’s poisonous or not.*

“Ichika, stop sparring for a minute and come here.”

“Hm? ’Kay, got it. Be there in a sec.” I stuck my head out the window and called Ichika over, interrupting her duel. She came right away, so I went ahead and just showed her the stuff in the bucket.

“Would you take a look at this water for me? I’m not sure if it’s poisoned or something.”

“Oh? Lemme take a looksie.” Ichika picked up the bucket and, without a moment of hesitation, started gulping down the water.

“The hell?! What’re you doing, Ichika?!”

“Fwaah. Okay, if I’m not dead in two hours, it’s definitely not poisoned!”

“And if it is poisoned?!”

“Aaah, I was just kidding about being dead. At worst I’ll get a stomachache or something like that. Its smell, taste, and clearness is enough for me to figure

that out. Fufufu... Were you worried about me? Thaaaank you♪" Ichika smiled as if embarrassed.

"...Y-Yeah. I was a little worried, sure. If you died I'd be out fifty whole silvers."

"Sure, suuure. But trust me, I don't wanna die this early. I'm planning on being the best slave you've ever seen, with my eyes set on you freeing me sooner or later."

"...Sorry, but now that you know so much about our dungeon, I'm not gonna be able to free you."

"That's okay too. 'Cause like, you feed me some hella choice food. Anyway, I'll get back to sparring." Ichika left the room, grinning at me and waving.

And two hours later, she was still totally fine. The water wasn't poisoned or anything. *Whew... I really hadn't expected her to just drink it out of nowhere like that. Seriously. Sheesh, that girl's a real wild card.*

* * *

I filled the bath with the warm water. The steam was incredible, revealing that the water was indeed still heated. *I love taking long baths in warm water. I'll have to try this onsen out myself later.* And so, with the onsen complete, so too was the inn.

Every day, either Rokuko or I would need to swap out the water manually using our withdraw powers. That was annoying, but my plan was to eventually have the thirty centimeter Drill Golems drill out water tunnels that would cycle the water automatically. The walls of their tunnels were technically considered dungeon walls, so I didn't need to worry about them collapsing. I was putting that off, though, since we didn't have much DP to spare and I needed some kind of rubber for use in pumps. For now, withdrawing the warm water and putting it into large, insulated Stone Golem containers would have to do. Worse case scenario, I could just throw a {Fireball} into the container and heat the water back up.

Including all the resources dumped into digging out the onsen, building the inn had cost us roughly 5,000 DP. The inn needed water too, so I had bought a

[Water Source (1,000 DP)] for it. The tools and such used for digging out the onsen totaled to about 4,000 DP. *Wait... I'm pretty sure it would have been cheaper for me to just buy a [Water Source] and then heat it with a [Heat Source]. Dang. Well, I guess having a natural onsen isn't so bad either.* I had built the inn for much cheaper than, say, just buying a house directly for around 50,000 DP, but even so, we were running lower on DP than I'd like. We had around... actually, let's be more specific. We had 56,390 DP left. That wasn't including the DP I had spent on the fourth and fifth basement floors, nor did it count the DP I had given to Rokuko to do whatever she wanted with. I really needed to be careful with my spending now... *Ah, geez. I just wanna start earning DP so I can sleep already.*

"So, Keima. How do you use this onsen, anyway?"

"Simple. You take off your clothes and then just get in after washing your body."

"...I have to take off my clothes? Honestly, I'd be pretty embarrassed going in there with just my underwear on... ah, I guess that's why you built those walls around it. Nobody can see inside the onsen thanks to those." Rokuko nodded to herself, impressed.

"Hey, hold on. You have to take off your underwear too."

"I what?"

"You don't wear any clothes in the bath. That's just common sense."

"Hold on just a second. Don't you go into the onsen with multiple other people? Are humans really fine with that?"

"".....Good point. I forgot we come from different cultures." It was a bit late, but I asked Ichika about the onsen. *Teach me, Ms. Ichika!*

"Mmm, there were definitely some baths in some imperial capital inns. I think in those you just changed into simple clothes before getting into the bath."

"It'd be hard to wash yourself like that, though. Oh, right... You guys have {Purification}...!" *Crap! I totally wasted my time building rooms for cleaning! I should have asked her fiiirst. I even built faucets, shower heads, and everything... Honestly, now I feel depressed over how needlessly hard I worked...*

“You don’t think people will go in naked?”

“Aaah, ummm... There’s like, one bath I know of that a Hero made, where like, you go in naked with just a towel. That’s just the kind of thing that Hero liked, though. I don’t think a random inn should be copying it, trust me.”

“...Alright, I’ll change those rooms into changing areas. I’ll make some bathing clothes that visitors can either buy or just borrow.” *Well, I only made the onsen for my own benefit anyway, so whatever. This is fine.*

“Ah, don’t forget that me and Niku are totally your slaves. We can bathe naked with you no problem. Whaddya think?”

“...The onsen has separate sections for men and women, so I’ll have to pass. Oh, and Ichika. Would you teach Rokuko and Niku how to use a bath? In the women’s section, of course.” *Trust me, it’s not that I don’t want to see them naked. Okay? Trust me. I wanna see them legs and feet.*

* * *

After getting out of the bath, I bought a coffee with milk (5 DP) and chugged it down with a hand on my side. I was wearing a bathrobe, obviously, with some trunks on underneath. Bathrobes were considered a variation of normal clothing, so they only cost 10 DP each. Even buying one for each of us only cost 40 DP. Nice and cheap. The hot water was nice, too. I had just taken my first bath since coming to this fantasy world. I got the feeling I’d sleep like a baby that night.

And so, I got into my massage chair (Chair Golem) and let myself drift off. I had made the massage chair with wood and a [Futon]. It barely cost anything. When you sat in the chair, the golem would start massaging you... so to speak. It was hard to manage how hard it would squeeze or chop, so I settled on the chair just vibrating.

A light *vrrr*ing filled filled the air, weakening and strengthening as the vibrating did. It felt pretty good. *Oh yeah. I should make it so this chair will vibrate for five minutes after getting a copper put into it. If it gets popular, I could earn a lot of money... haaah...*

I opened my eyes after feeling something ticklish and noticed that Niku had spread a blanket over me. Niku was wearing a bathrobe as well. Seeing her reminded my sleepy brain of how the DP Catalog had included an option for the bathrobe to include a hole for a tail. *Aaah, fantasy worlds. What wondrous places you are.*

“I-I’m sorry! I didn’t mean to wake you up...”

“Fwaah... Nnn, nah, don’t worry about it. I’m just gonna go back to sleep...” I yawned and got out of the chair to follow Niku back to my room. *Hmm. Guess I might need to think of a way to stop customers from falling asleep in the chairs and keeping them all to themselves.*

“...Eeeh, and I’m honestly kinda feeling unsatisfied. Just vibrating really isn’t enough... Oh. Hey, Niku. Do you know how to give massages?”

“...Ah! Yes, I do. Ichika taught me how.” *Ooooh! When did that happen? Niku sure loves to learn, huh?*

“Fantastic. Would you mind giving me one, Niku?”

“Ah, b-but, it’s a... um, it’s a stepping massage, so...”

“It’s a... stepping massage...?!” A stepping massage. Obviously enough, that was a massage performed with feet. Normally it would be done by kids who needed to use their full body weight to put a satisfying amount of pressure on someone else’s body. Parents often requested that their children give them such a massage. The execution was simple. You put your foot on the person and stepped down using your body weight. The end.

That’s right. You step on someone. With your feet. *I mean, obviously, stepping on someone means using your feet. That’s just how language works. And to someone with a foot fetish like me, that’s the best massage I could ask for.*

“That’s absolutely okay. Actually, it’s better than okay. Please, please give me that massage.”

“Eh?! O-Okay! Um, please lay down, then.” I lay down onto my futon. *C’mon. Do it.*

“A-Ah... U-Um, excuse me...” Niku timidly put a foot on my back. I felt the

heat of the underside of her foot through my thin bathrobe. *So... So warm. Her hesitant stepping feels really ticklish... Crap. I was just about to fall asleep again, but this is just gonna make me wide awake. Though her shaky feet feel pretty nice.*

"Ohoooh... Would you mind stepping down a little harder? It's way too ticklish right now."

"O-Okay, sorry!" *Oh. She's stepping down a lot harder than before. Now this is what I'm talking about.* I really wanted her to push her foot down hard on all the stiff spots covering my back.

"Would you mind, like, digging your toes into the harder spots on my back...?"

"Okay! L-Like this?"

"Aaah, that's the stuff, right there... Ohoooh, this feels so goooood..." Niku drilled her toes into my back as if digging into it while rubbing her heel against me. *Aaah. This really is a stepping massage. I'm being stepped on while laying down. Sweet mother of God, I feel like my dreams have all come true...!*

"Oh, I'm gonna fall asleep soon, so just stop whenever you feel like it."

"Okay... Hyah! Hyah!"

"Oooh, yeah, that's it. Being stomped on feels good too..." The bottom of her feet gently stomped on my hips.

Fwaaah. Her feet rhythmically hitting my back is making me really tired... This is great, I'll have to ask her... to do this... again... zzz...



Day 44

I woke up and found that I was using Niku as a dakimakura just like always, thanks in part to the distinctive sweet scent of a girl.

“...Ah. Good morning...” Niku woke up at the same time as I did, as if she had somehow been waiting for me.

“Yo, morning.... Aaah, I slept pretty well. It’s pretty rare for me to wake up feeling this good.”

“...I’m happy that I was helpful to you.” Niku smiled slightly. So... I gently rubbed her head.

“I’m gonna have to ask for another one of those massages.”

“O-Okay. I’ll do my best.” *Alright. Thanks to Niku’s massage, I’m feeling pretty energetic, unlike usual. What to do, what to do... I’m done building the inn, so I guess I could spend today sprucing up the dungeon.*

“Oh, right. That massage felt great, Niku, so I really wanna give you a treat. Is there anything you want? Something you want me to do?”

“Eeeh?! Th-That’s, um... Um... R-Really?”

“Yep. Just say whatever comes to mind. If you want something I can give, consider it yours.”

“Y-You really will?”

“What, are you doubting me?”

“Ah! N-No, I would never!” Niku vigorously shook her head side to side. Maybe I teased her too much. *Anyway, now I just need to wait and see what she wants. I wonder what she’ll say. Maybe she’s gonna ask for all the hamburgers she can eat.* After a minute or so of silence, Niku opened her mouth.

“Um... Please step on me!”

“Wha?!” *Huh?! What the heck is this girl saying?* I asked her what was up and, putting things together, it seemed that stepping on another person was—

massage or not—something she innately viewed as an act of dominance, and since she viewed me as her superior... stepping on me was very rough for her, psychologically speaking. (As an aside, since I bought Ichika after her, Niku had no problem stepping on her.) So, in order to set things right in her mind, she wanted me to step on her. Of course, I didn't have to do it if I didn't want to, but she *really* wanted me to step on her. And on top of that, she wanted me to step on her head if possible. In fact, to be honest, what she really wanted was for me to straight up kick her. *Seriously?! I wouldn't go that far!*

And so, I had Niku settle for bowing in front of me and letting me tickle the back of her head with the bottom of my foot. She looked really satisfied after raising her head.

* * *

"And that's what happened this morning. Is that normal for beastkin or what?"

"My guy, that's totally normal." I asked the all-knowing Ichika for help, and apparently Niku was just being normal. Beastkin were really uptight about superiority and inferiority in relationships, not to mention hierarchies in general. Add onto that the fact that Niku was raised as a slave, taught from birth that she's the absolute lowest on the social ladder, and things just got worse.

"Like, sitting and stepping on others are like, suuuper fundamental ways to show superiority in beastkin culture. A lot of beastkin propose by saying something like 'I want you to be right beneath me,' or 'I want you to lay me down beneath you.' It's wild." *Those are proposals...?*

"They've got some more normal ways to propose too, but yeah. My heart would totally thump if someone said 'I want you to eat the prey I hunt each day' or 'I swear on my fist that I will fill your stomach each day' to me, yeah." *Okay, I can understand that a little better. It's like saying, hey, I won't let you go hungry. That exact kind of proposal would really work wonders on Ichika.*

"There's a few others I know, like 'I want you to brush my tail,' or 'I won't let anyone touch my belly except you.' Now there's a winner, huh?"

"Do you know those 'cause someone's said them to you before?"

“Bahaha, as if. I just had a tight beastkin friend when I was an adventurer. He teased me a little, that’s about it.” *Oh, whoops. We’re getting off topic.*

“Y’know, this all means that Niku just likes you *that* much, yeah? That’s super nice.”

“Well, uh... Sure, let’s go with that.” *Oh yeah, and I asked her to give me another massage like that sometime. Maybe I should take that back. I dunno though, the massage seriously felt great... Yeaaah, I feel kinda weird about it, but I’ll just go through with it. I’ll repay her by stepping on her again... Am I seriously okay with that?*

Oh! Wait! Maybe Niku is a comrade with a foot fetish too...?! Nah, no way. Hahaha. Ha... Yeah, I’ll make some hamburgers to give her instead.

And so, four full days had passed since we returned to the dungeon. We needed to go back to Tsia City by tomorrow and give a report on what we found. Going all the way to the city was extremely tedious, but dealing with the punishment for abandoning the quest (or them thinking we got killed by bandits) would be even more annoying. *I’ll just go to town and rank up while I’m there.*

The inn was finished, which just left sprucing up the dungeon’s interior. I had thought up ideas for how to expand on the existing dungeon while lying down, so it didn’t take long for me to start making good progress. First, I made a room on the third basement floor and put our dungeon’s prize item—the [Golem Blade] (Magic Blade)—within it. In turn, I made some of the golems wandering the dungeon wield normal swords of stone and clay. Well, they were actually Golem Blades too, but I made them deactivate if the golem wielding them got destroyed. I also half-assed making them, such that they were basically clubs in the shape of swords.

Anyway, back to the room with the Magic Blade. To reach it, an adventurer would need to clear the first floor, get through the labyrinth comprising the first and second basement floors, go upstairs and beat the puzzle area on the second above-ground floor, climb down the spiral staircase that’s three floors tall overall, and then finally find the room after exploring the third basement floor. Pretty simple.

Summarizing that, the order was: [Area One: Entrance], [Areas Two and Three: Labyrinth], [Area Four: Puzzles and Riddles], then [Area Five: Magic Blade Treasury] after climbing down the [Spiral Staircase]. After that is [Area Six: The Boss/Core Room]. Naturally, we would be in some big trouble if any adventurers made it to the treasury. I hadn't even placed a boss in the Boss Room of the fourth floor, the deepest floor. I was thinking about making some kind of golem to put there. Maybe one that can do a useless but flashy transformation sequence. Or a bunch of golems stuck together like a super robot. That'd be cool.

Anyway. The labyrinth and puzzle areas were tough enough that I figured nobody would reach the Core Room for a decent amount of time. Which unfortunately meant that it'd be hard for people to realize exactly what our dungeon's prize was. Thus, in order to advertise the existence of Magic Blades in our dungeon, I put a room on the second basement floor where adventurers could try one out. It was a fundamental sales tactic: the trial period.

It was a room with a Magic Blade stuck inside a pedestal in the middle, ripe for the taking. But if someone did take it, a trap would be sprung. The moment the Magic Blade left the pedestal, every exit would immediately get sealed. To leave the room, you'd need to put the Magic Blade back where it was. Basically, there was no way for them to keep the Magic Blade. Even if someone were to successfully get it somehow, I could just shrug that off out of respect for their wisdom. Though I'd make it so if they tried reusing the same strategy twice, the second Magic Blade would destroy itself upon exiting the room.

Also, stopping the door from closing with a stick or something wouldn't work. Reason being, I had set spike traps in the walls, ceiling, and floor of the hallway leading into the room that would activate and block the exit with an impenetrable wall of spikes. Naturally that'd kill anyone in the hallway, but I made it so the plates covering the spike holes would retract when someone got close to the Magic Blade pedestal, so... Uh... Good luck dodging them?

I placed a Wood Golem shaped target (which was actually a real golem, just without a magic stone) in the room for adventurers to try the sword out on. *It might be a smart idea to turn the whole room into a training area, or something.*

To sum things up, the beginning of the dungeon was basically the same as what it was during the Dungeon Battle. My modifications could be summarized as me fleshing out the puzzle area, adding a spiral staircase that leads to the next area, and adding the Golem Blade trial room. And by the time I finished those modifications, the sun had set.

“Whew, I sure worked hard today...”

“Thank you for your work, Master.” I was having Niku give me a massage again. But not another stepping massage. *Why not? Well, I mean, that stepping massage is just so amazing I don’t wanna ask for one too often. That’ll just make it lose its magic. Basically, a certain amount of restraint is necessary for living a good life. Like, if you don’t hold back, your desires will just grow out of control and eventually most things just won’t satisfy you anymore.*

“Wow, Master. No need to hold yourself back. You can use my feet as much as you want, dude.”

“Hey, I sure do want to. But y’know... Think about it like food, Ichika. Let’s say there’s a food gourmand and just a normal guy. The gourmand eats some mid-tier food and says ‘This is crap. It isn’t even real cooking.’ The normal guy says ‘Oh man, this is pretty tasty,’ and enjoys his meal. Which one’s happier? I think the second guy’s happier.”

“...My guy, you’ve got a point. I’m all about eating good food, not eating the same thing over and over.”

“Right. Happiness is really important. If most things don’t satisfy you, you’ll end up unhappy, and there’s nothing good that can come from that.”

“Yeah, I’m gonna have to remember that. By the way, can I have some more of those [Curry Rolls]?” *Not even that’s enough for Ichika to hold herself back, huh? Well, her loss.*

“You’re going to Tsia tomorrow to give a report on the Dungeon, right? That means I won’t be eating any [Curry Rolls] for the next two whole days. So, like, what’s the problem? Yeah?”

“That’s true, but... aaah, that’s the stuff. Right there. Do that again.”

“Yes, Master.” Niku directly stimulated some of my acupuncture points. I let

out a weird-sounding grunt. Niku was using Glove Golems to boost her power, she she could massage me properly without using her body weight. Though my shoulders weren't that stiff in the first place, so... Actually, they were super stiff since I had worked so ridiculously hard. *Super, suuuper stiff. Yep.*

"Hey, Keima. Are we really going to the city again? I better get ready, then."

"Yep... Oh, yeah. Have you used your 10,000 DP yet?"

"Mmm, not yet. I was thinking about using it on the gacha again, but I'm not sure if I should roll the 1,000 DP gacha ten times or roll the 10,000 DP gacha once."

"What's gacha...? That word sounds totally rad somehow. Care to drop the deets on me?" *Oh right... Ichika ended up super in debt after gambling too much, I forgot about that. She's not just a big food lover. If I let her play the gacha as much as she wants, she'd probably use up all our DP in a single day...*

"You're right! Pulling the 10,000 DP gacha would be way more exciting!"

"Riiight? If you're gonna do it, you've gotta do it all at once!" It took exactly one thirty-second conversation for Rokuko to decide on how she should use her DP. *Seriously? Like, that's good enough for you? I mean, I said you could do what you want with it, but c'mon. Oh well.*

"Okay, let's do it! 10,000 DP gacha, gooo!"

"Hey, hold up! Don't do that in my room! Do it in the Master Room! What if something huge like a dragon comes out and destroys the inn?!" I yelled, but it was too late. Rokuko had already used up all her DP. A magic circle glowed into existence with a hum along the floor. *Uh... Hey?! Hello?! That Magic Circle's as big as the whole room! Isn't that a problem?!*



“Oooh, I knew the 10,000 DP gacha would be fancy!”

“Please don’t be big, please don’t be big...!” I prayed that the inn I had spent so much effort on wouldn’t be destroyed. Meanwhile, Ichika and Rokuko were squealing in excitement. Niku, bless her heart, was standing protectively in front of me.

“Dragooon! Dragooon!”

“You can roll dragons too?! We’re eating steak tonight, my dudes!”

“I won’t let you eat him!”

“...I mean, his tail will grow back even if we cut it off, so...”

“What?! No!”

The magic circle began to shrink while spinning rapidly. Eventually, it was small enough to fit within the room.

“Hm? Mmm?”

“Woah, woah, it’s getting small. What’s up with that?” The circle was getting even smaller. I patted my chest in relief. Nothing that size would destroy the inn. But then, it got even smaller. *Yeah... It’s pretty small now. Yeaaaaaah... I’ll be able to hold whatever gets summoned in my own arms.*

“Ooooh...”

“I-Is this is a miss? Is this what you called a bad roll?” Rokuko and Ichika were steadily losing their enthusiasm. Niku still stood in front of me without letting her guard down at all. And so, the magic circle disappeared, leaving behind a palm-sized box.

“...What’s this?”

“Only one way to find out, eh? Let’s open it, Rokuko. C’mon.”

“O-Okay.” Rokuko timidly opened the box. Within it was a single egg and nothing more. A pretty small egg, at that.

“...This is an egg, right?”

“Want to fry it? I bet it’d taste super fab, maybe...”

“No way! But... What is this, anyway? Mmm, I can’t tell, but it’s definitely something amazing! For sure!” Rokuko lifted up the box in a celebratory pose. The egg gleamed brightly... in my imagination. Either way, the summoning had ended without my room being destroyed.

“So, what is it? Did it come with a manual?”

“...Maybe it’ll hatch if we heat it up.”

“Sounds good to me. But... You spent 10,000 DP on this thing, so don’t break it.”

“R-Right...” Although she had spent all her DP on it, the day ended without us learning exactly what it was. We decided to just heat it in the onsen water for a bit. Though to make sure we didn’t kill whatever was inside, we did so under a managed pace, as if using an incubator.

Day 45

The dungeon and the inn were both ready; we had finished them within the week. It was time to head back to the city. And so, I prepared a kind of vehicle for us.

“Heeey, Master. The heck is this thing?”

“...A golem carriage, I guess?”

“There’s no horses! There’s no wheels! It has freakin’ legs growing out of it!” That’s right. The vehicle I had prepared was a box-shaped golem with six legs growing out of it, built to travel across the worst of roads. The front side of the box had a glass window made out of empty potion bottles. It was pretty unnecessary, though, since the golem could move on its own. I based the design of its legs on horse legs, so it was pretty fast.

“Hmph... This kind of thing isn’t enough to surprise me anymore. I mean, this is Keima we’re talking about.”

“Glad to know you trust me that much.”

“Well, I mean, I’m totally okay with this. It looks fast and easy, so... yeah...”

“The box will completely cover us, so we can travel in this thing even through forests. Even when we can’t use it, the golem is just small enough to fit inside our {Storage}.”

“Ahaha. I’ll let you put him into my {Storage}. You’re welcome.”

“...Rokuko and Niku can use {Storage} too, huh? I wanna learn it too...”

“I feel like that’ll turn you into a walking food pantry, Ichika. Well, I don’t mind teaching it to you when we’ve got the DP to spare, but that’ll only happen after we get enough adventurers eating out of our hands.” We needed a fair amount of adventurers exploring our dungeon, but not enough that we became too famous. Managing that seemed like it would be difficult.

So, using the Carriage Golem, we reached Tsia City in only two hours. We had to disassemble the carriage and put it into {Storage} a fair distance away from the city, but it was still only two hours even with the additional walking. *Fantastic. Now we’ll be able to reach town quickly even if we have to go through back roads to avoid attention from adventurers heading to our dungeon.*

“Hey, it’s been a while. You were on a quest, right?”

“Yep. And we’ll be going back to the mountain soon, too.” It was the same gatekeeper as always. We showed him our quest slip, passed through the gate, and headed to the Guild.

We got to town faster than usual, but the morning had ended a while ago. There weren’t many adventurers still inside. And behind the counter sat the usual receptionist. *Man, this lady sure works pretty hard, huh?*

“Hello. It’s been one week, I believe. How was the [Ordinary Cave]?”

“Before we get to that, I’d like you to take care of these first.” I gave her the forty-five goblin ears that I had bought with DP.

“I heard from Ichika that I could take the rank up test after turning this many ears in.”

“Goblin ears, hm...? Well, they all seem fine to me. But still, this is quite a lot of ears to hunt in only a week. Did you find a colony of goblins near Tsia Mountain?”

“Something like that. Truth is, we got all of these in the [Ordinary Cave].”

“Is that so...? Would you mind telling me more?” The receptionist, sensing that there was more to our story, stood up and gestured for us to come behind the counter. *Alright. Time to shill our dungeon.*

We were guided to the guildmaster’s room. *Yeah, we are bringing some serious info here. Makes sense we’d tell it to him directly.* Within the room was the old buff dude... the guildmaster. The receptionist remained standing in the doorway entirely, as if blocking off our means of escape.

“So, what happened at the [Ordinary Cave]?”

“Take a look at this.” I showed the guildmaster a Magic (Golem) Blade and two mana potions. In other words, loot from my dungeon that was good enough to sell. And not only that, but loot valuable enough to be a huge find in a small dungeon. To say nothing of the Magic Blade, even mana potions were a full silver each.

“This is...”

“I found it in the [Ordinary Cave].”

“Really now? I thought that dungeon only had one room...”

“One room? That’s crazy talk. There were tons of rooms, and even some staircases. I got this sword in one of those rooms. There were golems all over the place, so I got out of there. I figured I had gotten a good enough look at the place.” He took it and held it at various angles, investigating it.

“...This doesn’t seem to be a normal old iron sword. Wait, it has a magic stone inside of it...?! This is a Magic Blade!”

“It sharpens when you pour mana into it.”

“Oh hoh, that makes it a Low-Rank Magic Blade... but still, a Magic Blade none the less. And you said there were golems there, too?” I decided to press further.

“...And this info isn’t all coming from me, by the way.”

“Oh? What do you mean by that?”

“The A-Rank adventurer, the White-Winged Goddess. I heard she’s the one

who took the [Ordinary Cave] investigation quest before me. I think you can tell what I'm trying to say here."

"Lady Haku, huh? You're telling me she's involved in this?" *Ah. I guess he's calling her "Lady" Haku since she's an important figure in the Guild, too.*

"I met her by chance by the mountain. She told me that the [Ordinary Cave] had undergone a paradigm shift. Though she mentioned that the guild in the Imperial City made her report that everything was normal."

"...A paradigm shift?! But why would she hide that? Falsifying information is... no, wait. A-Ranks have the right to keep some things to themselves... and Lady Haku is the one who established that quest in the first place..."

"There's also an inn by the dungeon."

"An inn?! Wh-Why the hell was there an inn there...?" The guildmaster furrowed his brows, baffled by what I had said. *Yeah, it is pretty unbelievable. Basically as unrealistic as you can get. But this is where persuasion comes in!*

"Does it matter why? Haku had an associate of hers build it. It's probably pointless for us to try and think about why she'd do that."

"You've... got a point. Who knows what the hell that woman is thinking. She made it clear that the [Ordinary Cave] was not to be touched, but... Yeah, thinking about this is a waste of time. Which means all we gotta do is take your word for all this and figure out what to do with the dungeon."

"Er, well, a lot happened and now I'm actually gonna be working at that inn. I'm gonna be using it as my base of operations from now on."

"...Alright. Sure." The guildmaster closed his eyes and nodded. *Nice! Persuasion really worked!* But the moment I thought that and let my guard down, the guildmaster continued speaking.

"Guess I'll put a branch office of the Tsia Adventurer's Guild there."

"...Huh?" *A... branch office?*

"Yep. Thanks for the report. Consider your quest a success. And after we've taken a look at this dungeon ourselves, I'll let all three of you rank up to E-Rank. You managed to hunt this many goblins in only a week. Should be fine."

“Eh? Me too? Yay, go me!” *I guess Rokuko’s getting to E-Rank despite doing literally nothing. She’s even skipping F-Rank. Is it okay to break those rules...? Wait, this isn’t what matters right now.*

“Er, a branch office? What do you mean?”

“I meant what I said. If that dungeon really did grow, adventurers are gonna be crawling all over it. Things will go a lot more smoothly if we have an office there. Especially if there’s also an inn there.”

“W-Well, yeah, that’s true.”

“A town might spring up around that dungeon depending on what it’s like. We’re gonna have to investigate this further... which means another quest. You can take it if you want.” *A... town?! This is serious. I didn’t plan on anything that big happening. If too many people come to the dungeon, I won’t be able to make golems do all the farming! Crap, crap, crap. Can I grow crops inside of the dungeon? And it’ll be a lot harder to use special golems like the one I used to carry us here.* My thoughts were interrupted by the receptionist bringing back our guild cards. He had said we’d be ranked up after they checked out the dungeon, but our cards already had E-Rank on them. But that was the least of our problems. I said some half-assed goodbyes and left the Guild.

“...Things might not go so well for us here. Let’s get back to base.”

“Really? Mmm, I guess we can’t play around before leaving this time.” Luckily we had no business in Tsia City, so we could immediately head back to base. Also, Ichika said “Hell yeah! We’re eating [Curry Rolls] for supper tonight, dudes!” *At least she’s happy.*

Chapter 2

A Certain C-Rank Adventurer's Perspective

My name's Uzou. I'm an adventurer. I know what I look like, but I'm a veteran C-Rank and a skilled warrior. I've completed countless quests with my partner Muzou, a scout. Our quest this time is to explore a dungeon that just had a paradigm shift. "This used to be a dungeon that only summoned goblins, right? We're gonna be fine."

"Don't get cocky, Muzou. Paradigm shifts can change dungeons from the ground up. Who knows what kinda monsters are gonna be in there now."

"Sheesh, Uzou. You worry too much." Sheesh, Muzou's way too careless for a scout. Though I know that his carelessness comes from self-confidence.

"Hey, look at that, Uzou. There's an inn by the dungeon's entrance. Guess the Guild was right."

"Let's stay the night and check out the dungeon tomorrow. Sound good?"

"Yep, sounds great."

The inn looks pretty well-built from the outside. Let's go on in.

Behind the counter is a girl wearing a cute black and white outfit. The frilly design really catches my attention.

"Hi! Welcome to the Dancing Doll Inn, my dudes!" The girl's beautiful and she talks with the casual style of a Pavella girl. Her face is shapely like a doll's, and... they're huge. What's huge? Her tits, obviously. I wonder if the "doll" in "Dancing Doll Inn" refers to her. She's so beautiful I find myself staring at her. But I get myself together and ask for the price. Fifty coppers per night, per person. That means one silver for two people. We got a room together. A silver's actually pretty cheap for an inn this deep into the mountains. Newbie adventurers might struggle to pay for it, but it's nothing to we C-Ranks.

"Oh, and food's like, totally separate from that. You gotta pay more for it. The

bath's free, though!"

"The bath? Oh wow, this inn has a bath, huh?"

"You betcha. It's called, like, an onsen. Lots of people can go into it at once. Oh woah, my bad, dudes. There's lots of baths like this in Pavella, so I'm pretty used to them. Are they rare around here?" They are rare in Tsia, but I'm a C-Rank adventurer. I've been to all kinds of cities and Pavella too. I've gone to a large public bath before in my life.

"You can just borrow some of our bathrobes, consider it a treat from us. Oh, and about the food... We've got A-Rank meals down to G-Rank. Lots of choices, my guys."

"Oh wow. Might as well splurge on A-Rank... wait, what?! One whole gold piece?!"

"You betcha. The super duper good A-Rank meal has the super duper high price of one gold coin! But lemme tell you, it's totes worth it! I guarantee it! The A-Rank meal is so delicious you might just die eating it♪" I-I don't care how good it is, I can't pay a whole gold coin for it. I wonder what kind of meal it is anyway? I wanna know. I wanna know bad, but that's just way too much of a gamble.

"Mmm, I think I'm just gonna settle down and get the C-Rank meal... Wait, what? It costs five silvers...?"

"Yooou betcha. C-Rank costs five silvers. But it's pretty good too, dude. Wanna hear what exactly it is?"

"Nah, I'll pass..." I look at the prices chart and see that the prices are as follows: A-Rank, one gold; B-Rank, fifty silvers; C-Rank, five silvers; D-Rank, one silver; E-Rank, fifty coppers; F-Rank, five coppers; and G-Rank, one copper.

"Uzou, I've made up my mind. I want a C-Rank meal!"

"H-Hold up. That's how much we're getting paid for this quest! What're you thinking? You'll just lose money here. And I'm not lending you any of mine!"

"Hahaha. We can sell whatever we find in there for more money, y'know? I'll be fine. Hey, pretty girl. What's your name? When are you getting off work? I'm

Muzou, and I'm a C-Rank adventurer."

"Oooh, okay. Thanks for the business, and enjoy your stay. What meal do you want, mister? I gotta recommend D-Rank or above." Muzou, the heck are you flirting for? Seriously? And wow, she completely blew you off.

"...I'll have a D-Rank meal. That's still one whole silver, though. Your prices sure are expensive."

"That's just how good the food is. Thank yooou. Oh yeah, and you guys can go into the bath first if you want. The food'll be ready for you when you get back."

"Nice, that sounds good. I think that's what we'll do."

"Hey, at least tell me your name. C'mooon." I ignore Muzou's feeble flirting attempts and pay my share. The girl gives me a slip that she calls a food ticket. I can exchange it for the food by going to the cafeteria later. Makes sense.

After that, we were told our room number and given a key. I think I'll put my stuff down and head straight to the onsen.

I open the door to my room and see a dresser, shelves, and a bed. There's no magic light tool, but there is a lamp. They must be trying to sell oil and make some cash from that. And... What's with this bed? Is it... made from cotton? I had prepared myself for a wooden bed after hearing they had actually bothered to build a giant bath, but... ooh, my hand sinks right into this baby! This bed alone makes the room worth fifty coppers, easily.

Alright, next up is the bath. The changing room has shelves with lockers you can store your clothes in. The bath in Pavella had one of these too. Oh, and these must be the bathing clothes. I'm pretty sure she said we could borrow these for free. I take off my clothes, change into the bathing clothes, and store my clothes in the locker.

...I'm pretty sure these bathing clothes are better made than my own clothes. I kind of want to just keep these. But first comes the bath. Yeah... This is definitely an impressive bath.

It's massive and made from stone. The hot water in the bath is giving off steam. I'm surprised they can use water this freely while deep in the mountains. They must have found an underground water source somewhere. Maybe that's

why they built the inn in the first place.

Either way, I cast {Purification} on myself and get into the bath.

“Oh, ooooh...” I reflexively let out a groan. This is good... Really good. I’m confident this inn is gonna be popular... I haven’t had the food yet, but I’m already pretty satisfied. Muzou comes in halfway through my bath and looks more surprised than I was.

I get out of the bath. I definitely want to come here again... Actually, wait. I’m staying the night so I can use the bath as much as I want. I’ll take another one tomorrow morning. Wait... What’s with this chair? It looks like it has a slot I can fit a copper into... I look up and see a poster explaining what the chair is. Apparently, it’s a chair that gives massages. Must be a magic tool they found in a dungeon. Though it mentions that you should expect people to throw you out of the chair if you fall asleep in it, so be careful.

Hm... Five minutes per copper, huh? I wonder what kind of massage a chair will give. Let’s try it out. I sit in the chair and put in the coin. After hearing the pleasant sound of a coin hitting something, the chair starts vibrating rapidly.

Oh, oooh! Wh-What’s, going on? I’ve never felt a massage like this before. Oooh, ooOoooOooh?! The vibrating gets stronger and weaker randomly, this is definitely... pretty good, ooooh...

.....

Someone roughly pats me on the shoulder. “Hey. Wake up, Uzou. You’ll catch a cold if you sleep here.”

“Woah! O-Oh, Muzou. Hey. Guess I did fall asleep.” I had indeed been sleeping peacefully until Muzou woke me up. Whew... That chair massage really is something...

“C’mon, let’s go eat. I bought a C-Rank meal for five silvers and I’m ready to eat it. I’m starving.”

“Oh? Right, right. I got a D-Rank meal. I wonder how different they’re gonna be.”

Food’s provided in the cafeteria, so we go there and exchange our food

tickets. Our meals were brought out immediately without any waiting time.

"Um, here." A young beastkin girl with brown skin brings out our food. She's wearing the same frilly outfit that the girl behind the counter was, which looks super cute on her. The square tray she set in front of me is covered with several plates and bowls of thick brown soup, bread, and salad. This is all I get for one silver? Wait, no. The smell's so good I can tell this is some high quality food.

"You can get extra bread for ten coppers a piece. Also, there is dessert after you're done."

"Dessert? We can't have it now?"

"It's cold, so I don't recommend getting it now. But I can bring it out if you want it right away." It's cold? I wonder what it is. But either way, I'll follow her recommendation and eat it after I'm done.

"Oh? Wow, Uzou. You didn't get a lot of food, huh?"

"What're you talking about? This is plenty. I guess that's the C-Rank meal you're eating. Now that's a lot of food."

"Well, 'course it is. My C-Rank meal cost five times as much as yours. Hahaha!" Muzou has one more plate than me, with a big steak on it. Plus, he got two rolls of bread. I'm jealous of that thick steak. Wait... His soup is a different color than mine too. His is white.

"And this one comes with a dessert, too."

"So does mine... A steak, huh? Looks good. What kind of meat is it?"

"Probably boar meat...? Woah! This bread is really fluffy, and sweet?!"

"It looks pretty white, too. This bread's crazy good... Oh, crap. I don't wanna finish the bread off before eating the soup." I hurriedly spoon some of the soup into my mouth.

What...?! Holy cow. This tastes amazing. I can taste meat in it. Actually, now that I'm looking, it actually does have meat in it. There's a lot of vegetables, too. This soup is stacked.

"Woah, what is this, rabbit meat...? No, maybe boar meat? Man, if this is friggin' minotaur meat..."

“Haha, fat chance of that. No way would minotaur meat cost one silver. And remember, we’re this inn’s first visitors.”

“Good point. By the way, your soup looks a lot different from mine... How is it?”

“Hm... nnn?! Holy crap, it’s really thick and... kinda fluffy, too? Is it like... some kind of milk? They must have made this soup... or stew... with milk. Right... I’ve eaten this stuff at the imperial capital before.”

“Looks pretty good. Let me have some.”

“No way! This is mine!” Yeah, same. I don’t want to split any of my soup either.

I dig into my salad and... what?! Sh-Sheesh, this is some high level cooking. Even the salad’s surprising me. Is this... dressing? It’s yellowish, and kinda white... oil?

“Oh, look at you, Mr. Appetite. How is it, dude? You like it? I beeet you do. Ah, the stuff on your salad’s called, like, mayonnaise. Some Hero invented it or something.” The receptionist comes over and sits next to me. Woah... I smell something really nice...

“Hey, c’mon! At least sit next to me!”

“Haha, too bad. Dudes who can’t take a hint aren’t my type. But I’ve got some time, so I came to talk about your food. Let’s see... About that white soup. You were totally right, it’s a kind of stew made with milk. You don’t see that kinda thing around here much, but people at the imperial capital eat it all the time.” Wow. Muzou was actually right about something, huh?

“So, about your brown soup. Hold on to your pants, but that’s some real beef stew!”

“...What? Beef, as in like, from cows? Seriously?! Was there some celebration recently or what?!” You usually don’t eat beef unless you’re celebrating something or retiring an old cow. There are farms near the imperial capital that raise cows, so people eat beef more often there, but it’s still pretty expensive.

“H-Hold on. Doesn’t that make his stew way better than my stew?!”

“Hahaha, no way, my dude. That steak you’ve got is beef too. And since we’re still not getting too many visitors... or more like, since you two are our first customers, I gave you an especially thick one as a treat.”

“Seriously?! Oooh, so this is beef, huh... This steak is worth five silvers by itself.” That’s right, this inn just got built recently. Them opening shop is worthy of a celebration, makes sense that they’d have beef lying around. But seriously... this is one high quality meal. No way is this normal. It’s gotta be like, a limited edition thing.

“Ah, aaah, right. Right. This is a special time for us; normally the steaks are just boar and stuff. Truth is, we wanna know the adventurer who built this inn for us has a real good time when they come visit, so we’re trying out a lot of things as practice right now.”

“The adventurer who built this inn?”

“...He was an A-Rank adventurer, but like, anything more than that’s a secret. Sorry, can’t lose my job over this, y’know?”

An A-Rank adventurer, huh...? Yeah, a celebration for someone like that would justify killing a cow or two. They must be using beef now to train their chefs for when it really matters. But either way, this meat is perfectly flavored with delicious spices. Cow meat or boar meat, it’s easily worth several silvers. I end up finishing off all my soup in no time.

“Oh whoops, it’s about time for your dessert. Niku! Bring it out!”

“Right... away...” The beastkin from earlier comes out holding dessert. It’s white... no, yellow. It looks like a trapezoid, but from above it looks like a weird flower. Also, there’s some brown sauce covering it.

“What is this...?”

“It’s called a [Purin], and it’s your dessert. By the way, it only comes with D-Rank meals and above. That’s why I recommended them. So... Get ready, boys. You’re gonna melt in this sweetness...” I gulp after she whispers into my ear, holding my spoon at the ready. The girl grins at me, amused. I push my spoon forward and dig into the purin, causing it to jiggle.

And so...

...That day, I saw a glimpse of Heaven.

It's the next day. I leave the inn with a heart full of regret, chewing on the bread given out as a free morning breakfast. I honestly want to stay another night. The bath is great, the food is great, even the beds are great. Everything's top class. Food that good should cost way more than a silver or fifty coppers! Aaah, sheesh. I'm gonna stay another night after finishing this quest, and then I'm gonna come back to stay a third night after turning the quest in.

We go into the dungeon and are immediately greeted by rooms filled with pitfalls. We would have fallen to our deaths in seconds if not for Muzou's [Detect Danger] skill.

"Friggin' crap. I wish I had at least gotten her name. I'm definitely gonna try to get it when we stay before going back." Muzou seems to be pretty obsessed with that receptionist girl. Well, can't blame him for that. She is a real babe. She seemed kind of familiar to me, somehow, but... ah.

"Aaaah. Muzou, this is kinda late, but... I know that girl's name."

"What?! The hell is going on here, when'd you get so close to her?!"

"Man, that's Sorin."

"Sorin...? Wait, you mean Sorin the Food Monster?! Th-That's her?!"

I think back to all the bad memories I have about Sorin. Yeah... I'm pretty sure she lost everything she owned to gambling. She's crazy strong to alcohol and her stomach's a bottomless well. Countless adventurers have been drawn in by her good looks, only to end up spending all their money buying food for her. On top of all that, she's strong enough to reach C-Rank without knowing a single skill.

"I heard she fell into slavery recently... What's she doing in a place like that?"

"Woah, she was a slave? I didn't notice at all..." She had a collar, man. Though it was hard to notice since her clothes kind of mixed well with it. Hm. Muzou really doesn't pay enough attention when it comes to women. I don't know what that says about him as a scout. He's usually really reliable when it comes

to exploring dungeons with no women around... usually.

“But man, there’s nothing but goblins around here. What’s up with that, Uzou?”

“Remember, this used to be a dungeon that only ever summoned goblins. The real problem here is all the traps. They’re deadly, and there’s a lot of them.”

“Yeah, there’s mountains of spikes in each pitfall. Pretty dangerous.”

“Sheesh. Do your job, alright?” We advance further, collecting the right ears of all the goblins we cut down. Oh, a treasure chest. “Muzou, check it out. There’s a chest. Let’s try opening it.”

“Let’s see... No traps. Alright, sweet. Is there any treaaaasure...? Oooh! There’s a mana potion in here!”

“Nice, that’s worth a silver.”

We keep advancing just like that. Judging from how Muzou has to keep using his {Little Heal} spell, a normal party of adventurers might struggle a bit in this dungeon. And then, we find some stairs.

“I heard the people who were here before us found a Magic Blade somewhere after these stairs, Uzou.”

“Yep. I’m looking forward to finding one myself, Muzou. But be careful. Alright?”

The second floor is filled with golems. But they don’t pose much of a threat to us.

“...{Slash}!” My iron blade cuts a Clay Golem in half. They were weak enough that I didn’t even need to destroy their magic stones. After all, there’s generally three ways to take down a golem.

First is to destroy their magic stone. Magic stones are the practical heart of a golem. They’re usually inside their bodies, but sometimes they’re somewhere outside of it. If you destroy that, the golem will stop moving.

Second is to hit them with a magic-based attack. Golems are basically dolls that are powered by mana, so they’re really weak to attack magic that disturbs their mana. Though I don’t have any magic-based attack skills or anything.

Third and final is to really mess up their bodies. That's more accurately disturbing the magic within their bodies, but... it's basically the same thing. If you keep hitting golems with attacks that they can't defend, they'll briefly get weaker, allowing you to...

"And another one bites the dust."

The golem I cut in half crumbles, returning to simple clay. Muzou recovers the safe magic stone from within it.

"You're pretty good, Uzou. Thanks to that we get to keep the magic stones. It's great." We can easily recover the magic stones when they're on the surface of the golem, but we ignore them when they're deep inside their bodies. Not worth the time. Plus doing that would be a huge risk for a pair of two adventurers like us.

We explore the dungeon some more and eventually find a small room.

"Huh? What's with this room? The hallway looked different somehow... Oooh, this must be a Safe Zone."

"Oh, really? Nice. Let's rest for a bit. Wait, wait! Look! There's a sword over there! Muzou!"

"Well look at that, it's stabbed right into a pedestal, ripe for the taking. Let's get closer while checking for traps." Muzou steps into the room while keeping his guard up. Safe Zones may be free of monsters, but that's it. They can still have traps inside of them.

Eventually, we reach the pedestal.

"Huh? I think I heard something in the hallway. Did you, Muzou?"

"Nah, don't think so. I'll check it out."

"Might be dangerous to just leave. I'll check out the sword first... Oh man, it has a magic stone inside of it! This is a Magic Blade!" I shout without thinking. I can't believe we found the Magic Blade we were looking for this fast.

"Wow, that's pretty great. Do you think I could use it too?"

"We found this one so fast, I'm sure there's another one nearby. You can have

that one Muzou.”

“I’m not sensing any traps here. Go ahead, take it ou—wait. Hold on! Don’t take the sword out!”

“Wha?” Seems like Muzou’s [Detect Danger] just noticed a trap. But it was too late. I had already taken the sword out, unable to contain my excitement.

I hear a loud thunk from the hallway, along with the sound of metal scraping together. I take a look and see that the hallway is locked tight with needles much thicker than the sword. They looked like fangs of a beast, blocking up its mouth.

“Hey, what the heck happened...?”

“...Sorry, it’s not a trap that directly hurts us, so it took longer for me to detect it...”

We’re... trapped in here?!

How long have we been stuck in here? Muzou says that the trap seems harmless and will probably deactivate given enough time, and I agree. We decide to rest in the room and wait for everything to blow over. It’s a safe room, after all. I’m not too worried, though. I got a Magic Blade and I’m high on life. We’re supposed to be resting, but I’m having so much fun swinging the blade around that time passes by in moments. Heheheh. Won’t be long before people all over the world start calling me Uzou the Magic Swordsman!

“Sheesh, Uzou. Don’t let your guard down so much just ’cause we’re in a Safe Zone without any traps nearby.”

“But c’mon, this is a Magic Blade! A real one! The iron sword I’ve been using up until now is pretty nice, but look, this Magic Blade’s tearing that wooden practice dummy to shreds! It’s so sharp!”

“Aaah, yeah yeah... Hey. Would you mind letting me try it out for a bit? I wanna see what it’s actually like.”

“Sure, the dummy’s not totally destroyed yet.” I hand the Magic Blade over to Muzou.

“Wow, this is pretty nice. It sharpens like hell the second I pour mana into it.

Just what I'd expect from a Magic Blade."

"Right?! We sure are lucky, finding a great Magic Blade like this on such an early floor."

"Though we're kinda stuck in here."

"...Don't say that, man..." We grin, joking around with each other.

And so, we keep passing time without worrying about a thing... or we did, until two whole days had passed.

* * *

It's been three days since we got trapped. I can make us water with my {Water} spell, but we're running out of food fast.

"...The hell is going on? The trap's still not unlocking?"

"Yeah, nope. I'm thinking we should start trying to get out of here on our own, but these spikes, man. They won't budge."

"Maybe they shot out because I took the Magic Blade out of the pedestal?"

"I thought that too, but nothing happened when I stuck my own sword into it."

"...Should we break through them?"

"Dunno if we can. Look at those spikes—they're made of iron."

"...Maybe I could cut through them if I use {Slash} with this Magic Blade?"

"Don't come crying to me if it breaks."

I don't want that, but I might have to try it out if all else fails.

Muzou and I go back to investigating the room.

* * *

It's been five days since we got trapped.

"Gaaaah, we're screweeed. We can't find a way out. We're almost out of food. We've got nothing, man."

"Hey, Muzou. Do you think someone will come looking for us...?"

“...They probably think we’re dead. Why do you think they hired us to check this place out? Huh?”

“Aaah, right...” If C-Rank adventurers are sent to explore a dungeon and don’t come back, the Guild can extrapolate that the dungeon will likely be too dangerous for lower ranks. In other words, they put this quest up knowing that whoever accepted it might die. Of course, we took the quest knowing that as well.

“Crap. If I knew this was gonna happen, I would’ve gotten the C-Rank meal too...”

“Hey, shut up, Uzou! You’re just gonna make me hungry! Aaah, sheesh. Now I’m thinking about that food again. Ngh... If we get outta here alive, I’m gonna spend all I have on getting that A-Rank meal!”

“...Alright. Guess it’s about time to throw down the gauntlet. I’m gonna try breaking the spikes with {Slash} and this Magic Blade. I don’t wanna mess it up... but our lives are more important.”

“You sure? You might even break the Magic Blade in two, y’know.”

“You’re telling me to sit and wait for death? That doesn’t sound so hot to me.” I ready the Magic Blade and pour mana into it. Then, after building up plenty of power into it, I launch a blow with all my might.

“...Nhaaaah! {Slash}!” My blade cuts through several of the spikes with a loud screech. It’s working! I can do this!

“Uzou! Do it again!”

“Yeah...! {Slash}!” Loud metal screeching fills the air as my sword cuts deeper into the spikes. Just one more blow!

“Alright, here it is! {Slash}!” The screeching intensifies as if the spikes are shrieking in pain, and then... they break! I did it, I cut through the spikes!

“Uzou! You did it!”

“Yeah! I... what?!” I froze in place. Right behind the wall of spikes I just destroyed... is another identical wall of spikes.

“D-Don’t worry, I already cut through one wall of spikes. What’s a second one

on top of that?”

“...Nah, man. We’re finished.”

“Huh? What’s with you, Muzou? Don’t you want to get out of here?”

“Yeah, I do. But look... That Magic Blade can’t take much more punishment. We can’t use it anymore.” Confused, I look at the Magic Blade. It’s filled with cracks, punishment for trying to forcibly cut through a wall of spikes. The hell...? This is a Magic Blade, isn’t it? They’re not supposed to break this fast, c’mon...

“And look, the spike trap is already regenerating. You’re gonna turn into a pincushion if you stay in that hallway.”

“Shit...!” I curse and backpedal out of the hallway, moments before the spikes fully regenerate and fill up the hallway. The spike wall’s back without a scratch on it, thanks to how dungeon traps and walls regenerate over time. Now it really feels like we’re trapped inside the mouth of a monster. This is all I get for sacrificing my new Magic Blade...?

* * *

It’s been eight days... I think. We’re stuck in this underground room with no sun to guide us, so who knows how long it’s really been. And we ran out of food. We had only planned to stay in here for two, three days tops. Really, it’s impressive we stretched it out as long as we did.

...But we’re still stuck inside here. There’s nothing we can do. Tensions are high for both of us.

“This is really all your fault, Uzou. I tried to stop you, but you just couldn’t wait to pull that Magic Blade out...”

“I only pulled it out ’cause you said I could. You took it back last second, but c’mon, I was already pulling the sword out. This is your fault.”

But we don’t stop blaming each other for this mess. We let out all our built up annoyance for each other, and even go down to just plain insulting each other. We get so mad we threaten to choke each other to death for saying another word. The fact we’re not actually backing up those threats is because we’re brothers who have shared a strong bond for our whole lives. Any other party

would probably have started killing each other or stealing each other's food, for sure.

"...Alright, I'm getting tired of this. Let's drop the insults for now. Sorry for being a dick to you, Muzou."

"Huh... Well, sure. What's with you all of a sudden, Uzou?"

"Nothing's happened since we got stuck in here. Maybe this whole thing is just a trap to break our party apart."

"Aaah... Yeah, no point in us getting pissed at each if that's true. Sorry, my bad. Not that we're strangers to stupid fights."

"Nah, it's not your bad. This is all the dungeon's fault. Sound good, Muzou?"

...I wonder if we can eat those goblin ears. Ah, no, they're definitely rotten by now...

I shut my eyes, hoping to save as much energy as possible.

Day 50 — # Keima's Perspective

With the dungeon's modifications finished, it was time to start managing it and the inn for real. But regardless of how ready we were, adventurers didn't just storm the place as soon as we opened up. Things would take time to really get going.

By the way, I named the inn the Dancing Doll Inn. That name would provide cover if anyone stumbles upon the golems farming the nearby fields. We could just claim that Rokuko, the owner, was a golem user and the inn was named in her honor. And that wouldn't be a lie, either, since the golems do obey her orders. I was planning on buying a {Create Golem} scroll for her when I had the spare DP for it, too. I'd just have to give them armbands or something that signified that they worked for our inn.

"Haaah... I'm so freakin' bored, man..." Ichika slumped against the counter in boredom, but I couldn't blame her. We weren't getting any customers yet. *Wait... Speaking of which, do we even need someone to sit behind the counter constantly? Rokuko can sense people entering the dungeon boundaries, so we*

could just wait for that and then send someone to the counter... Wait, better yet, we could just have a golem behind the counter that will come get us whenever a visitor enters. Suddenly, my thoughts were interrupted by our first pair of customers.

It was a pair of two men. I took up camp in my room and watched them through the monitor.

...They get a C-Rank and D-Rank meal, respectively. The C-Rank meal is a [Steak Set (10 DP)], while the D-Rank meal is a [Beef Stew Set (6 DP)]. By the way, the food was basically as good as the stuff you'd find in an average restaurant. If you think of 1 DP as 100 yen, eh, it basically worked out. In fact, it was a little cheaper DP-wise. *So, honestly, I think charging five silvers for the C-Rank and one silver for the D-Rank is pretty much overkill. Cause like, if you turn one silver into yen, that's basically 50,000 and 10,000 yen for those meals. Ichika said I could charge even more than that, but I dunno, it didn't feel right to me.*

Partially out of guilt, I decided to give a free purin with any meal over D-Rank. I bought them in a set of three, much like you'd find in a supermarket. [Three Purin Set (1 DP)]. They came on plastic plates that were actually valuable in this world, so I recycled them for use in golems. *Huh, I just realized. We'll have an extra purin since there's only two people... Wait?! Was Ichika planning for this to happen all along?!* Anyway, they seemed to love the food, the onsen, the massage chair, and even their futons. They took a bath and headed to the dungeon immediately after waking up.

"Masteeer. I tooold you that you'd have the raise the prices if you want to sell beef like that. They totally got suspicious." *Yeah... She's got a point. They were really thrown off by the beef. Though one of them forgot about it and fell asleep with a gross smile on his face seconds after eating his purin. I guess I'll move all the meals up a rank and make [Ginger-fried Pork (5 DP)] the new D-Rank meal. E-Rank and below can stay as [Vegetable Rolls] and [Butter Rolls].*

Also, I could now buy three pieces of black and hard bread—what you'd normally find in this world—for 1 DP. Though... [Butter Rolls] came in a bag of six for 1 DP each, so there was no reason to ever buy the bad bread. *I just don't understand.*

“So, it looks like they picked up the Tsia quest to explore our dungeon. They’re brothers, Uzou and Muzou. Both C-Rank adventurers.”

“Are they really brothers?”

“Nah, they said they weren’t blood-related or anything. They were born in the same town, though.” *Alright. I’m not gonna worry about what kind of “brothers” they are.* In any case, thanks to them, we had earned seven silvers, one copper coin, and 125 DP. Each silver was worth 10 DP, so subtracting the points I had used on their food, we had earned 178 DP in total.

Oh, and about DP. At some point we unlocked another function, one that allowed me to see how much DP was coming from each individual room in the dungeon. Very useful. Maybe it unlocked because I had built an inn? Either way, I was surprised to see that they were earning us 120 DP per night. I figured they were pretty strong but then realized that just meant they were as strong as Ichika, maybe a little weaker. *I wonder what’s up with that.*

I checked the map to see what the invaders were doing, and realized that I could now see how much DP they were individually earning us. It was displayed as “/DP”. That definitely referred to how much DP they earned us in a day. *Man, we sure are unlocking a lot of functions here.*

So, I checked them out and saw Uzou was getting us 61/DP, while Muzou was getting us 59/DP. That meant that together, they were earning us 5 DP an hour. But that meant things didn’t add up. They stayed in our inn for one night, not a full twenty-four hours. They got here at 6PM and left at 8AM, for a total of fourteen hours. That shouldn’t have even earned us even 70 DP. Some simple calculations gave me 55 DP at best.

But after watching them closely on the map for a while, I noticed something. One of the rooms in our dungeon had a jail cell in it, a remnant of the prison room I had built for the bandits all that time ago. The moment Uzou stepped into that cell, his DP count shot up to 183/DP.

...Basically, the amount of DP earned from an individual changed from where they were in the dungeon. There might have been other factors, too, but all I knew then was that being in a jail cell probably boosted an individual’s DP gain by a factor of three. *I should investigate this further.* Ichika’s worth 65/DP, so

she'd earn us 195/DP if she were in a jail cell... *Yeah, this is some great info. I'll show Uzou and Muzou my thanks by giving them a little [Mana Potion (150 DP)] as a gift. And wow, this DP stat is really gonna be useful as a rough estimation of how strong someone is. Ah, right. Niku's 10DP, while Rokuko and I are both 0/DP. Cause we're the Master and Core, probably. And Niku... Has she gotten stronger? Or did she just heal up? She was nearly dead when I saved her, so... Wait. Doesn't that mean our daily DP from the ground is only 90 DP a day? I feel like that's not much at all... Come on, ground! You can do better than this, I believe in you!*

Uzou and Muzou found the staircase in the midst of their goblin slaughtering and thus proceeded to the first underground floor. I put a lot of traps on the first ground floor, but they beat them all without much trouble. *Maybe I should make things a little harder?*

Basement floors meant golems. The adventurers stumbled upon many groups of Clay Golems wandering around near their spawners. These golems mostly didn't have any swords and would just come fists swinging, so they weren't very strong. They didn't pose any threat at all to the brothers.

"...Oh, huh. Golems die if you cut them in half?"

"C'mon, Master. You're a golem user, you gotta know that much. Y'see, golems stop moving if the mana in their body gets all messed up. And like, not moving is basically being dead, yeah? So, yeah, that kills them dead. It's pretty normal to take golems down with heavy blows or strong magic. Oooh, right, and their magic stones are a total weak point. Destroy it and they'll die from the shock." Ichika told me all about golems and their weak points. In reality, the only thing I learned from the {Create Golem} scroll was how to make golems. I didn't know much else about them. And the instructions were just for Clay Golems, not all the original ones I had been making all the time.

Heavy blows, magic, and magic stones. Maybe golems were actually pretty weak? They were low-tier monsters, with a Clay Golem costing two-thirds as much as a Lizard Man (150 DP). *Oh, maybe I should make them wear armor or something. Golem Armor for a golem... Ah, now I'm imagining terracotta warriors, like those that got super famous. I think they're called haniwa. Wait, wait! That gives me a great idea. I should make a boss golem that looks like a*

haniwa. They're kind of like warriors that protect their master's sleep, right? They're perfect for my dungeon.

I kept watching Uzou and Muzou casually conquering my dungeon for bit, and eventually they reached the trial room. Uzuou walked up to the pedestal and pulled out the Magic Golem Blade. *Oh. Their /DP counts doubled the moment the exit got shut off. I guess... an individual's DP income doubles if they're in a closed room? Maybe I should make an extra floor of the dungeon and call it like, a training area, to put locks on the door... Wait, no. People will close and lock their doors on their own, we're an inn. And that's already what happened. Now I know why I got extra DP today!*

They looked so excited after getting the Magic Blade that I couldn't help but smile. I uh... I didn't expect things to get so bad for them afterwards. Seriously. I honestly didn't.

Day 53

Three days had passed since the adventurers went into our dungeon. Our inn hadn't had a single visitor in the meantime, but we were getting 240 DP a day from them (the Zou Brothers, Uzou and Muzou). Adding on Ichika, Niku, and the ground's DP, we were getting around 400 DP a day. Basically, I was earning 40,000 yen a day for doing absolutely nothing. Which meant, in turn, my monthly income was a whopping 1,200,000 yen. If that were a pension, I'd be having the retirement of a lifetime.

"...But why aren't they leaving the trial room?"

"They must really like it in there! Just what I'd expect from my dungeon, eheheh!" All they had to do was stick the Magic Blade into the pedestal to get out, but... they weren't doing that. *What could be compelling them to stay inside there...?* As far as I could tell, they were just walking around the room and tapping the walls. *Oh! Uzou just stuck his normal sword in the pedestal. Almost, but not quite. You're getting warmer.*

"Wait. Have they just... not figured out what to do?"

"Aaah, now that you mention it, they did seem kinda dumb."

“I don’t think you should be saying that, Rokuko.”

They must have been unconsciously avoiding the correct answer, maybe because they didn’t want to give the Magic Blade up. That reminded me of the experiments where monkeys got their hands stuck in jars when trying to take treats out of them.

“Let’s keep watching them for a bit. They’ll probably find their way out soon enough... and if they don’t, we get their tasty DP.”

“Okay, Keima. We’ve come this far. Maybe we should just keep them trapped in there until they die.”

With Ichika’s help, I discovered that DP gain was doubled by being in a locked room, tripled by being in a jail cell, and multiplied by six by being in a locked jail cell. In that last case, however, just being in the cell steadily tired her out. Maybe because DP was being squeezed out of her? I didn’t know jail cells had that kind of power. *But either way... I’m gonna make sure to lock my door before going to bed from now on. Gotta work with everything I’ve got. Ah... Wait, I only earn 0 DP. Whoops. That won’t help at all.*

Day 55

Five days had passed since Uzou and Muzou locked themselves up. A long time ago, I believe that I mentioned that an invader staying inside the dungeon for ten days would earn us as much DP as they would by dying. In other words, we had now gotten more DP from Uzou and Muzou than we would have by killing them instantly. I could give’m food and just keep reaping in all this sweet, sweet DP. By the way, several upper-tier dungeons apparently had human farms within them. They literally raised humans like animals on a farm to get their DP. Though if they ever got found out, they’d instantly be branded an enemy of humanity with everyone out to destroy their Cores. A small dungeon like ours wouldn’t be able to survive that kinda heat. *Though nobody would find it if I built one on a really, really deep floor... No, even that’s too risky.*

Anyway. I was watching Uzou and Muzou while lazing around, thanks to no other visitors showing up, when all of a sudden Uzou lost his patience and

started wailing on the spike wall with the Magic Blade.

"...But too bad! That Golem Blade turns into just a normal [Iron Sword] whenever it's attacking a dungeon object! In our dungeon, anyway!"

"Who are you explaining that to? They can't hear a word you're saying, you know." *Oh, though it'll still work just fine on normal monsters. That way they can try out how good the sword is real-time. What about the boss? Well, the boss is special. I haven't made him yet, but I'm planning on making our Dungeon Boss have a "special power" that negates the Magic Blades found in the dungeon.*

So, just as expected, he failed... or not. He somehow managed to break through the first spike wall. He gave up after seeing that there was a second one behind it, though. *I'm surprised he got through the first one, though. Thanks to this locked room having its key inside itself—that key being the Magic Blade—the doors and walls and so on should be so beefed up that almost nothing can break them. Wait... Huh? The Magic Blade is broken...?*

"Umm... I guess I'll just go ahead and repair the spike traps? It'll cost us some DP."

"Yeah, go ahead." I left the trap repairs to Rokuko and started thinking about the situation. The Golem Blade had likely broken during the first swing. And when it was broken, it turned into a normal [Iron Sword] that wouldn't work in the pedestal lock. With no way out of the locked room, the mysterious dungeon power buffing the walls and doors vanished, turning the spike wall into an easily breakable object. Then, while he cut down the spikes with the blade, it got cracked. *Makes sense to me.*

"...I think I've figured most of this out, but now I've realized something really annoying."

"Mmm? What's that?"

"Well, Golem Blades are kind of the big prize for our dungeon, but can they even really be used like Magic Blades? I'm not so sure anymore." *Thinking about it, let's say someone blocks an attack with a Golem Blade. Like, someone swings their sword and they block that with their Golem Blade. If you think about it abstractly, that's the exact same thing as a sword-shaped golem taking*

a direct hit. And if the golem gets taken down, it turns into a normal [Iron Sword] without any special properties. Even if they're still in the middle of a fight. Isn't that like... a huge fatal flaw?

I could repair my Golem Blades instantly, but Niku, Ichika, and other adventurers couldn't. And of course, those using Golem Blades were fighting on the front line. Which meant that it was very likely that their Golem Blades would break while fighting. *Yeah... I'm gonna need to fix this somehow. Oh, and I'll make the trap unlock if Uzou or Muzou put the Magic Blade back into the pedestal, broken or not. Rokuko can take care of that while I'm sleeping.*

Day 56

Uzou and Muzou still hadn't escaped the trial room. Delicious, delicious DP. But when I looked at the map, I saw that someone was coming our way. *Our next visitor?*

"Owner! There's a visitor here for ya!"

"Huh? They're here for Rokuko, not the inn...?"

"Eh?! A-Ah, okay! I-I'm the owner, right! H-H-Here I-I-I-I g-g-g-go!"

"Stop, stop. You're not going anywhere like that. Eh... Here, let me take care of this." Rokuko was nervous to the point of shaking, so I decided to tag along with her. But that wouldn't be enough, so I had her temporarily restore my Absolute Authority. I then ordered her to calm down, smile while next to me, nod if I said "What do you think, owner?", shake her head if I said "Well, owner?", and to say "Indeed." if I shifted the conversation to her any other way. *Hey, don't get mad at me. I need her to calm down and this is the only way I know how. But man, this Absolute Authority really is powerful. She actually calmed down when I ordered her to despite being completely terrified. It's a big help right now, but wow, that's kinda scary.*

Also, I had Rokuko wear a simple dress to reflect her status as the owner of the inn. Looks were actually pretty important for this kind of thing, especially since the idea here was that Rokuko was a member of Haku's family. We needed to make her look as regal as possible while borrowing her sister's

fearsome reputation.

We went to the front after Ichika called us again and there we saw the receptionist who was always behind the Guild's counter. She... She had a huge backpack on her back. Judging by how easily she was carrying it, there was either something special about that backpack or she was just really strong. I stealthily checked her out on the map and saw she was getting us 80/DP. *Wait, what? Holy crap, that's amazing. Guess there's nothing special about that backpack, then. Wow.* "You are the owner? It's very nice to meet... wait, Rokuko? I heard that the inn was being run by a family member of Lady Haku."

"Well, you know what that means, then. And by the way, you can just think of me as a secretary of sorts."

"I see. In any case, I would like to discuss some things with you, owner. Would that be acceptable?"

"What do you think, owner?" Rokuko nodded, as ordered. *Alright, looking good.*

The receptionist was clearly treating us differently than she did at the Guild, a sign that she understood we were in different positions now. It wasn't particularly rare for nobles to hide their status and work as adventurers. Normally, only a noble would be able to shape themselves up like Rokuko in her teen form. Not that Rokuko was a noble, though.

Anyway, to summarize what the receptionist said:

・I came to build the Guild branch office! There's space in front of your inn, so I'll build it there!

・But it'll be under construction for a while, so lend me your bathroom! And your food, too!

・Oh, and the Guild will pay you for all this! You can just charge me what you would any other visitor!

That was it, more or less. She must have been talking about the branch office the guildmaster brought up. Her staying in our inn wouldn't be a problem at all. I kind of had an issue with them building the office on the other side of our inn, partially since that'd be squishing the dungeon entrance between us, but I

didn’t exactly have the choice to turn her down. This land didn’t belong to anyone (on paper) yet, after all.

“I thank you for your assistance. And... Might I ask how much your inn charges?”

“Fifty coppers per night, and meals cost anything from one copper to one gold. We give out free bread for breakfast.”

“One gold for one meal? What kind of meal is that?”

“It’s a meal fit for an A-Rank adventurer. What about it? Oh, the details are on this price list if you want to see.” I showed her the menu.

“...What are the contents of the one copper G-Rank meal?”

“I believe that mostly E-Ranks will come to the dungeon, so the G-Rank meal is planned to be for their slaves. It’s just black bread. The F-Rank meal above it is for beginner adventurers and consists of two pieces of white bread. The E-Rank meal consists of special rolls made from original recipes we devised ourselves. The specific kind of roll changes daily. The D-Rank meal is aimed at the more successful adventurers who can afford it, so it has both white bread and some sides. It comes with a dessert as well.” I gave details on the meals while going down the list. *She probably won’t order the C-Rank meal, right?*

The receptionist closed her eyes briefly, then answered.

“Then I would like to order the E-Rank meal.”

“Certainly. Feel free to change your mind if you want.”

“Fifty coppers... This meal is fairly expensive, isn’t it?”

“Well, that’s because it’s hard to get ingredients in a place like this. Right, owner?”

“Indeed.”

“...I see. There’s certainly no helping that. This inn is situated deep in the wilderness, with no paved road leading to it.” *Score. One more silver a day, I’m making them big bucks now. And a stable income means some stable sleeping. Hell yeah.*

“Oh, and there is a personal quest that the Guild would like to offer to your party, Keima. Would you care to hear the details?”

“Hmm... What do you think, owner?” I decided to hear what she had to say. After Rokuko nodded, the receptionist started explaining what the quest was.

“Several days ago, the Guild put up a quest to investigate this dungeon... We’re in the process of determining a new name for it, but in any case, two adventurers accepted it and left for this [Ordinary Cave]. They never returned.” *Ah, that must be Uzou and Muzou. They’re sleeping in the trial room right now.*

“They’re C-Rank adventurers and thus I believe they are fairly used to exploring dangerous dungeons. That they have not returned leads us to believe that this might be quite a difficult dungeon.”

“...I see. So?”

“We would like to know if you would like to take over the quest for them, as you have explored the dungeon and lived. If they are alive, we would also like you to attempt to rescue the missing adventurers. Though... It’s quite unlikely that they have survived in the dungeon for this long.” Naturally, I couldn’t just tell her that they were still alive. I fell silent and pretended to think about her request.

“If you accept this quest, the guildmaster will permit for this... [Ordinary Cave] to be a C-Rank dungeon only when trying to conquer it fully.”

“Oh, really. I just have to accept the quest for that?”

Naturally, they couldn’t let E-Rank adventurers just waltz willy-nilly into a dungeon that C-Rank adventurers had gone missing inside of. They’d need me to go inside and come back alive again before they’d assign it as a limited C-Rank dungeon, rather than a full on C-Rank dungeon. I had no reason to refuse the quest. Or rather... I was an E-Rank adventurer, so I had to take it if I didn’t want to get locked out of my own dungeon.

“...What’s the reward?”

“Five silvers for investigating the dungeon, with extra payment for any particularly useful information. You can keep anything you find in there for yourself after showing it to us. If you successfully rescue the adventurers, we

will pay an extra five silvers. You can work out additional details with the adventurers themselves.” I had to take the quest no matter what, but the rewards for it were pretty sweet. Especially since Uzou and Muzou were still alive. Plus, more importantly, I didn’t want the dungeon to get such a high rank. That’d lead a bunch of really skilled adventurers to gather together and attempt to conquer it. No thanks. Not to mention, the first adventurers who visited my inn going missing would lead to some bad mojo.

“...I’d like to accept your offer, but I need a second an opinion. What do you think, owner?” We took the quest. I told the receptionist we’d be taking it. She nodded and left the inn to start setting up the tent that would temporarily serve as the Guild branch office.

I relinquished my Absolute Authority and started to prepare to go into the dungeon. Or at least, I pretended to. Obviously. We had a map and I was the Dungeon Master. We didn’t really need to prepare at all.

“Fwaaah! Aaah, that was really rough. Good work, Keima.”

“You too, Rokuko. Why don’t you ask Niku to give you a massage later? She’s pretty good.”

“Mmm, good idea. I’ll have to borrow her from you. So... Are we going to save them?”

“You bet. We won’t be able to go into the dungeon easily otherwise, and I’d prefer it if we started off dealing with weaker adventurers.” We were still lacking in offensive power, so we’d be completely and utterly destroyed if a bunch of strong adventurers came too soon. *What about the boss golem? I’m making him, I’m making him. Soon our halls will be guarded by a super armored haniwa. And since Uzou and Muzou seem like they’re fine, I’ll get back to work building him while pretending to be exploring the dungeon. Or I’ll just nap. Either way’s fine.*

Day 60

So, ten days had passed since Uzou and Muzou trapped themselves. I decided to let them out since they had basically stopped moving at all. Plus, they were

getting weak enough to earn us a little less DP than before.

I called for Ichika and went to the dungeon with her. They were probably feeling pretty hungry, so I brought some white bread with me as a gift. And naturally, we quickly reached the trial room with no issues at all.

“Heeey, I’m here to save you! Is anybody theeere?!” I faced the spike-filled hallway and shamelessly shouted towards it.

“Helloooo?! Is anybody theeere?!”

“...Here! We’re right here! There’s two of us, and we’re still alive! Please help!” Uzou desperately called out to me from behind the spike traps. *Don’t worry, I can see you on the map. And I knew you both were still alive, too, thanks to the monitor.*

“Hey, Ichika. How do you think we should do this?”

“...Why not just break the spikes, dude?” *Yeah, it’d look pretty suspicious if the spikes just retracted like magic the second I got here.*

“Alright, I’ll try hitting them with magic... Hey, I’m gonna try breaking through from this side! You’re gonna wanna back away from the spikes!”

“A-Alright, just give us a second... Okay, we’re out of the way!” I checked the map and confirmed that they had indeed gotten out of the way. I then thought back to the {Fireball} spell I had learned from a scroll a while ago. The chant for it came to mind immediately. *Thanks, scroll. Seems like the chant is... “Oh fire, become a sphere and smite my enemy.” Okay, okay. We can do better than that. Language Cheat Skill: Go!*

“Oh fire, become five spheres and smite my enemy — {Fireball}.” I said “five” without really thinking, but five fireballs did in fact appear and race towards the spike traps.

Bam! Bam! Bam! Bam! Bam! The balls of fire hit the spikes one after another. *Yeah... This isn’t gonna be enough to break those spikes. But wow, I guess I’m pretty good at shooting fireballs. If my mana lasts, I could definitely shoot out like a thousand fireballs, no problem.* I decided to give the fireballs another shot and change my strategy a little.

“Oh fire, rise up and... uh... just explode or something. {Fireball}.” *Ah crap.* That chant was pretty half-assed, so I lost a ton of mana. I actually felt a chill run down my spine.

A fireball poofed into the air and slowly floated towards the spike traps.

“Master, that fireball is giving me hella bad vibes. I’m thinking we should back the heck up ASAP.”

“E-Er, yeah.” Ichika pulled me away and we waited together for the fireball to hit the spike trap.

The moment it did, it exploded with impressive force, filling the air with blinding light. But the spike trap was just fine. *A-Alright, it didn’t break! Good job, spike trap, that was close. Wait... Crap. I thought for sure that one would work. I guess it was just dumb of me to try breaking through metal with fire.*

“...Oh well, I’ll just fiddle with the traps to make them easier to break.” I shook my head at myself and used {Create Golem} on the traps to fill the spikes with cracks. Maybe because they were traps in my own dungeon, they were already filled with my mana without me needing to pour it into them. They changed shape fast and easy. But I was pretty tired from that {Fireball}. *I’ll leave breaking them down to Ichika.*

“Ichika, they’re weak now. Make a big show of destroying them.”

“M’kay. Leave it to me, boss man.” Ichika stood in front of the spike traps and readied her Golem Knife. And not just any Golem Knife. It had a special, experimental Golem Blade covered in a Water Golem to help absorb force, not to mention three extra layers of steel to enhance its force and magic resistance.

“...Slash! Wannabe!” Ichika quickly attacked the spikes with a large swing mimicking {Slash}.

Slash Wannabe. {Slash}, being a skill, would normally enhance a move magically. Slash Wannabe mimics that phenomenon by using the movement enhancing properties of the Maid Outfit Golem. Though it still wasn’t a skill and thus was several tiers weaker than an actual {Slash}. And apparently, you could learn skills without using a scroll, so I was having Ichika use Slash Wannabe partially as an experiment to see if she would eventually learn to use {Slash} for

real.

Her knife cut right through the spikes, causing them to crash inward while clanging loudly. *Uh... Uzou and Muzou, you two didn't just get crushed to death, right? You're both fine. Definitely.*

"Y-You saved us... Hey, Uzou. We're saved."

"Yeah..." *Yep, there they go, standing up on their own. Their legs are kinda shaky, but let's not think about that.*

Ichika and I went into the trial room, stealthily repairing the spike traps along the way.

"H-Hey! Hold on! Don't come in here!"

"Huh? Why no... oooh." The spike traps regenerated behind us, locking us within the room like teeth locking prey into a beast's mouth.

"N-No... Fucking hell..." Muzou looked at the repaired spike wall with despair in his eyes.

"Hey now, this is a Safe Zone, isn't it? What're you two so worried about?"

"We couldn't break those traps no matter what we did. Not even a Magic Blade was enough. We actually broke ours, even... I'm guessing those spikes are super resistant to attacks from the inside, somehow." I knew all that, but I pretended to be surprised.

"Woah, hold up. You broke yours? Seriously?"

"...Uzou."

"It's this thing. See? Covered in cracks." I took his Magic Blade and looked it over. *Yep... It's totally broken. This isn't a golem anymore, it's just a [Broken Iron Sword]. I'm impressed they managed to break even just the first spike trap with this.*

"...Yeah, this thing doesn't look too useful. Guess we'll have to use mine instead. Ichika, give them some of the bread we brought."

"Okaaay, Master... Mmm. Here?" Ichika took out the bread and ripped off a single bite for them. *Come on! I'll give you as much as you want later, so let*

them have all of that!

"...Th-Thanks. Alright, I guess your name is Ichika now... H-Hey, Uzou. This bread is white. It's the bread we ate at the inn!"

"...Are you an angel?"

While Ichika distributed the bread, I walked to the pedestal and tried sticking the broken Golem Blade into it. *Yeah... Nothing. The pedestal's definitely not considering this thing to be an actual Golem Blade anymore.* I grinned on the inside, thankful for the valuable information, and tried sticking my own Golem Blade into the pedestal instead. Upon doing so, the spikes by the entrance retracted just like that.

"...What? Th-The hell just happened?"

"Looks like this room is set up so you can't get out unless there's a Magic Blade stuck in the pedestal. And your broken Magic Blade didn't work, so I used my own."

"A Magic Blade?! R-Right, so that's how it works... Shit!" Muzou seriously got depressed. I had intended to stealthily fix their Magic Blade and stick it back in, but changed my mind on the way. Reason being? Well, let's just say I wasn't the nicest guy around.

"You're gonna pay me for this, right? My Magic Blade's gonna be stuck in here now." That's right. All my acting up to this point had been buildup to that one statement. The receptionist said I could work out the details of my payment with the adventurers themselves. The best way to get a lot of money for them wasn't just to rescue them, it was to use my Magic Blade and demand payment for it. *Heh! Pretty impressive, right! Tremble in fear of the life of debt awaiting you!*

"...Yeah. Sorry man, I hate that you lost your Magic Blade to save us."

"Of course we're gonna repay you. We owe you our lives for using your Magic Blade to save us. Thank you. Sincerely." *Wh-What? They took that way better than I thought. Holy crap.*

"W-We're talking about a Magic Blade here, y'know? They're pretty expensive."

“...It’ll take some time, but we’ll definitely pay you back. Would you mind if we do it through the Guild?”

“I-I mean... I kind of want a new Magic Blade, so...”

“Alright. Give us two... no, one year. We’ll get it done somehow. I’ve uh... I’ve lost a lot of confidence in myself because of this, but we are C-Rank adventurers. We’ll get you a new Magic Blade no matter what it takes.” *Holy crap. These guys are so honest. I’m kinda feeling like trash right now.*

“...Oh, and how much do you want for saving us? I’d prefer it if you let us keep enough money to prepare for future quests, but...” *What?! They’re paying me even more?! Oh man, I’m making bank off this. But... I’m already asking them to get me a Magic Blade. I’d be a real monster if I asked too much more from them. Alright. I’ll make up a ridiculous sum and then lower it based on their reaction.*

“Hm, uh... How about like... T-Two gold coins?”

“...No way!” *S-Sorry! W-Was one gold per person too much? Alright, I know how to barter! Come at me! I’ll bargain you into as high of a price as I can!*

“You’re fine with us paying you that little?! You’re a lifesaver, man! Seriously!”

“Aaah, you mean two from each of us, right? We can do that. We’ll pay the four gold coins as soon as we get back to Tsia.” I definitely looked like a stunned idiot as Uzou and Muzou grinned at me. *Whaaat...?*

* * *

I had totally forgotten to ask Ichika about what they’d be willing to pay for me saving them. Apparently, given the situation they were in and how Muzou had asked me to save them, I could have taken everything they owned if I wanted. They wouldn’t have complained even if I demanded they pay half as much as their potential value as slaves. Though naturally, recovering from something like that would be next to impossible, so most people would let them keep a small sum. A C-Rank adventurer would usually end up paying four golds to their rescuer.

“I knew you had a sharp head on your shoulders, Master. You got a promised

Magic Blade from them and left plenty of money for them to get it. You'll earn way more from that Magic Blade than anything they could have paid you. Maaan, you earned the big bucks from this little trick!" *Well, that's how it is, so at least I won't lose sleep over this.*

As an aside, they didn't even have to go back to Tsia to get the cash. They just withdrew it from the Guild branch office and handed it to me then and there. *Hm... Four gold coins. This is pretty sweet. They said an A-Rank meal would cost all their savings, but look at this. They had plenty. Though apparently three of these coins are Uzou's.* Four gold coins turned into Dungeon Points would be worth 4,000 DP, but I wanted to keep them as coins. I could use them to buy more slaves to work at our inn.

Uzou and Muzou stayed at our inn another night, this time both getting a C-Rank meal to celebrate. They even offered to treat me and Ichika to a meal. Plus Niku, since she belonged to our party as well. *Yeah... I coulda squeezed out a lot more money from them. Well, whatever. I got plenty.*

I decided to be nice and give them the original steak dinner C-Rank meal. When Ichika told them that I'd be making it the B-Rank meal after this, they looked both happy to be eating it now and sad that it'd be harder for them to eat later.

The next day, after giving their report at the branch office, Uzou and Muzou left with smiles on their faces, waving as they went. They were pretty tough dudes. All it took for them to recover from near starvation was a steak dinner and a good night's rest.

To summarize what I had gained from Uzou and Muzou's visit: 2,650 DP, four gold coins, twenty-nine silver coins, and five copper coins. I calculated the DP with some rough mental math, not accounting for all the minute alterations to DP gain the dungeon does on its own, but it was close enough.

If you put that all into Earth money, I had earned 4,290,500 yen in ten days. *Oh man, I'm so glad I didn't kill them! I wouldn't have gotten their savings if I killed them in the dungeon. Not to mention the new Magic Blade they're getting for me. Or the Guild's reward for investigating the dungeon and saving them.*

Well, I sure "investigated" the dungeon, but I didn't feel the need to tell them anything more than I had to. I couldn't straight up lie, for both myself and others, but the Guild seemed to accept that most adventurers would keep some things to themselves. Plus, I mean... They have a lie detecting magic tool, so yeah.

All I told them were things that Uzou and Muzou probably already had: The first floor had goblins, the second floor had golems. Uzou and Muzou were on the first underground floor. They were stuck in a room and couldn't get out due to a trap. By the way, I earned ten silvers for telling them that you could disengage the trap by putting a Magic Blade in the pedestal. Normally I'd only earn five silvers for that, but Uzou and Muzou had told them that the information came from me and requested they boost the reward for me. *Seriously. Those two are so honest it hurts.*

I also drew them a rough map of the first floor near the entrance. They paid me eight silvers for it. *Man, they sure are loose with money. That would've been really easy for them to investigate themselves.* And so, I got an extra twenty-eight silvers from the Guild, earning the big bucks. Also, the receptionist had stayed in the inn for five days now, giving us five silvers and about 600 DP.

We should have a lot more leeway with our DP now. We have... 49,532 DP left right now. We're not over 50,000 since I've been spending a fair amount of it digging a tunnel through Tsia Mountain. I'm just throwing a lot of drills at it, so it's only a matter of time until we've gotten through it. And yeah... With this much DP, I don't need to worry too much about minor expenses. I could turn the gold coins into some emergency DP if necessary, too.

"It's pretty great that our first visitors earned us this much. A lot of the money's coming from bonuses from saving them, but still, we earned one hundred and sixty-two goblins' worth of DP in just eleven days."

"Wow, that's amazing! But why did you express that through goblins? Keima?"

"Huh? Well, it's easier for you to understand that way, isn't it?" I gave Rokuko a bright grin.

"Well... It was easy to understand, but... I don't like it!" I patted Rokuko's

head.

The point of the investigation quest was to determine the dungeon's difficulty ranking before opening to the adventurer public. Both C-Rank and E-Rank adventurers returned alive from exploring it, so I imagined they wouldn't give it too high of a difficulty ranking. If a bunch of low-level adventurers came and gave us some stable DP income, I'd be able to spruce up the defenses a lot more. Though, either way, I could swap the Dungeon Core on the bottom floor with the dummy core I was using as a light fixture in the owner's room of the inn. We were totally safe no matter what happened, which was good for my heart. I could sleep easily.

What's that? You wanna explore the dungeon? Yeah, go ahead. Don't worry, you won't find anything on the bottom floor. All you'll end up with is disappointment and exhaustion. Oh, and maybe some Magic Blades that break like twigs in actual fights. Aaah... Yeah. I'm gonna have to remake the dungeon again once I save up enough DP.

Day 67

Several days after Uzou and Muzou left, the Guild finally decided on a new name for our Dungeon. That name being [Cave of Greed]. Apparently, it came from the fact that you would be putting yourself at risk if you weren't careful about being greedy. *Come on, you don't need to warn people like that. It'll be a lot easier for me if they let their guard down.*

It was classified as an E-Rank dungeon. That put it in the lower tiers of difficulty. *Well, I can't get mad about that. Uzou and Muzou nearly dying despite being C-Rank adventurers was basically an accident, and the method for escaping that trap is now public.*

"Congratulations, my sweet little Rokuko. That's a beautiful name fitting for a girl as sweet as you."

"Thank you very much, Haku!" Haku, who came to inform us of the Guild's decision as soon as possible, gently rubbed Rokuko's head. Behind her was Chloe, standing around in her butler outfit as always.

“...So, why’d you come deliver that news yourself?”

“Well, of course, I rushed over immediately to be the first visitor of Rokuko’s inn as soon as I heard it was going public.”

“Sorry, you’re going to be the fourth visitor.”

“What in the world...?! Hm... Could you please tell me the names of the three prior visitors? Everything will be fine if I can just eliminate them.”

“Please don’t. You can be the first visitor to sleep in the grand suite, so please uh... settle for that. And don’t kill anyone. Thank you.” The grand suite... in other words, the room for A-Rank adventurers that I had built just for fun. At the moment, I had no plans for anyone but Haku to stay in it.

I had put a lot of effort into making the sleeping arrangements in the grand suite top-tier. It had a [Memory Foam Mattress (200 DP)] that was much better than a plain [Futon (50 DP)] placed within a high quality wooden frame I had made and decorated myself. To top things off, it even had a [Feather Comforter (100 DP)]. I couldn’t help but congratulate myself on making such a high quality bed.

There were a ton of other minor improvements over normal rooms, like carved reliefs in the furniture, a candle-shaped light magic tool on the table, a glass window with curtains, and so on. It even had its own bathroom and bathing room. *Yeah, bathroom AND bathing room. We wouldn’t make our valued A-Rank guests take a bath in the same room that has their toilet.* The bathtub was made from wood, but since we used some pretty nice smelling lumber that was coincidentally growing nearby, the entire bathing room actually radiated a high class aura... maybe.

Plus, I threw in a massage chair as well. That way, guests could get out of the bath wrapped in a towel and go to sleep while getting a massage. They could get their food delivered by pressing a button in their room, so they didn’t need to go down to the cafeteria. We had everything taken care of. Though, since I made it with A-Rank adventurers in mind, basically only Haku would ever stay in it. Oh well!

By the way, since I made both the normal rooms and the meals fairly expensive, I wouldn’t be sleeping in the especially expensive suite room myself.

People would start questioning how an E-Rank adventurer like myself was staying in such a costly room. I didn't mind if people thought less of me, but I definitely didn't want them getting suspicious. *Crap! I wouldn't have to worry about this so much if only the Guild hadn't made a branch office nearby! I could have slept it in when we didn't have any visitors...!*

"So, how much does it cost? I'll pay the money as I should. Don't think I'll let you get away with claiming I'm not the first visitor because I didn't pay." *Why would I do that?!*

"...Aaah, you know, I actually haven't decided on how much the grand suite should cost yet."

"I helped him decorate the inside of the room. Haku, how much do you think we should charge?"

"Oh my, you did? I'm quite looking forward to that. And, mmm... I suppose I'll think up a price and pay after I've stayed the night." That would be pretty helpful. I asked Ichika what she thought it should cost, but she had never stayed at a high class inn and thus had no idea how much a room like the suite would go for. She was more interested in paying tons of money for food, not sleeping arrangements. If you turned that around, I totally understood how she felt.

"Oh, and you'll have our A-Rank meals for food. We're passing things off as if you're giving Rokuko the ingredients through {Storage}, so keep that in mind."

"Very well. Ah, and I imagine the food comes from your world as well? Here, have two gold ones, for both Chloe and I. I'm looking forward to the meal." *I would've been fine giving her the food for free, but sure. I'll take what I can get. And like, woof. The way she hands over gold coins like it's nothing really shows how much of a different world she's living in. Well, I mean, she's literally living in a different world from my own... but that's not what I meant.*

Anyway. It's kind of late to say this, but I really don't think our current A-Rank meal is worth a million yen. I should probably turn it into a full course French meal fit to serve an entire table of people. Probably.

Haku's Perspective

[Cave of Greed]. That is the new name of Rokuko's dungeon. The Guild discussed and decided on it after receiving reports on its nature from the Tsia offices.

The reports also mentioned that an inn had been built in front of the dungeon. I imagined that it would take more time for them to be able to afford an [Inn (400,000~ DP)]. I'm quite surprised that they had it ready by the time the dungeon went public... I wonder how in the world they earned so much DP so fast. Perhaps a human farm? Mmm, even then, they wouldn't have finished it this fast. Did they stumble upon a vein of orichalcum while mining?

Either way, I used [Teleport] to speedily visit her inn to become her first (customer). Unfortunately, it seems like I missed that opportunity, but I nonetheless choose to stay in the inn's grand suite. Also, they gave me the heavy duty of determining a proper price for the room. Fufufu. I have built countless inns throughout the imperial capital, and as part of work I've stayed in various grand suites in the Holy Kingdom and beyond. In fact, I've even stayed in a wide variety of inns while traveling as an adventurer. They could not have picked a better woman for the role.

"Now then. Could I ask for some hot water?" I could just clean my body with {Purification}, but it actually feels quite nice to wipe your body off with a towel wet with hot water. Though cheap inns aimed at Low-Rank adventurers don't bother offering this service, I expect a grand suite to have hot water on hand at all times. Let's see how many seconds it takes for them to get the water to me.

"...Aaah, um, I'm sorry."

"Oh my, do you not have any ready?" It didn't take long for them to lose points from me. My goodness, I'm surprised they would call this a grand suite without having basic services such as this...

"There is hot water readily available in your bathing room if you would like some. You can use as much as you want."

"...What? I-I may use as much as I want?"

"There's a lever inside that will produce hot water whenever you pull it." I-I'm... I'm not sure if there's an [Inn] room with that function available from the dungeon menu. Perhaps it's in the expansion options? They must have saved

costs by only expanding the suite room to have that option. Just what I would expect from Rokuko's master.

"Oh, and this is true for every room, but you can use the onsen as much as you want too."

"The onsen... I see, so you have one as well."

"It's our main attraction." Hm... [Onsens] are completely separate entities from [Inns]. I wonder how much they spent on theirs? I don't believe they are that expensive, but even so, they truly have spent a lot of DP on this inn.

...As I recall, a normal room costs fifty coppers a night. Most of that price likely comes from access to the onsen. In which case, it would be wise to not stay in the normal rooms, as all of them have access to the onsen.

"Okay, Haku! I'll take you to your room!" Rokuko guides me to the Grand Suite. This service alone is easily worth a whole gold coin... Oh my, I need to take care to stay objective here. Though tips are a different story.

I reach the room with Rokuko. Mmm, I see that the door's not just made of wood. It has metal plates enforcing it, and it even has a lock. They must have destroyed the original inn door and put a dungeon door in its place. Very clever.

"Here! Take your time looking around, sister!" I open the door and see that the room is bright inside, thanks to sunlight streaming through the windows. The furniture is all made of beautiful, engraved wood. The bed looks comfortable and there's a large chair that looks perfect for a cozy afternoon nap. Hmm, but what country are these engravings from? Did they perhaps originate from an artisan from Keima's original world? Or perhaps he did the engravings himself. He has quite the talent if so.

There's a clock resting on the wall. Clocks, I believe, are a magic tool far more expensive than they're worth considering how little utility they offer. Though, they're more valuable out here, where unlike towns there are no bells to ring out the time.

As for the window with light pouring through it... I imagine this is a plate of crystal in the window sill. It's very clear. It seems that I can use the cloth on the sides to block the light if I so wish. This, and much of the room in general, must

have cost quite a lot of DP in total. All in all, I'd say it's more than fine enough to be considered a grand suite.

Oh, I forgot for a moment that it has a bathing room and a toilet as well. I shall... investigate them immediately.

The bathtub has no water, but surprisingly enough, it's made of wood. Mmm. It smells nice as well. Ah... Is this the lever that produces hot water? There's a sheet of paper explaining things beside it.

I see, this lever produces hot water and this one cold. I experiment by pouring hot water into the tub. Mmm... It feels a little bit too hot? Ah, the idea must be to pour out cold water at the same time.

"What do you think, Chloe?"

"This is quite an excellent room. At the very least, it's superior to any grand suite we've stayed at in the Holy Kingdom." The quality of this room is surprising even to me. I sat down on the chair and decided what to do next from there.

"...This is quite a comfortable chair, I like it."

"My lady, it says here that the chair you're sitting in is a magic tool known as a massage chair. It seems that it will give you a massage if you put a copper coin into it."

"Really now? I shall try that out." I ask Chloe to put a copper coin into the chair, and once she does, it starts to shake.

"Wh-Wh-Wh-What in the world is this?! Fwaaaah!"

"My lady?! A-Are you alright?!"

"I-I'm, fiiine...! Aaah, this is amazing... Fwaah, it feels so goooood..." Aaah... I feel like just falling asleep now, as I am... I spent a lot of time finishing up work so I could come here, so... aaah...

* * *

I wake up and see that Chloe covered me with a blanket as I slept. Hm... This blanket is quite soft. It's not very thick, but it still feels nice and warm.

“...I must ask them to lend this chair to me. I imagine it will cost at least ten gold pieces...”

“I have never seen a magical tool like this before. In which case, it must be fairly valuable.”

“...Surely it’s worth no more than fifty gold pieces.”

“If you’ve grown that fond of it, why not investigate it yourself to try and make your own?”

“Ah, that’s quite a good idea... but since I took a nap, I’m now in the mood for supper. I hope it’s not too late for it. Either way, I believe I just have to push this button and wait for them.” The button has a simple cover over it so as to prevent accidental pressing. This cover is made of crystal as well, for some reason... I see no seams on it, which must mean he’s shaving a large crystal down into this shape. Why go that far for something this trivial? I put that aside and press the button. Immediately, I hear the sound of two pieces of metal vibrating against each other outside of the room. I wonder how this works? Is this thing in the [Inn’s] options as well?

After a brief wait of only three minutes, someone knocks on my door. That was quite fast. I suppose they’re using DP for the food as well, then.

“Sister, I’ve brought you your food!”

“Please come in, Rokuko!” I open the door wide and see a pushable food cart in front of Rokuko. It has three meals on top of it. Each meal is covered with a silver dome known as a cloche, hiding their contents. That is another sign of this service being quite high level. In fact, I recall the food in one country’s grand suite being brought to me bare.

Oh my, and what’s this square box...? Ah, there are drinks inside of it. I suppose this is a cloche for drinks. It opens from the side.

The drinks have spoons and straws with them. Wait... Are these crystal cups? And the straws, too. He truly holds nothing back when it comes to using crystals... This allows me to see the contents of the cup. It’s, erm, a green liquid? With a white crescent of something on top of it. Is this perhaps a potion with mashed potatoes on top? That’s quite the combination.

“Wait just a moment. Why are there three meals?”

“I-I wanted to eat with you, sister... Is that okay?”

“But of course! Come now, Rokuko, take a seat. Leave the rest to Chloe.”

“H-Hmph, I can’t do that. Chloe’s our visitor today.” Rokuko carefully places the meals on the table... Aaah, just seeing that makes me want to give her a gold piece tip. The cups have droplets of water on their sides. That’s what happens when you use water-based magic to cool drinks down. And indeed, they are quite cold.

“And here we go. Tadaaa!” Rokuko lifts up one of the cloches, revealing an assortment of food stuffed onto a single plate.

“The plates have ridges which separate the food, allowing multiple types of cooking to be delivered at once... That is quite a clever idea.”

“Heh heh heh, isn’t it? Ummm, this is [Hamburg Steak], this is a [Napolitan], and these are [Fried Shrimp]! These long things are [French Fries], and this bit with the flag in it is [Omelette Rice]! Ah, and this is [Butter Corn Stew]. Oh! Right. The green drink is called, um, [Cream Soda]. It’s a drink, but it’s a dessert too! The white stuff on top is called [Vanilla Ice Cream]. It’s really cold and sweet! It melts fast, so you should drink it soon.” I pick up my fork and begin eating while listening to Rokuko’s explanations.

[Hamburg Steak], hm? It’s definitely meat. It’s not like any steak I’ve had before, but it’s definitely made of meat. And I believe this meat is beef as well? Either way, the mushroom-filled sauce is fantastic.

This [Napolitan] is a kind of pasta. I suppose this sauce covering it is made from tomatoes. It has a sharp flavor that stimulates my tongue.

[Fried Shrimp]... This feels like seafood. I wonder what “frying” entails? This must be another kind of food from his own world.

[French Fries] are made from potatoes, obviously. Hm... They’re crisp and crunchy, much like the [Fried Shrimp]. Potatoes are quite easy to obtain, so I would be able to make this myself if I could just learn how to “fry” things.

It seems that you can eat [Omelette Rice] with a spoon. These are cooked

eggs covered with tomato sauce, with a side of... some kind of small grains. Hm, this isn't bad at all. But what is with this flag?

[Butter Corn Stew] is sweet, warm, and practically makes my heart melt. It certainly earns high marks from me.

On top of all this, there's even a salad covered in [Mayonnaise], which originated in a world not our own. I suppose it makes sense that Keima would be able to recreate it himself, then. It's fairly common in the imperial capital, but I appreciate being given the option to eat it in a distant location such as this.

Although he produced all this food with DP, it still had to be prepared and made presentable like this. It's fair to say that he likely put a fair amount of effort into this meal. Although that effort doesn't compare to how much it would take to make this meal from scratch, the price of the suite shouldn't be impacted whatsoever by the fact the food came from DP. In which case, thinking about how much effort it would take to make the meal on its own, without DP... Yes, it's easily worth a full gold coin. Though in many cases, it's difficult to say just how much effort it takes to make a meal that originates from another world.

"Ah, this boxy thing is a [Purin]! It's a dessert covered in cream and cherries! It's sweet, pretty, and super tasty!"

"I see, so this is also a dessert. Now that you mention it, I recall cream being a luxury food made in some imperial farms. Cherries... Where do cherries come from, again?"

"I believe they are grown in Wakoku." Wakoku, hm? That's a country to the far east, as I recall. The transportation costs would be quite hefty... Ah, I see. That's why they plan to pass off the food as coming from me, an A-Rank adventurer helping them out of kindness. Time is stopped within {Storage}, after all. But with that in mind, I feel that even one gold piece is not enough for a meal of this caliber.

...Ah, this [Purin] is quite tasty. It's squishy, sweet, and makes me feel like melting... ah, oh my! That was close. My mind was nearly consumed by this heavenly dessert.

...And finally, the [Cream Soda]. I was put off by the green liquid due to it

looking like a potion, but Rokuko seems quite fond of it, so I suppose I must try it out. Apparently, it is a drinkable dessert made from [Melon Soda] and [Vanilla Ice Cream], but... I wonder what in the world it tastes like. Ah, and it has a cherry on top of it as well.

First, I'll use the straw to taste the [Melon Soda]. Mmm...?! So sweet! And I can feel it popping within my mouth! Also, it's so sweet! What kind of overwhelmingly powerful drink is this?! The way it stimulates my mouth with a sort of hardness reminds me much of alcoholic drinks. But perhaps due to how cold it is, this drink feels significantly stronger. And the melon flavoring pierces my nose while the sweetness fills my mouth. This [Melon Soda] is strong enough that it feels as if I've been punched in the mouth!

"Try eating the [Vanilla Ice Cream] on top of it, sister. It's melted a little by now, but it tastes the best right after it starts to melt!"

"C-Certainly..." Using the thin spoon that is likely made especially for this purpose, I scoop up some of the [Vanilla Ice Cream]. I then bring it into my mouth and am immediately hit with its coldness. And then, sweetness that surpasses even the [Melon Soda]. However, it's a gentle flavor that melts like snow within my heated mouth, filling it in the process. The soft scent and milky sensation of the ice cream spreads across my tongue and cheeks as it melts, producing a truly pleasurable feeling.

"Do you like it, sister?"

"...Yes, quite a lot." This drink, no, this dessert wields both intensity through its [Melon Soda] and peaceful calm through its [Vanilla Ice Cream]. It dominated my heart and mouth. In the end, the [Vanilla Ice Cream] melted into the [Melon Soda], creating a combination so heavenly I feel as if I've caught a glimpse into the true meaning of the world. Eh? This is all only one gold piece? Yes, that's certainly cheap.

I let out a sigh of impressed satisfaction.

"That was... extremely fulfilling."

"I'm honored to hear you say that, sister! That's our inn's A-Rank meal, I'm really proud of it." Hm, I see. A meal of this caliber is only worthy of an A-Rank to them.

“Rokuko. What is the overall name of this meal? I feel that ‘A-Rank Meal’ is simply too drab of a name for something like this.”

“It’s called the, um... Grut... no, ummm... [Glutton Set]!” This must be their answer to those gluttons that come to the [Cave of Greed] wanting to eat a lot of delicious food. In order to be more satisfying, they focused on offering a large variety of food without giving too much of any one meal. Having the insight necessary to come up with that idea and then having the acumen to execute it well is no small feat.

“Ah, you must be playing off of the [Cave of Greed’s] name by naming the meal with another sin. That’s very clever.”

“Right? Oh, sister. Do you mind if I take your flag? I’m collecting them.”

“Oh my, not at all. Here you are.” I take the small flag out of my [Omelette Rice] and hand it to Rokuko. While I’m at it, I give her Chloe’s as well. It seems that all of our flags have different designs. I didn’t understand the purpose of the flags while eating, but now I recognize them as collector’s items. He’s attacking people’s greed for collecting items while feeding them. Keima has quite the fearsome mind.

“Oh yeah, sister. Did you try the onsen? It feels super good in there.”

“I have not yet, but... now that you mention it, it’s been far too long since I’ve visited an onsen. Though my castle does have a large bath.”

“...You have a bath where you live?! That’s amazing!”

“Oh my, but you have an onsen yourself, don’t you? We’re equals here.”

“Ah, you’re right! Fufufu, I’m equals with Haku...” Rokuko smiles happily. Just seeing that makes my heart warm up.

“Do you want to visit the onsen together, sister?”

“Oh my, that sounds delightful.” An onsen... Mmm, yes, that certainly sounds nice right about now. I’m fond of the personal bath in my room, but a large bathing area like an onsen will allow me to bathe with Rokuko. Despite having just finished eating, I decide to go to the onsen immediately.

“I’ve visited a real onsen created by a Hero, so I can teach you how to

properly bathe in one.”

“There’s a ‘proper’ way to bathe in onsens?! Wow, I’m looking forward to learning that!”

* * *

It was a very nice bath.

“...I didn’t know that in real onsens, you don’t wear any bathing outfits or anything.”

“Oh my, Rokuko, did you overheat in there? Your cheeks are quite flushed.” Although onsens by the imperial capital do have bathing outfits to wear, this is an onsen. A bath created by Keima, a visitor from another world. It’s only right that I would teach her to bathe in public naked like those from his world do. And thanks to that... I saw something wonderful. The only problem was that someone else was in the onsen. If not for that human, I could have been all alone with her... Aaah, next time, I’ll just reserve it for the two of us. Fufufu. Now I’m really looking forward to my next visit.

“Now then, I suppose it’s time to sleep. Will you join me, Rokuko?”

“I will!” Speaking of which, I don’t believe we’ve slept in the same bed before. That makes sense. As Dungeon Cores, we do not need any sleep and only choose to as camouflage or as a form of frivolous entertainment. Though of course, it does help speed the passing of exhaustion.

I return to my room and see that Chloe’s already on the bed, laying down. What in the world is this girl doing...? I cannot believe that she would sleep on her master’s bed without permission... and while still wearing her butler outfit as well.

“Chloe?”

“...Ah?! M-My lady...!” I call out to her, causing her to immediately jump out of the bed and bow before my feet. Bowing like that is a classic form of apology derived from alternate worlds. It is also known as genuflection.

“...Well, fear not. I understand. You actually do require sleep, after all.”

“I have no excuse...!” However, it’s rare for Chloe to make such a blunder. I

wonder what in the world happened?

“...The truth is, I wanted to check the bed to make sure it was up to standards before you slept on it. However, it felt so oddly comforting that before I knew it, I was...”

“Hm... It’s entirely as if you’ve been charmed by a spell.” Although this could be the work of a magic tool... I find it hard to believe that a succubus like Chloe would fall under the effects of a charm spell. After all, since succubi specialize in charms, it would have to be an extremely powerful one to catch Chloe unnoticed.

“You may sleep on that bed tonight, Chloe, since you’ve already taken a liking to it. I will use the other bed.”

“Understood, my lady! Thank you very much.”

“Oh wow. I’ve never seen Chloe do something like that before. I can’t blame her though, these beds are really comfy.” Rokuko smacks the bed that Chloe had just been lying on. She seems to be hitting it pretty hard, but the sound is still soft. I gently touch the bed as well. And... my fingers sink into it...? What in the world? This isn’t cotton, is it...?

I reflexively push my palm against it. The bed is soft, yet still firm enough to resist my hand... Oh my. I nearly became charmed by the bed myself. I pull a tactical retreat and observe the bed from afar. The frame is made of tastefully decorated wood, which would no doubt make it a valuable luxury item. Since it was built by a craftsman from another world, it would run for at least fifty silvers. I personally wouldn’t mind buying it for that price, even.

Though I must question how thin the blanket is. It seems like it would be quite cold at night... Oh? It’s still warm... Chloe’s body heat from earlier is still within it. Despite being so thin and light, it seems to have quite an impressive degree of heat retention. Hm. Perhaps it has bird feathers inside of it. The entire blanket is soft. I had no idea feathers could be used for sleeping implements like this. I’ll have to try making one of these blankets myself after returning home. I can certainly understand how Chloe was taken off guard by this bed. Succubi, given their nature, can get quite invested in beds and such.

“Sister, it’ll be hot with both of us in bed, so let’s use this thinner blanket

instead.” Rokuko picks up the thin blanket on the massage chair and brings it over. She seems... quite used to doing that. Keima hasn’t laid his hands on her, has he? He better not have.

“Over here, sister.” Rokuko gets on one side of the bed and, leaving plenty of empty space for me, pats the other side. I... I feel a happiness that’s difficult to describe right now. A trembling happiness that feels as if it’s filling my entire body.

I get into the bed as invited and, like a pair of happy sisters—I do think we truly are a pair of happy sisters, but in any case, like a pair of happy sisters—we nestle together and fall into a blissful sleep. The comfortable bed is nice, but that’s not important to me. What I truly care about is the fact I’m sleeping together with Rokuko. Dungeon Cores don’t need actual sleep. But even with that aside, up until now, Rokuko hasn’t had the leeway necessary to do things such as sleep. I myself had forced her to live in dangerous, rough conditions in order to hide from the Soldiers of God. Just cause or not, I cannot help but feel guilt and regret over what I’ve put her through. With that in mind, perhaps I should feel grateful for Keima.

Or at least, right now. If he makes Rokuko unhappy for any reason, I will never forgive him. But in any case... This experience is certainly worth one hundred gold coins. W-Well, I’ll remain objective when determining the cost of the room, but I can express my gratitude with a special tip. It might be nice for me to give Rokuko DP through another direct transfer, so she can have some spending money. Yes.

Day 68 - # Keima’s Perspective

“Twenty-five gold pieces. No question.” Haku gave me a small bag packed with gold pieces first thing in the morning. *Uh... What?*

“That is how much a night’s stay in your Suite is worth. Twenty-five gold pieces per person, and thus fifty gold pieces for two people.” A copper piece was equivalent to about one hundred yen. So one hundred of those would be worth ten thousand yen, or one silver piece. Now taking it a step further, a hundred of those would be worth one million yen, or one gold piece. And she

just gave me fifty gold pieces. In other words. Fifty million yen.

I had definitely delivered Haku's food through Rokuko with instructions to get in the onsen together with her in hopes of boosting the price as much as possible, but fifty million yen for a single night's stay was more than I had ever imagined. And on top of that, Haku put another thirteen gold pieces on the counter.

"And as for the food, one gold piece is simply too little for a meal of that caliber. I know the special circumstances under which you are acquiring the food, but normal inns would charge around ten gold pieces for such a meal. You should raise the price to five gold pieces at the least. Here is my payment for our meals, splitting the difference, with Rokuko's included."

Five million yen per meal?! A [Child's Deluxe Lunch (10 DP)] and [Cream Soda (8 DP)] is worth five million yen... Inflation is a hell of a drug. Economically speaking, I'm making over 99% net profit from this... I mean, I definitely want to earn as much as I can from this, but I kind of feel like I'm ripping people off. Like, sure, it's deluxe, but I literally fed a child's lunch to Haku and she's paying this much for it. Ichika also said that the meal would be worth five gold coins, but it just... feels bad to sell a lunch worth a thousand yen in Japan for friggin' five million yen. I'm middle class, y'know?! I'm not a gangster running a laundering scheme here.

"Honestly, I feel like this is a bit much..."

"Are you suggesting that you cannot trust my opinion?"

"Not at all! Perish the thought! I will gratefully accept your payment!" I jerked out a deep bow, feeling a chill run down my spine. As Haku stood at the top of the entire Empire, whatever value she personally assigned to the room would become the proper price for it, twenty-five gold coins or not. Haku didn't just pay prices. She created them. And that wasn't a joke, either. In a situation where the price of a good is unknown, whatever someone pays for it becomes its real price. Doubly so if that person was a higher up in the Empire or an A-Rank adventurer. People would see what they paid and assume they must know what they were doing. Art in particular was influenced heavily by this phenomenon.

Since I had asked Haku to determine the price, I had basically gotten her backing for whatever price I may charge. In other words, twenty-five gold pieces for one night's stay and five gold pieces for a meal were both prices Haku had determined to be correct. Requesting them to be cheaper would be, by extension, not trusting Haku... which would basically be picking a fight with her.

"...It seems you do not fully agree with me, so I will explain my reasoning in more detail." However, she was kind enough to elaborate for me.

"R-Right. Sorry."

"First of all, I assume that you attempted to match the price to how much DP you spent on the food. However, the resulting price feels lacking and inconsiderate of such costs as transportation and labor." For example, cherries were apparently fruits grown in a distant eastern country called Wakoku. A single one of them would cost fifty silvers in Tsia. They rotted quickly, so fresh cherries had to be stored in {Storage}... and the only adventurers with {Storage} going back and forth between Tsia and Wakoku were generally A-Rank adventurers. Sending an A-Rank adventurer that far on a delivery quest would run you up five gold pieces at least. To make up for that, you would buy in bulk, and subtracting the cost of the cherries you ended up with... fifty silvers per cherry. *Makes sense. I never considered that until she brought it up.*

...Yeah, the only reason I could buy stuff like vegetable stuffed bread rolls for cheap in Japan is thanks to factories, mass production, and a globalized economy with cheap shipping. Recreating Japanese recipes in this fantasy world that doesn't have factories or even the recipes for the food will naturally lead to a lot of invisible costs coming out of seemingly nowhere. This world has magic and dungeons, but it hasn't developed any forms of mass production yet. Crap... I made a big mistake trying to equate one copper to one hundred yen. Thanks to making a shortcut between this world's money and Japan's money, I ended up calculating prices based on what they would be worth in Japan. Haku's suggested price for the A-Rank meal is basically exactly what Ichika suggested to me. She shoulda worked a little harder to convince me... oh, wait. Slaves can't really backtalk their masters too much. Right. This is completely my fault.

"By the way, B-Rank adventurers and above are practically treated like nobility. Many of them are even given noble titles. Such is optional for B-Ranks,

but it's mandatory once you reach A-Rank. And an A-Rank adventurer fundamentally pays with gold coins." Apparently, it was a common saying that A-Rank adventurers would pay a gold coin for an apple and not ask for any change to save time. The saying reflected how A-Rank adventurers would get so rich their sense of money would go wild... *Yeah, now I know for sure that inflation in this world is out of control.* All that said, however, there weren't many A-Rank adventurers in the Empire. Excluding Haku and her squad, there were about twenty in total. Heroes—Soldiers of God—were A-Rank by default, so they were another story.

"But either way, I don't think you needed to pay Rokuko's share or anyth—Er, uh, I mean, I am extremely honored that you deigned to share your precious meal time with the owner of our establishment. Yes."

"I would really love to pay for her staying in my room as well, but as Rokuko is the owner of this inn, it is practically her own home. It would be odd for one to pay a fee for sleeping in their own home, so I restrained myself and settled for only paying for her meal in an act of selflessness. Understand? If you don't, I'll pay you another twenty-five gold coins."

"I-I understand, please, no need to glare at me like you're about to murder me and my whole family."

"Fufufu. I'm glad you understand. By the way... I suppose it would be best for me to tip Rokuko directly with DP, yes?"

"E-Er, yeah. That sounds good to me." By the way, both Haku and Chloe were giving us 0/DP. I had been looking forward to some massive gains from them since they were both A-Rank adventurers, but oh well. Though... I understand why a Dungeon Core like Haku would give 0 DP, but what's up with Chloe? Maybe monsters summoned into a dungeon with DP end up permanently earning 0 DP a day.

"Okay, Rokuko. Open wide."

"R-Righteo!" Haku asked Rokuko to prepare for the DP transfer. *Okay, okay. Here comes another kiss scene...* Or so I thought, but then Haku thrust her finger into Rokuko's mouth.

"Nmm?! Nnn, nmm!"

“Come now, don’t pull away. Loosen up your shoulders and relax... okay? Let it flow over you.”

“Nnn, nmmm! Nmmm, fuaah! Nnn...!” Haku’s cheeks flushed slightly as Rokuko sucked on her finger desperately, ears bright red. *Th-This is uh... Yeah, this is something. Really gets the blood flowing.*

After a while of that, Haku pulled her finger out of Rokuko’s mouth. A small string of saliva bridged the gap between them.

“...You aren’t going to kiss her this time?”

“Correct. Now that Rokuko has made her debut as a public dungeon, I imagine she will end up in Dungeon Battles with other Cores that come to duel her. She needed to learn how to accept DP from them without using her mouth. After all... I have no doubt that you will defeat every one of them, and we can’t have Rokuko kissing them afterwards each time.” Haku smiled. *Uh... I can understand all that, but why are you licking Rokuko’s saliva off your finger?* I almost pointed that out, but decided not to. Her murderous glares were bad for my heart.

“By the way, speaking of other Dungeon Cores... Did you know that there’s another dungeon in Tsia Mountain? It’s on the other side of the mountain, more or less, so I imagine you won’t be seeing them anytime soon.” Haku said that without a care in the world.

“...Haku, do you know what the word ‘flag’ means?”

“Flag? Like those tiny ones you put into the [Glutton Set’s] [Omelette Rice]?”

“Er... Nevermind...” *I’m not sure why, but I’ve got a really bad feeling about this...*

Suddenly, I remembered the egg that Rokuko had got with her 10,000 DP. We didn’t know what it was, but Haku might. And so, I had her look at the egg that for some reason had grown to the size of a soft ball. *I, uh... I’m pretty sure eggs aren’t supposed to get bigger. This is weird. I wonder if it’s going to get even bigger.*

“Here, sister. Do you know what it is?”

“Oh my... It’s been a long time since I’ve seen one, but I believe this is an immortal phoenix egg. Phoenixes are quite tasty, you know.” Haku’s inspection revealed that it was a phoenix egg. Apparently, they tasted pretty good. *I wonder if you could just keep eating the same phoenix over and over? I’m pretty sure they’re immortal or something.*

“They are like big clumps of mana, so their blood is useful for making medicine. Phoenixes are truly useful in many ways, though they aren’t too powerful as monsters.”

“They’re not strong?”

“Although they revive on their own after dying, they’re more or less birds that are constantly on fire. They’re classified as B-Rank monsters due to their rarity, but in a fight they’re weak enough for a single C-Rank adventurer to defeat them. Their primary advantage is that they don’t use DP when reviving, I suppose.” *They’re weak, huh? Guess this guy’s not gonna be a boss in our dungeon. Might be smart to have him wander the dungeon as a rare monster or something, though.*

“By the way, you’ll want to really heat up the egg if you want it to hatch. I suggest throwing it into a fire. Though it wouldn’t die even if you froze it or something of the sort. Egg or not, it is still an immortal phoenix.” It would also revive even if I broke its egg. It would revive... as an egg. How it worked was a mystery. Apparently, the only thing that could kill a phoenix was old age. Though they turned into eggs after reaching old age, so it was questionable whether or not they truly died.

“Wow, an immortal phoenix! Thanks for telling us, sister. I really want to thank you, but I’m not sure how.”

“Fufufu. It’s the thought that counts, Rokuko. Ah, but there is one thing... Erm, I would quite like the, um, the massage chair from the room. W-Would that be possible? I’ll pay in DP if necessary.” *Oh hell yeah, it’s money making time. Time to wring as much DP out of her as I can.*

“Oooh, that thing? It just tickles me, I don’t think it feels good at all. Let’s just give it to her for free, Keima.”

“How about no... is what I’d like to say, but Haku, you’ve been a good friend

to us. I don't mind giving it to you for free."

"Oh my, really? I'm quite happy to hear that." Haku's smile was filled with suspicion and her eyes practically pierced my soul, trying to figure out what I was planning. I smiled back at her as brightly as I could. *My face muscles hurt.*

"Seriously, I'm just being nice here. At most, it's a little gift to encourage you to visit our Dancing Doll Inn again sometime."

"I would do such without your encouragement, believe me. So, anything else?"

"Well, I'd be pretty grateful if you'd tell me about that dungeon on the other side of the mountain. I get the feeling that they might end up posing some problems for us later."

"Oh my my, that's no problem at all." Haku gave a slight smile and began telling me information I wanted to know.

The dungeon was known as the [Flame Caverns]. They were indeed on the opposite side of the mountain from us. Adventurers needed to be C-Rank or above to enter it. Same for even getting information about it. The monsters within it were almost always fire-based, though there were some earth monsters as well. The fire monsters were like... magma slimes and red lizards.

Now, that was all information that any adventurer (C-Rank or above) could get at the Guild. Everything after that was information I could only get from Haku herself.

The Dungeon Core is a salamander type. Its number is 112. *Salamander type, huh? I guess Cores aren't always human shaped, then.*

"Rather, human type Cores are relatively uncommon. That's partially why I dote on Rokuko as excessively as I do." *What?! This woman knows she's being excessive? Wow, color me surprised.*

Furthermore, the [Flame Caverns] had a Dungeon Master as well. And that Master was a dragon, even. Apparently it was a red dragon that had originally been living in Tsia Mountain long ago.

"Dragons have a tendency to be attracted to shiny objects. I imagine their

dungeon is absolutely filled with treasure."

"Er, I'm more worried about the fact that dragons can become Dungeon Masters..."

"Anyone with intelligence can become the master of a Core they match wavelengths with... Though I believe there are some other requirements involved, with names and such. Masters tend not to advertise themselves very much, so it's still mostly unknown what requirements there are to become one." *Oh yeah. I became Rokuko's Master without really knowing what was going on, now that she mentions it. Though it turns out that a Core with a Master can't replace their Master on their own, so I haven't been worrying about it.*

"...Ah, I almost forgot. You won't be able to use your rat strategy on their dungeon if you end up in a battle with them."

"Huh? Why not?"

"The floor of their dungeon is quite hot. A good pair of boots would provide enough protection to not worry about it, but rats wouldn't fare so well. They would likely all be crippled by the end of the first floor." *Now that's some good info. If she hadn't told me that I'd probably have summoned a lot of doomed rats. And... I guess I really should start preparing for a Dungeon Battle with those guys. Shouldn't be anything wrong with me thinking up a battle plan right now. Wait, wait. I might lose some sleep getting plans ready. And I was just reaching thirteen hours of sleep a day, too.*

Anyway, that was basically all the information Haku gave me. Most of it seemed pretty useful, so yeah, I didn't feel bad about missing a chance to sell the chair for fifty gold pieces. Although half of the information could be learned from the Guild, I wasn't a C-Rank and thus it'd all be blocked off from me. And I was pretty grateful to get any information on the Dungeon Master themselves.

"Though as I mentioned, you likely won't be seeing them for quite some time. They are on the other side of the mountain, after all." *Haku, come on! You're tripping a lot of bad flags here!* And so, Haku left with clear reluctance after giving Rokuko one final hug. Her visit had proved very beneficial to us, both financially and intelligence-wise. *Huh... Thinking about it, Haku is kind of like a*

bonus character to our dungeon. I'm starting to see her as a goddess of good fortune or something. Guess I should start praying to her.

Oh, and by the way, I decided to let Rokuko do whatever she wanted to with the DP tip. I didn't want to even think about what Haku would do to me if she found out I took it from her.

"How much did she give you, anyway?"

"...Ummm, about 100,000 DP." *Yeah, I'm sure she'll be fine if I take just a little of that. It's tempting.* She gave us sixty-five golds in total for her stay at the inn. Buying that much money with DP would cost around 650,000 DP. Turning it back into DP would earn us 65,000 DP. It'd be more valuable as money thanks to that, so I decided to keep them as they were for the time being. That was plenty on its own. I decided to settle down and let Rokuko keep her tip. Though Haku surely wouldn't complain if Rokuko wanted to use her DP on the dungeon. *I'll just borrow that DP from her if the circumstances demand it.*

Anyway, about the phoenix.

"...So, um, do you want to break the egg and see if it really revives?" I went along with Rokuko's invitation and broke the egg with a lit torch.

...Have you ever heard of the Vietnamese dish known as hot vit lon? It's a type of boiled duck egg. Except that the egg has a live bird inside of it, just days away from hatching. It's a dish famous world-wide for how... gross it is. Pretty weird, isn't it? Boiled eggs aren't gross and bird meat isn't gross, but mix them together and you've got something extremely gross to most people. Hahaha. The mind can play some funny tricks, huh?

...Okay, enough trying to escape reality. The broken phoenix egg looks exactly like hot vit lon. I feel like I'm gonna have nightmares about this...

Soon enough, however, the gory mess was consumed by flames and, with light particles gathering around it, regenerated as an egg right on the spot. The broken shell remained on the ground, but the revived egg didn't seem particularly smaller. Therefore, I could conclude that the egg revived itself by forcefully sucking mana out of the surrounding area.

I threw the egg against the ground again to confirm my findings, just to be

safe. *Yep... It only took about one second for it to regenerate after burning up. This is pretty disgusting, by the way.*

"So, that's what Haku said would taste delicious if we ate it?"

".....You've got a pretty strong stomach, huh? I'm impressed. Sincerely."

"Eh? Um, okay. Thanks?" Anyway, the hot vit lon... I meant, the phoenix egg apparently hatched best in fire, so I decided to place it in one of the torches in the dungeon that mysteriously never burned out. Not having to worry about its safety was pretty convenient. I dropped and broke it once by accident while putting it in the torch, but it revived in no time.

I figured that the phoenix eggshells would be valuable for something, but the menu only gave us 0 DP after I tried offering it up as treasure. Either way, now was our only chance to get eggshells from the phoenix egg, so maybe it'd be smart to order a golem to automatically destroy it every few seconds. Also, since biting into it would set your mouth on fire, I decided not to show it to Ichika. She'd throw it into her mouth without a second thought, no doubt.

Chapter 3

Day 73

Several lazy days passed and soon enough I forgot all about the flags Haku had tripped. A party of two mostly boring E-Rank adventurers came to our inn with plans of conquering the dungeon and started exploring the first floor while hunting goblins. They were pretty cautious about traps, so their progress was fairly slow. In the midst of all that, Rokuko suddenly burst into my room while I was sleeping and using Niku as my dakimakura just like always.

“We’re in trouble, Keima! The tunnel broke through!”

“Huh? Finally... Wait, what? The tunnel’s not through the mountain yet.”

“Th-That’s why I’m here waking you up! This is serious!” Indeed, Rokuko usually didn’t wake me up while I was sleeping. This may have been the first time she ever did. She had been diligently following the order I gave her long ago to not wake me up unless it was an emergency.

I glanced at the Dungeon Map and saw that we had dug into some kind of hollow cavity. Looking at it directly through the menu, I saw a red cave sprawling out in all directions. Though I had to look through a golem since it was outside of our dungeon.

“Hey, Rokuko... Is this...”

“...It’s definitely not our dungeon. What are we gonna do?” *This is probably the [Flame Caverns]. I see an adult dog-sized red lizard over there licking his lips with his red tongue, so yeah, this has gotta be the place. Oh. Crap. He just made eye contact with our golem.*

“Retreat! Block the hole!”

“I’ll use DP to build a wall!” I made the golem take a single step back as a wall rose up where he once was. The red lizard immediately charged towards it. The wall... just barely finished in time. We could hear the lizard slamming against it

repeatedly from the other side.

"...Whew, that was close. One second slower and we would've started a war."

"Keima. I'm pretty sure that the war has already started." *Yeah. The war started and we just avoided it. Wouldn't be weird if that wall broke down in no time.*

"We'll plan a counterattack while buying time. Just gotta put some traps in the hallway."

"[Bottomless Swamp] and [Spear Ceiling], right?"

The wall broke down and the red lizard charged through right after we finished setting the traps and preparing the golem for battle. But the lizard just charged into the [Bottomless Swamp] and got stuck. Undeterred, it pushed forward, trying to use all its strength to break free. We held it down with the golem and dropped the [Spear Ceiling], skewering it and sinking its corpse into the swamp. *No coming back from that.*

"...Alright. Let's rebuild the wall and pretend this never happened."

"R-Right!" We rebuilt the wall, removed the final five meters of the tunnel from our dungeon, and collapsed the ceiling. *That should be enough.*

...Of course, it wasn't. A flame-covered lizard burst through the rubble while furiously spitting fire, taking up about half of the tunnel that we had designed to be wide enough for carriages to pass each other... in other words, he was the size of a horse-drawn carriage. He dried up the [Bottomless Swamp], burned down the [Spear Ceiling], and slammed into the golem, crushing it.

"UWOOOOOOH! WHO THE FUCK ARE YOOOOU?!"

A salamander. A huge lizard, flames shooting out of his body from head to toe like a lion's mane. And on top of all that, fire poured of his mouth each time he yelled. *Is that maybe... the Dungeon's Core himself? He's got a gravelly, low voice. Kind of like a mobster.*

Either way, I decided to greet him. Since the tunnel was part of our dungeon, and the salamander was a Dungeon Core, I could contact him through the menu's communication function. It was the same function that Haku had used

to contact us back before our Dungeon Battle. I activated it and called out to him.

“Stop, Dungeon Core Number 112!”

“OOOOH? YOU KNOW WHO THE FUCK I AAAAAM, HUH?!” The contact was a success. And I had basically confirmed that he was indeed the Dungeon Core.

“...Huh? Wait, this is a fucking dungeon, ain’t it! Who the FUCK ARE YOUUU?!” The salamander suddenly put on the brakes and halted his charge.

“Hiiih? N-Number 112... Wh-What are you doing here?! What do you want?!”

“That weak little voice... Aaah! I got it, you must be Number 695! And that’s my line! Why the FUCK did you break a hole into my dungeon?!”

“I’ll explain that. It was an accident. I’m sorry. You have my sincerest apologies.”

“O-Oh? You’re a pretty fuckin’ honest guy, huh? You’re, what... this Dungeon’s Master? Show yourself!” Since he knew that we were a Dungeon Core and Master, he probably wouldn’t attack us out of the blue. But just to be safe, I sent out a golem instead.

“Huh? You’re the Dungeon Master, huh? Wait, THIS IS A FUCKING GOLEM!”

“Yeah, this is me. And sorry, I didn’t intend to invade your dungeon or anything.”

“I won’t kill you, so show your real self already! Number 695’s a human type, so she wouldn’t have a golem Master... Wait? Uh, I guess golems are human-shaped too... Wait, no no! Golems are idiots, they can’t be Masters!” I thought for a moment I’d tricked him, but it didn’t go through. He did seem like someone I could talk to, and the fact he didn’t charge the golem down immediately was a solid sign that he wouldn’t kill me before I could say my piece. Worst come to worst, Rokuko could withdraw me the moment I was in any danger.

And so, I steeled my resolve and showed myself... after walking there. I couldn’t use the teleport function since an invader was in our dungeon. It was a long and empty hallway, but he had charged pretty far into it, so I got there

pretty fast. It was only one hundred meters-ish away from the entrance to our dungeon and the former goblin room.

"...So, how the FUCK are you gonna make up for this?!" The salamander roared in front of me. *I mean, yeah, we're definitely the ones at fault here. My bad.*

Just like a Dungeon Core could still summon monsters directly from itself even with invaders nearby, the Dungeon Master could place traps and such directly within the dungeon. Though I could only work in a range of about five meters, so one wrong move and I'd be dead.

"Well, first of all, I'll apologize. More concretely... We'll fix the hole ourselves. And... Alright. Do you know what 'genuflecting' is?"

"...O-Oh? Genuflecting? Yeah, I know what the fuck that is. You get on your knees and kind of lower your head! Yeah?"

"That's right. But do you know about the form of apology even greater than that, known as the genusnooze?"

"Nope, never heard of that in my fuckin' life. What is it?" *Oh man, he fell for it with a name like that. This might actually work.* I'd normally just bow my head and leave it at that, but I didn't want this guy looking down on us and causing problems later. Tricking him like this was basically asking for a fight, but I've been preparing for a battle with the [Flame Caverns] ever since Haku told me about them. Right now, I just needed to buy some time.

"When you genuflect, you show your remorse by lowering your head, but when you genusnooze, you lower your entire body to apologize." I gave a made-up explanation while spreading my futon on the tunnel floor.

"Hey, what the fuck do you think you're doing?"

"Huh? Preparing to genusnooze, of course. It's such a sincere apology that it takes time to prepare for. The more preparation a meal takes the better it is, right?"

"Fuckin' COOKING? I don't know SHIT about cooking!"

"How about this. Laying a bunch of traps to hunt prey is preparation, just like

this.”

“Alright! I got it.” *I’m glad you get it.* I got into the futon. And then, I made my declaration.

“This is genusnoozing!”

“O-Oooh! You really are lowering your entire body...” I glanced at the salamander and saw him trembling a little. *Looks like he believes me. This guy is... a chump.* I decided to push things a little further.

“For the next seven days, I’m going to genusnooze for five... no, eight hours straight every day.”

“Wh-What?! Eight hours?!”

“That’s not enough for you?! Then twelve hours! I’ll spend twelve hours, an entire half of each day like this! Please, let that be enough for you to forgive me...”

“A-Alriiight already! If you’re gonna go that far, I ain’t got no choice but to forgive you... Heh. I was wondering what kinda Master that Number 695 would have. Looks like you’re a guy who really knows what’s up! But remember, men gotta follow their word. Seven days, twelve hours a day. You better not fucking back out of that! Alright?!”

“Yeah. I know that.” And so, the lizard left in satisfaction. I didn’t know when he’d be coming back, but I figured I’d just keep on genusnoozing. In my room.

Day 78

“YOU’RE JUST FUCKING SLEEEEEPIIIIING!” The salamander returned, blowing away all the sand I had used to fill up the end of the tunnel. It had taken him five days to realize what was going on, longer than I had expected. But to be honest, at that point I just wished he would have stayed tricked for the whole time. I didn’t want to lose my excuse for sleeping twelve hours a day.



I sent out a golem to greet him, and the fact he quietly followed its guidance showed that he hadn't completely lost his temper. He may have cooled down after slamming into all that clay. Anyway, I had made a room halfway through the tunnel just in case this happened. I teleported there by "placing" myself on the map. Not having to walk all the way there again was pretty nice.

"So, punk... You fuckin' with me or what?!"

"Honestly, I'm hurt. Do you really think genusnoozing is as simple as sleeping? Trust me, it's not."

"Y-Yeah?" *Oh man, is that hesitation? I might be able to trick him again at this rate.*

"Yep. Think about it like this: if genusnoozing is just sleeping, then genuflecting is just sitting, right?"

"Ngh... That's a good fucking point."

"I'm putting myself through so much to apologize, and you thank me by destroying the clay wall I built...?" The salamander started to waver after I emphasized that point.

"Huh? Errr, aaah... I..."

"How are you gonna make up for this?"

"Ngh, nggggh!" The salamander took everything I said with utter seriousness. Gullible. This guy's really gullible. Salamander? Mo' like gullimander.

"Alright, alriiight. This time, I'll fix up the wall for ya."

"That's it? You're not gonna make up for mocking my sincerity and the depth of my regret?"

"...Sorry, man."

"Aaah, don't worry about it. I got a little too heated up myself."

"Oh yeah...? You're a good fucking man."

"By the way, Dungeon Core Number 112. I heard you have a Master, which means you probably have a name. Mind telling me what it is? Dungeon Core Number 112 is pretty tedious to say for we humans."

“Yeah, it’s 112. My Master gave it to me. Means 112 in the dragon language, y’know.” *Oh crap. It got translated to just 112 both times. And I guess dragon language is a thing that exists.*

“Really? That’s a good name. But it’s hard for me to pronounce dragon language stuff. You know... The truth is, I’m from another world. Mind if I call you something that means 112 in my own language?”

“Oooh! Sounds pretty fucking great to me. What name?” I had preemptively thought up of a name for him over the past five days of sleep.

“Ittetsu. I split 112 into 1 and 12, then split 12 into 10 and 2, which gives i, te, and tsu. Put together in Japanese fashion, Ittetsu. What do you think?”

“That’s a damn good name. Go ahead, use it all you want.” Ittetsu the gullimander smiled in approval.

“Alright, Ittetsu. I’m Keima Masuda. You can just call me Keima.”

“Keima, huh? Alright, I’ll remember that.” And so, Ittetsu left in a good mood. *Classic gullimander. Didn’t take much to dupe him again. But, eh... I guess you really can’t overwrite a Core’s Master by giving one a new name. I heard that from Haku, but I wanted to double check.*

Day 81

“This just ain’t fucking right! It can’t be!” It took another three days before gullimander came charging back. *Wow, he noticed a lot faster this time. Some new parties are exploring my dungeon now.*

One D-Rank party and two E-Rank parties. They seemed to be exploring my dungeon to practice avoiding traps and building up some real combat experience, as they didn’t appear to be too interested in hunting for treasure. Thanks to that, I didn’t have to replace the expensive treasure scattered around the dungeon, which saved us some DP.

We were getting more and more visitors, but with Rokuko on the food and Ichika at the front desk, things were still running smoothly. If there was any trouble I could just leave everything to the Guild, meaning my only job was to walk around and cast {Purification} every now and again. *Though I’ve been too*

busy genusnoozing for even that lately. Hahaha.

"Oh, Ittetsu. Good to see you again. But what are you so upset about?"

"My Master told me that you've been tricking me! I tried out this genusnoozing shit and it wasn't hard at fucking all! My Master even went into her human form just to try it out! She told me it was fucking nothing!" *He went out of his way to try it out, huh? Nice guy. And I guess dragons can transform into human forms, or something...*

"C'mon, man. You're a salamander, Ittetsu, standing is harder than sitting for you. I'm a human with totally different anatomy, it just makes sense genusnoozing would be easier for you."

"Y-Yeah?"

"And that dragon's shape-shifting is just them mimicking a human form, right? They've definitely got way more endurance than a normal human. I'm nobody special, so c'mon, don't compare me to a dragon. And like, if I tried laying down in the [Flame Caverns], I'd just straight up burn. That's how different our bodies are."

"Oooh... Good fucking point."

"Some humans literally pass out from how hard genusnoozing can be, y'know? I've passed out more than a few times doing this...?"

"Th-The hell?! I had no fuckin' idea..." I wasn't lying. Though more accurately, I was passing out after getting so sleepy it was hard to keep my eyes open!

"So, Ittetsu, what exactly do you want me to do?"

"U-Uh... What do you think?" *Seriously? You're gonna ask me that? Don't ask me that. Think for yourself, man.*

"Alright, alright... I guess twelve hours of genusnoozing a day isn't enough to satisfy you."

"U-Uh, I don't fuckin' know... Maybe?"

"Okay. I'll order one of my subordinates to genusnooze alongside me!"

"Wh-What?!"

“I’ll hold her down myself, so she can’t move even if she wants to. Forced genusnoozing!”

“What the fucking hell? That’s pretty intense... Alright. That’s good enough. I can tell you’re damn serious about this, Keima.” Ittetsu left once again. *At this rate, he’s gonna be back tomorrow, I guess. Well... A promise is a promise. I’ll have Niku get in bed with me and use her as a dakimakura. Just like I’ve been doing this entire time.*

Day 82

“I THOUGHT ABOUT IT SOME MORE AND YEAH, YOU’RE JUST FUCKING SLEEPING!”

“Huh? Oh, hey, Ittetsu. I’m surprised to see you here again. You sure have a lot of spare time, huh?” Ittetsu came again the next day, as expected. But this time, there was a girl riding his head with a red lizard t—well, a rough bumpy tail that looked kind of like a crab’s shell. *Uh... Isn’t his head on fire? Is she gonna be okay?*

“...Who’s that with you?”

“My fucking master!”

“That’s right! And I know you’re fuckin’ messing with my husband, 112!” *Master? I guess that makes her a red dragon. Which makes that a dragon tail. Also, she’s Ittetsu’s wife? Wow.*

“By the way, my normal body is way too big to fit into this tunnel so I went out of my way to come in my human form! Be grateful!”

“Oh, wow. Thank you very much.”

“Yeah! That’s the kinda gratitude I like to see! You’re welcome!” The young-looking red dragon puffed out her chest in satisfaction. *She’s pretty cute. Too bad she’s married.*

“So, Mrs. 112, what exactly are you unhappy about?”

“Mrs... That’s right, I’m married! Right, 112?!”

“Yeah! You’re my amazing fuckin’ wife. I love you, Redra.” *Hey, don’t flirt in my dungeon. Sheesh. Do that back at your place.*

“Ah! Wait, this isn’t right! He almost tricked me too! What a crafty guy...!”

“That a fuckin’ fact? Hey, Keima! The fuck do you think you’re doing?!” *Whaaat...? I didn’t do anything. I guess they’re like, cliché fire-types that get heated up over nothing. Hm... I get the feeling that she’s gonna be just as gullible as her husband!*

“But like I said, Mrs. 112, what exactly are you unhappy about? I personally think that my genusnoozing is a more than sincere apology.”

“M-Mrs... Eheheh... Ah, wait, no! That’s it! Your genusnoozing is full of bullshit and I know it!” *Oh wow, getting straight to the point. She might not be dumb like her husband is.*

“I’m lowering not just my head, but my entire body as well. Is there anything more apologetic than that? Here, let me turn this around and ask what *you* think would be the best posture for showing one’s regret.”

“Mmm?! Err, now that you mention it... Maybe, like, showing your stomach and rolling around?!”

“Alright. Then you’ll be satisfied if I start genusnoozing on my back, right?”

“What?! I will?!”

“I’ll be apologizing in the exact posture you suggested. But you know, I’m surprised you two still don’t believe me even though I’m going this far to apologize... It really makes me sad.”

“N-No! We’re not doubting you or anything, alright?!” I put a hand on my head and lowered my eyes with so much forced sorrow even I questioned whether I was being too obvious, but Redra reacted entirely as if she was in the wrong. *Just what I’d expect from the gullimander’s wife.* I decided to be a little more forceful.

“You know, if you really do believe in me... then how about this: I want this tunnel to reach all the way from our dungeon to the other side of the mountain. Can we make something work?”

“...I don’t think so!”

“Oh? You really don’t believe in me, then...?”

“You’ve got the wrong idea! Err, most of Tsia Mountain already belongs to our dungeon in the first place! There’s no space for your tunnel!” Redra hurriedly explained herself. *Wait, what did she just say?*

“Most of Tsia Mountain already belongs to your dungeon? Really?”

“This is a big mountain, right? All the big caves inside of it belong to our dungeon! All of them!” In other words, the bulk of the mountain was part of the [Flame Caverns]. I was having trouble visualizing that, so I decided to make a little model. I took some of the clay I had made from excess Clay Golems and shaped it into a rough copy of Tsia Mountain while referencing my map.

“Oh? This is Tsia Mountain! You’re pretty talented!”

“Thanks. So, let’s say this really is Tsia Mountain. How much of it would be a part of your [Flame Caverns]?”

“About this much!” She pulled away a little over eighty percent of the clay. About half of the remaining twenty-some percent metaphorically belonged to our dungeon. We really were just at the tip of Tsia Mountain. *Yeesh... The [Flame Caverns] sure are huge. I’m surprised we dug our tunnel this far without hitting them before now.*

“And wait a second, when did you even make a dungeon in our mountain?!”

“Aaah, lemme ask my Dungeon Core that... Rokukooo, when did you first come here?”

“Eh? Um... She never told me exactly when, but I guess about ten years ago?” *Ten years? Really...?*

“Ten years ago, apparently.”

“We’ve been here for over five hundred years! We came first!”

“Yeah, no fuckin’ way Core 695 is older than us... wait. Why the hell do I know who Number 695 is? Why do I recognize her voice?” Ittetsu fell deep into thought about something that really didn’t matter. *Alright... Let’s ignore this gullimander and get to business. Redra and I are gonna have a serious*

negotiation as Dungeon Masters. Finally, my time to shine!

"You sure there's nothing you can do about the tunnel?"

"Errrr, you somehow managed to slip through the cracks between our caverns up until now, but there's really no way you can go any further from here! Our dungeon's everywhere you can go from here! Not even a mouse could slip through!"

"Would you mind giving us a small part of your dungeon, just enough for the tunnel? I'll pay you DP for it."

"Sure, for 500,000 DP! Changing ownership of the territory and moving aside the contraptions in the way of the tunnel would cost about that much!" *500,000 DP? I'm pretty sure moving contraptions around wouldn't cost nearly that much. And we'd be spending DP to change ownership of the territory, not them. Is she trying to cheat me here? That's pretty cheeky for a gulli-wife!*

"500,000 DP is a bit too much, I think."

"Really? I think it's a pretty generous price, if I do say so myself! I wouldn't go any lower!" *Eeeh, I doubt there's any pricing standards for selling dungeon territory, and even if there were, I wouldn't know them. Rokuko wouldn't either, but this is all moot since we couldn't afford that much DP anyway. I want to haggle her down, but Redra seems like a pretty honest person, so she probably did offer the lowest amount she was willing to accept. Oh, wait... I could try haggling with gold coins too.*

"What would you say to an offer of fifty gold coins?"

"Why would I want gold coins? Don't be dumb, we don't need anything but DP!" Redra turned me down with a grin. *Figures. I wouldn't have minded paying that much if it got us the tunnel, though. Wait, wait, wait... Dragons love shiny things, right. I should try showing her the merchandise.*

"...What if you bought each gold coin for 10,000 DP?" I took out a glittering gold coin and held it up so Redra could see.

"Hahaha! Why would I pay 10,000 DP for a single... a single... Y-You know, that sounds like a good deal!!!" *Hook, line, and sinker!* I waved the coin back and forth. Redra's eyes chased it. When it moved right so too did her eyes, and

if I moved it up left her whole face tilted up to follow. She was completely enraptured. *But we're not done yet. She's still debating it in her head.* I took out a silver coin, polished to a sheen, and held it in my other hand.

"If you take this deal now, I'll throw in a free silver coin for every ten gold coins you buy."

"What?! I-Is that, uh, for real?!"

"Absolutely! My offers are all genuine!" I spun the silver coin in my hand as I spoke, and Redra's head spun in turn as she watched. *Alright... Just one more push and she's mine.*

"B-But, I... er...?"

"Woah now, Mrs. 112, what're you hesitating for? If you're really on the fence about this, allow me to offer you a special deal! If you agree to buy all fifty gold coins for 500,000 DP, I will give you not only the free silver pieces... but also this crystal knight statue with absolutely no extra charge!"

"Uwoooooh?!" The moment I put the transparent yet shining knight statue on the table, Redra's hot eyes opened wide in surprise. The statue was about twenty centimeters tall; I had made it from empty mana potion bottles.

"I-It's... amazing! It looks like it'll start moving at any second...! Amazing!" It could move if it wanted to. It was a golem, after all. I had built it as an anti-dragon weapon, and thus had intentionally made it shine incredibly brightly. That paid off, as Redra's eyes were shining even more brightly than the statue.

"This is a bonus that will only be provided if you accept the deal right now."

"A-Alright! That seems like a good deal to me! What do you think, 112?!" Redra smacked Ittetsu on the back repeatedly, kind of like a child begging her parents for something.

"Huh? Hold on, gimme a second. I'm thinking about something important right now."

"Ngh! Hurry it up! We gotta take the deal now if we want that statue!"

"Aaah, alright, alright... Wait. I REMEMBER NOW!" Ittetsu suddenly shouted.

"NUMBER 695 IS A FUCKING ALLY OF THE TRAITOR NUMBER 89!" Fire shot

out of his mouth. *Welp. Seems like Haku's known as a dirty traitor in the Dungeon Core world. Makes sense. She does hunt other Dungeon Cores, after all.* And so, our negotiations crumbled right then and there.

"Wha?! D-Does that mean I don't get to have that knight statue?!"

"You don't! I don't know the fucking details, but I do know that any friends of the traitor are enemies to us!"

"Enemies! It's been a long time since I've heard that word! What does it mean?! Say it in dragon language!"

"Prey to be crushed and devoured!"

"Prey to be crushed and devoured?! I can't wait!" *Hold up, that's what "enemy" means in dragon language? Makes sense that the strongest life form would look down on other species so much.*

"Then it looks like our deal isn't going through, Keima! But I still want that knight statue! Do something, 112!"

"Aaah... Hey, Keima. Would you mind throwing us a bone here?" *Wow. Know some shame, dude. You just shouted about me being prey to devour, don't go asking me for favors. Though... Maybe this is Redra's Absolute Authority working its magic on him? She did basically give him an order there.*

"Hold up, Ittetsu. Aren't we enemies now?"

"C'mon, don't be like that. That's just Dungeon Core stuff. You're a pretty fucking cool guy otherwise." *I'm glad to hear that. I like you a lot too, my friend. Because you're really easy to trick!*

"Alright, you can take the crystal knight statue. But not for free."

"Really?! I knew you were a good guy. So, what's your price? I ain't giving you no fuckin' territory, just warning you now."

"Yeah. My terms are simple. I'm going to challenge you to a Dungeon Battle. If you two win, I'll give you the gold and silver coins, plus another crystal knight statue. But in return, if I win, you'll give me your territory. We're not negotiating as allies here, we're determining the spoils of battle as enemies. That should be fine with you, right?"

“Huh... Sounds fuckin’ good to me. But isn’t this pretty damn one-sided...?” Ittetsu tilted his head in confusion. *Yeah, can’t blame him for being confused. I just challenged a dungeon over five hundred years old to a duel. Normally, that’d be suicide.*

“It is, which is why I want to add two custom rules.” Custom rules. They could be used to customize the terms of a Dungeon Battle, just like how Haku had set the victory condition to touching a Dummy Core instead of a real Core during our battle.

“First, I want your dungeon to go fully on the defensive, no attacking. You win if you defend your dungeon for a set amount of time... let’s say one full day.”

“A defensive war, huh? But our dungeon’s pretty fucking deep. No one could conquer it in a day.” It was certainly true that I had no way of knowing how many floors their centuries-old dungeon had.

“That’s where the second rule comes in. Our dungeon only has five floors. So to make things *equal*, let’s say that it’s our win if we get past the fifth floor in your dungeon.”

“Yeah, that’d be fair. Sounds good to me. You’ll have your tunnel if you can beat us.” Though, it actually wasn’t fair at all. I could easily conquer a five floor dungeon with even just half a day. My battle with Haku proved that. And this time, I could focus entirely on the offensive front. Plus, I had been planning specific countermeasures for the fiery caves of the [Flame Caverns]. We had a clear, significant advantage.

“And just to spice things up a little, how about this? You give us half of Tsia Mountain if we touch the Dungeon Core on the bottom floor of your dungeon.” Naturally, even the gullimander Ittetsu opened his eyes wide at that suggestion.

“What?! I-I’m not seeing how that’s fair!”

“C’mon, what’re the chances that I would reach the bottom floor of your dungeon in a single day?”

“O-Oooh! That’s a good point. You’ve got a one day time limit... Hey, Redra, whaddaya think?”

“Sounds good to me! We get the statue just by accepting, right?! And we’ll

get shiny coins after we take care of the prey to be crushed and devoured! What's the downside?!" *Yeah, they're not even considering the possibility of them losing.*

"But if you lose you're not getting any gold coins, remember?"

"No way would I lose when we're on equal footing!"

"Then you'll accept this Dungeon Battle under the discussed terms?"

"Yeah! So, when are we gonna do it?! Right now?!" Honestly, I had prepared ahead of time enough that starting immediately wouldn't be a problem. But a guaranteed victory would need a little more time.

"C'mon, babe, our dungeon's gotta prepare a little too."

"Alright. Let's do it in a week from now, then."

"That sounds fuckin' good to me. See ya then."

"I can take the statue now, right?! Right?!" Redra was already reaching out for the statue.

"...Yeah, go ahead." I grinned.

* * *

"I-I can't believe we're having a dungeon battle with Dungeon Core Number 112... C-C-Can we really win this?!" Rokuko asked me that in a panicky tone after I returned to the inn. I responded while patting Niku's (who had raced to my room to serve as my dakimakura if needed) head.

"Well, I've got some plans that should help us win. I have been thinking about this for a long time."

"Really?" Haku tripped so many flags we were guaranteed to meet them soon. Of course I started planning on how to deal with them.

"We win just by getting past the fifth floor of their [Flame Caverns]. Haku's dungeon only had five floors, remember?"

"Uh-huh..."

"I beat Haku under these circumstances. Do you think I'd lose now?"

“...Mmm, I-I’m not really sure.” *Oh wow. She looks pretty down about this.*

“Haku held back for us, didn’t she? She even agreed to only use 100,000 DP in the fight. And during the fight, she had to use some of that DP to attack us. This time, there’s no holding back, no DP limits, and although we can focus on attacking, that just means they can focus on defending.”

Rokuko kept going.

“We can’t use the rat strategy from last time in the [Flame Caverns]. Worst of all, that Redra is a real Red Dragon. She definitely looked into this fight. There’s no way she won’t be the Dungeon Boss. No way. Keima... Do you think you can beat a real red dragon?”

“...Wow. I didn’t expect you to think things through that far.”

“Wait, what? I’m not dumb or anything, I can figure this much out for myself.” Rokuko pouted a little bit. I put my hand on her head with a plop and patted it. *You’re really growing up, Rokuko.*

“You’re right. This battle’s gonna be a lot harder than the one with Haku, for a lot of reasons. I don’t know if we’ll be able to beat the dragon... Which is why what we’re gambling here is money we can afford to lose, and some crystal statues I made myself.”

“...But you worked really, really hard to make that money. You built an entire inn yourself with it. You wouldn’t mind losing it all over this?”

“Hey, most of that money’s pocket change Haku gave us. And we wouldn’t be losing everything. We can live without the fifty gold coins. Especially since we can earn basically as much when Haku comes back. Remember, we charge her for staying.” This time, losing the battle wouldn’t end up with me as a dungeon-spelunking slave. We’d just lose as much gold as we would earn from Haku visiting a single time. In other words, there was no need to feel so grim about our chances.

“Plus, think about it like this. You get to watch one of the dragons you love so much fight. Even if we lose, wouldn’t front row seats to a dragon fight be worth the price? Smile a little.”

“...Sheesh. Fifty gold coins for a front row seat is pretty expensive.”

“But if we win, it’ll be completely free. Feeling more hyped up now?”

“Well, getting to the boss comes first. I really do want to see a dragon fight.” Rokuko smiled with a laugh. Her uneasiness from earlier was nowhere to be seen. So, with my partner Rokuko now hyped up for our Dungeon Battle, I...

“Alright, I’m gonna go sleep now.”

“Wait, what?! You’re gonna sleep after heating me up?!” *Of course I’m gonna sleep. I really tired myself out negotiating with that salamander. And I’ve already put a lot of time into preparing for this battle. I don’t need to panic and rush anything. It’ll be fine.*

“Alright then, think about how to beat the dragon while I’m sleeping. I’ve already figured out how to reach the boss, so yeah.”

“Eh? Really? Just what I’d expect from my partner! But, mmm... How to beat a dragon...” Rokuko started to think about that while I got into my futon with Niku as my dakimakura.

...Uh, Rokuko? I’m glad you’re thinking hard about this, but could you do it in your own room? It’s kinda hard to sleep with you pacing around my room.

Ittetsu’s Perspective

“Man, what a great guy!”

“Yep. I’d have no problem with him if he weren’t part of the fuckin’ traitor faction.” Redra the red dragon, Dungeon Master of the [Flame Caverns], and Ittetsu, Dungeon Core Number 112, were talking about their new neighbors.

“He even gave me a new name, y’know. Ittetsu.”

“Wow! But the name I gave you is way better, 112!”

“Heheh, apparently it’s pretty hard for humans to pronounce. But yeah, the name you gave me is way more precious, Redra.”

“Well, aren’t you a smooth talker! I knew you were the best husband I could ask for, 112!!!” Since Redra said “112” in dragon language each time she addressed Ittetsu, it sounded like nothing but loud roars to those who hadn’t

studied dragon language or learned a translation skill. Normal humans would struggle greatly just to pronounce words like that, but Redra spoke it fluently in her human form.

“But really, this crystal statue is super shiny and cool, isn’t it?! Eheheh!”

“Yep. It was worth all the trouble to get it.” Ittetsu spat out satisfied bursts of fire as he watched his wife happily hug the treasure she wanted so much.

“...Ah, right, we’re gonna be having a Dungeon Battle. I gotta put out warning signs for a Paradigm Shift.” He had learned about Paradigm Shifts from other Dungeon Cores. He considered them a convenient tool he could use to get humans out of his dungeon before a battle while simultaneously making it such that they wouldn’t question any major changes within his dungeon afterwards. An increased number of traps, seemingly narrowing corridors, more monsters roaming about, and types of monsters not usually seen in a dungeon suddenly appearing were all considered signs of an upcoming Paradigm Shift. Those were all convenient ways to prepare for a Dungeon Battle as well, so it all worked out.

...Though, he didn’t know that the traitor Dungeon Core Number 89 had thought up all of that. All he knew was that someone smart out there had done him and other Cores a major solid.

“Alright, I’ll go buy some more traps and monsters.”

“Hey, hey, 112! I’m gonna get to join the fight too, right?!”

“.....Yeah, you bet.”

“What was with that pause...?” Ittetsu personally wanted to avoid sending Redra out as a monster. She was both his Dungeon Master and his beloved wife. But if she wanted to go on a rampage, he had no real choice but to let her go wild and be happy. Plus, Redra was in fact the strongest creature their dungeon had. There was no practical reason not to send her out.

“...I’ll make a Boss Room on the fifth floor. You can wait there. We’ll lose if they beat you, y’know?”

“I just gotta stop those small fries from getting past me, right? Easy and simple to understand! I like it!” Redra cackled with enthusiasm, her expression

lacking any trace of fear or worry.

“Heheh, I’m lookin’ forward to seeing you crush them. But that fuckin’ Keima definitely had the eyes of someone with a plan. But, eh... Even if they somehow manage to beat you, they won’t get to the fiftieth floor. No way are we gonna have to give up half the mountain.” Ittetsu’s lizard face twisted into a grin. Redra, seeing her husband’s grin, fell in love with him all over again.

Day 83 — # Keima’s Perspective

“Alright, time to genusnooze all day again.”

“You have it really rough, Keima. I can’t imagine genusnoozing all day... and twelve hours each time, too. Plus, Ichika and I have to work a lot harder since Niku’s too busy being your dakimakura to help us.”

“Huh? You don’t want to work either? I know the feeling, trust me. But I’m pretty sure all you have to do is buy the food with DP since golems do almost everything else.”

“...I really never thought that golems could be this helpful.” Most of the minor chores around the inn were done by golems with special gloves and shoes, instructed to obey orders given by Rokuko and Ichika. That said, there really weren’t many chores to do. Pretty much just delivering the food. Any adventurers causing problems were the Guild’s responsibility, and I could wash all our clothes and dishes with a single {Purification}.

“Niku has {Storage}, so normally I don’t have to do anything after putting a bunch of meals into it.”

“...I mean, Niku’s my dakimakura, so her working in the kitchen doesn’t make sense in the first place. Right?”

“Right! I’m your dakimakura!” Niku gave me an energetic response, tail wagging and ears flapping. *She hates working that much, huh? I’d expect nothing less from my dakimakura.* I took her soft dog ears and rubbed them between my fingers, causing her to close her eyes while trembling happily.

“Ngggh... Geez, why don’t you appreciate me that much?!”

“Huh? But I appreciate you a lot. It’s thanks to you that I’m even here in the first place, Rokuko.” I was getting a lot more sleep as a Dungeon Master than I ever did back in Japan, and the food I could buy with DP was pretty much perfect. “We’re gonna have a long and fruitful relationship, Rokuko.”

“O-Obviously! Hmph, well, I don’t need sleep like you do, so whatever!” Rokuko left the room looking extremely pleased. *Yeah... I’m pretty impressed with how she can get by with zero sleep. I wouldn’t be able to survive like that. No way.*

Day 84

Preparing for the battle was nice and easy since we didn’t have to build any defensive measures. I knew it was the right idea to suggest they focus purely on defense.

Rokuko came into my room while I was fiddling with the menu and giving orders to various golems.

“Hey, Keima. Do you know where my egg is? The phoenix egg.”

“Huh? Oh, that. I’m using it for something right now. Why?”

“You’re... using it?” Rokuko tilted her head.

“So, phoenix eggs have pretty solid shells, right? Well, I researched them a little and it turns out their eggshells have some pretty high fire resistance. I figured that’d be useful, so I’m having a golem smash it repeatedly to build up a nice stock of shells.”

Rokuko looked at the dungeon monitor. What she saw was a lone golem, smashing the egg over and over and over. At first the egg had been about the size of a chicken egg, but at some point it had gotten two, three times as big as a softball. I didn’t know what was going on biologically, but the egg’s shell was definitely growing along with it.

The golem threw the eggshells behind it each time it broke the phoenix egg. It would then wait about a second for the resulting hot vit lon to burst into light and revive, after which it would break the new egg, starting the process anew. There was already a mountain of eggshells right behind the golem.

“K-Keima! What are you doing to my little Phenny?!”

“Well, I mean, I was thinking that the eggshells might be strong enough to resist even a dragon’s fire breath. Don’t you think that’s too good to pass up?”

“You think it’s worth being this evil?! My poor little Phenny...!”

“...A phoenix knows no death. Its life is one of endless reincarnation...!” The monitor showed the phoenix egg reviving again.

“Saying something cool doesn’t give you a free pass! Hey, golem, stop! stop!” And so, Rokuko stopped the egg-breaking cycle. *Mmm, crap. I only got one room of the storehouse filled with shells. I can’t believe she’s willing to let a free source of powerful anti-fire material slip us by...*

“Uuu, you sure suffered a lot, didn’t you Phenny?” Rokuko rubbed the egg against her cheek. *Tch. Fine. I’ll do what I can with the eggshells I do have.*

“And wait, you named him?”

“Obviously. I got him with my own DP.” *Speaking of which, I do remember her naming the goblin she bought without thinking after summoning me. She called him Gobsuke... I, uh, I wonder if she named every single goblin she summoned before I became her Dungeon Master.*

“By the way, what’ll you do if that phoenix is a girl?”

“...Then I’ll call her Phenni. It sounds like Phenny either way, so it works!” *True.*

“So, Rokuko. Did you think of a way to beat that dragon?”

“Ummm, well...” Rokuko trailed off. It seemed like she did come up with a few ideas, but felt unsure about them. She would have just said so if she didn’t have any ideas at all.

“Um, I was thinking we could use Phenny... He’s a phoenix, so even a dragon won’t be able to kill him. Though I haven’t figured out what he could do, like, specifically.”

“Hey. Rokuko. Aren’t you being a lot more evil right now than I was?”

“...I-I’m not being evil! I’m planning on him saving the day as a hero!” *I doubt*

the egg's gonna hatch over the next few days, though. How's an egg gonna help us...? I, uh... I'm just gonna try to think up a plan on my own.

Day 89

"Hey, Keima. You fuckin' good to go yet?"

"Yep. I'm ready when you are."

"Gahahaha! That's the spirit, human! Hurry up and reach me, alright?! I'm gonna be bored as heck waiting for you!"

"B-Breathe as much fire as you want, we're going to win!"

It was the day of the Dungeon Battle. Rokuko and I were stationed in the Master Room, along with Niku and Ichika... *Huh? What about the inn? Well, we'll be able to tell if a visitor comes along since the area surrounding the inn is part of the dungeon. I'd just have to teleport one of our lovely receptionists to the cafeteria or something before we get discovered. Worst comes to worst, I could just have a golem perform receptionist duties. We are the Dancing Doll Inn, after all. Why couldn't our receptionist be a golem?*

We had a one day time limit, which meant our battle would be going on for a fairly long time. It was important for us to challenge this at the top of our game. If I needed to sleep midway through, the presence of my beloved dakimakura was absolutely essential. Though, it was apparently normal for Dungeon Cores to fight for days straight since they don't actually need sleep. A one day battle is kind of... no, is pretty ridiculously short, apparently. *I guess my battle with Haku ended weirdly fast, then.*

"Let's just set things straight before we get going for real. The battle will last one day, twenty-four hours. My side's going purely defensive, no attacking. If we win, you give us fifty gold coins, five silvers, and another crystal statue. If you win, Keima, we'll give you enough of our [Flame Caverns] territory for you to finish your tunnel."

"Hey now, you're forgetting the terms of victory. We win if we get past the fifth floor and reach the sixth floor. And on top of that..."

"I know, I know. If you touch the Core on the bottom floor of our dungeon,

we gotta give you half of Tsia Mountain. Yeah?”

“That’s right. Don’t forget that. And by the way, how many floors does your dungeon even have?”

“HAHAHA! Fat chance of me telling you that! Quit shitting your pants, it’s less than a hundred.”

With the details settled, I confirmed with Rokuko and the others that we were ready to go.

“Master, the Golem Platoon is ready to move at any moment.”

“When the heck did you make these...? Uhhh, yeah dude, my squad and I are ready too.” I had given both Niku and Ichika platoons of golems to lead. Our main source of firepower this time would be golems. Main reason being that they could be made from literally anything. They were practically free, and there was power in numbers. Plus, rats would just die this time if I sent them charging into the enemy dungeon. I couldn’t use them again.

“Alright, I’m gonna start my attack. You ready?”

“You fuckin’ bet.” ...It was kind of weird, but that reply marked the start of our Dungeon Battle. I set the whole thing up myself, but I was starting to have second thoughts. Regardless, our dungeons connected through time and space. The entrance of the [Flame Caverns]—which happened to be the volcanic crater at the top of Tsia Mountain—connected to a room on the fourth floor of our [Cave of Greed], where no adventurers would come. The fact that we didn’t have to connect entrances specifically allowed me to proceed without closing our dungeon. We’d lose in a second if they could fight back, though. This starting position was only possible because we didn’t have to worry about defending ourselves.

“Alright, Ichika. Open the door.”

“Yooou got it, boss.” I ordered her to open the door of the room that I had thoroughly, thoroughly prepared for just this occasion.

Ittetsu’s Perspective

One week has passed since we made the deal. It's finally time for the Dungeon Battle. I can't remember when I last fought a fuckin' Dungeon Battle... but now's not the time to be thinking about that. The one thing I do remember is that I'm more of an attacker than a defender. Too fucking bad. This war's a defensive one. Never fought a Dungeon Battle like this before. Defending my dungeon from human attackers is nothing new, but I've never even heard of a Dungeon Battle set up like this.

"Keima sure is a guy with funny ideas."

"112! Do you think I'm gonna get a chance to fight?!" No way will they reach the bottom floor, but they might get through the first five surprisingly fast. Keima's confidence is proof of that.

"Alriiight! It's time to get fired up, Redraaa!"

"Yeah! We've got ten times as many red lizards as normal for this! Our halls are overflowing with red lizards!" I bought way too many red lizards. They're overflowing out of the rooms and filling the cramped hallways. But my wife Redra's happy, and that makes it all worth it.

"...Eh. This is about how many monsters I'd want if we ended up clashing monster armies together anyway."

"Alright, I'm gonna start my attack. You ready?"

"You fuckin' bet." Our dungeons immediately connect, making me realize that the lazy exchange we just had signaled the start of our Dungeon Battle. I'm pretty fuckin' sure that Dungeon Battles usually start with some more heated shittalking, or something...

"Grrr... That kinda hurts my enthusiasm..."

"I think it's pretty fucking funny. If his goal was to bum you out, Redra, he sure fucking succeeded." But even after the gates open, no monster army comes marching through. He's taking his sweet time. Bold move for someone with a one day time limit. Is he just not tak—

I immediately fall silent. A huge flood of water has started racing through the portal.

“...What?!” The water races down our tunnels like an unstoppable tsunami. It hisses as it covers our hot floors and walls, washing away our red lizard armies without slowing down for a second.

“WHAAAT?!” I can’t believe it. This is a volcano. The only entrance to our dungeon is at the mountain peak. At worst, a little rain water gets in sometimes. And yet here is a flood of water, dominating our halls. It’s flowing with so much force that our red lizards are getting stuck at the end of the flood, crumbling into a meaty ball of useless underlings.

The water races through our dungeon and reaches the second floor in no time at all. The green dots signifying allies on the maps slowly drop in number as red lizards die from drowning, being slammed into walls, or just being crushed by their fellow lizards.

“Wh-What’s going on?! What the hell is this?!”

“Ha, hahaha... What the fuck...?”

On top of everything, the tsunami is somehow filled with enemies. I check the map and see it filled with so many red dots it’s like the screen is getting painted over in red. That meant that letting the water keep flowing was a bad idea. It’s already smashed through the second floor and reached the third floor, only thirty minutes after this Dungeon Battle started. *He’s conquered two floors already... At this rate, he might actually be able to reach the fiftieth floor in a day! Hahaha, he was actually fucking serious!* Thirty minutes per two floors would be ninety-six floors in a day. Twice as fast as necessary.

“But I can’t let that happen. Here’s what I gotta do.” Moving fast, I dig a hole in the still-dry fourth floor leading to the outside of the dungeon. Naturally, I can’t change stuff on a floor that’s being invaded by enemies. I’ll have to give up on the third floor and above.

The water quickly reaches the fourth floor, but now it’s flowing outside of the mountain—along with a bunch of red lizards.

“...Heh. You’re pretty good, Keima. Hey! Redra!”

“Eh?! Y-Yeah?! What the hell happened?!”

“Gahahaha! I don’t fucking know, but they’ve conquered the first three floors!

I'm sending you to the Boss Room, get ready for them! They'll be there in no time!"

"Whaaat?! Isn't that way too fast?!"

"I'll bring you back if things get too risky, but don't let your guard down and get yourself killed, alright? He's definitely got *somethin'* up his sleeve!"

"Y-Yeah!" I hurriedly send Redra to the fifth floor's Boss Room.

Keima's Perspective

"Wow, what is this? It's pretty brutal..."

"What do you mean, 'what is this?' It's a water attack. Pretty basic stuff."

"How is it basic?!" *Well I mean, it's a volcano with just one entrance at the top. What else would you do? And I mean, it's a fire dungeon. It'd just be rude to fight a fire dungeon and not flood it with water. I basically settled on this the second Haku told me what kind of dungeon it was.*

All I did was pack a bunch of [Water Sources] close together onto the ceiling of a room in our dungeon... a very, very big room. Once the battle started, I opened the door and unleashed the flood. Of course, it wasn't just simple water. I had mixed in a bunch of plankton with it (and plankton only cost 1 DP per one thousand critters, so it was cheap). Since this world lacked microscopes, they had no way of telling that there was plankton in the water. Their small size meant they were hard for us to use, in that they couldn't really move much and I couldn't use their eyes to see, but given that they were treated as ally monsters, I could use them to map out the enemy dungeon. I had mixed in a few ball-shaped Water Golems just to be safe, but they all died after slamming into the walls of T intersections and other places. *Yeah... Water Golems are pretty weak if you don't surround them in something.*

Ittetsu reacted quickly. He opened a hole in the side of his dungeon and redirected the water through it... just as I had expected him to.

"Okay. I didn't get to use them last time, but now we're gonna start invading the dungeon with the Second Golem Platoon. Rokuko, Niku, Ichika. Initiate Plan B. Is everybody ready?"

“Uh-huh. But... Are you really sure about this?”

“Yes, Master, I’m ready.”

“I’mma be real with you, I’m basically just copying Niku and have no real idea what I’m doing... but yeah, I’m ready to bust some heads.” I nodded to the three of them.

“Alright! Golem Platoons, charge!”

Ittetsu’s Perspective

Another large wave of enemy dots appear on the monitor. This time, it’s a platoon of golems. But they aren’t any golems I know about.

“...Ngh! Hey, those golems are fucking armed!”

“Wh-What?! They’re golems with weapons and stuff?!” The golems are wearing rock armor and helmets while wielding shields, swords, and even short spears. But most surprising of all is how they’re marching in a rigorous military formation, as if they were a human army. They’re also carrying boxes, though I can’t tell what’s inside of them. Did he really need to use golems for something like this?

“Hahaha! I’ve never seen anything like this in my life... wait, what?” But right after appearing, half of the golems change course and rush out of the dungeon.

“The fuck? What’s going on here... Golems, running away from battle?” I dunno what’s going on, but since the other half are still advancing through the dungeon, I send the red lizards that survived the flood after them. Most of the lizards didn’t survive, but even so, I have as many now as I usually do. However...

“Tch, yeah, this is rough. Golems are weak on their own, but they’re way stronger than your average human when they team up like this.” The red lizards have their blows blocked by the front row shields, then get skewered by the back row’s spears. Even their fire breath gets blocked by the shields, leaving them open to the spears. The golems kill with brutal efficiency, working together so well they’re like an elite military squad.

Our main attack force, red lizards, have been completely defeated. And before long, they reach the staircase to the next floor taking the shortest route possible. They're slower than the water, but they're making good progress. And the moment they reach the staircase, another platoon of golems appears. They're also wearing stone equipment and move in unison. They advance through the halls protected by their fellow golems and begin conquering the second floor just as they did the first.

"Ngh... This is a problem. The magma slimes ran away from the water, and red frogs can't do shit against golems! Poison and burns don't hurt them at all!" A platoon of golems is basically the worst possible foe for a fire-based dungeon. Red minotaurs might be able to do something, but I only have them stationed on floor six and below.

"But I'll be able to handle a frontal assault, as long as... what?!" New invaders come out of nowhere. But not from the entrance. I look at the fourth floor's map and see that a platoon of golems are marching through the hole I had made to drain the water earlier.

"What...?! Those are the golems from earlier! Hahaha, he sure got me! The first platoon must be a distraction!" If a wall gets destroyed by an enemy, I can repair it even with invaders nearby. But holes I make myself don't work like that. I'd need to buy new walls with Dungeon Points, which isn't possible with invaders on the floor. There are puddles marked as enemies filling the tunnel. I might have been able to block the tunnel if I had removed the water more thoroughly, but that would have just let him send a second flood of water through. There was nothing I could do. I might have been able to think of a plan given enough time, but the distraction had completely fooled me until it was too late.

In other words... I had ended up making a shortcut that let them skip straight to the fourth floor. And another platoon of golems is heading its way too. They don't seem to be as heavily armored as the first platoon, but they're pulling something behind them. It looks like a long snake, curving back to their dungeon where it seems to be connected to something. What's it for? How long is it? The golems just keep advancing, stretching it behind them.

The golem platoon loops around the mountain. The hell is going on...? The

golems who invaded the fourth floor through the tunnel are standing still, as if waiting for something to arrive. No matter how many monsters I send over, none of them can do anything to the shield and spear combo. The occasional sword does serious damage, too. I can't believe weapons and armor can make golems this much stronger. I'm gonna have to take them a little more seriously from now on.

Eventually, as expected, the platoon of golems with the snake-thing meet up with the other platoon.

"What the FUCK...?!" Another massive horde of enemies appears on the map. But they're not golems. I can't see them at all. But I can see that the snake-thing the golems have been carrying is swelling like hell. It used to be flat, but now it's packed full of something... packed full of invaders. It's probably carrying the same water that first flooded into our dungeon. They left the dungeon and headed to the hole leading to the fourth floor. I took a look outside the dungeon and saw that they had built dirt walls to help prevent water from leaking back out.

"Haha! HAHAHAHAHA! This is pretty fucking serious now...!" Water filled with invaders is flooding into my dungeon from the tip of the snake-thing. The fourth floor is being steadily covered in red enemy dots. I can only laugh loudly and buckle down to try and recover from this.

Keima's Perspective

The hose continued to spray out water, utilizing gravity for an extra boost. That water being plankton water, of course. It couldn't produce an overwhelming wave of destructive water like the initial flood did, but it was enough to really get the dungeon soaking wet.

"So, how do you all feel about Plan B? Lemme hear your thoughts."

"If the enemy opens a hole to divert the water, we'll invade through the hole and flood it with water from there. If the hole is small, we'll dig it out. And finally, if the enemy digs another hole further down, we'll repeat the process with that one. Well... I think it's super mean! Think about how they feel right now!"

“You’re amazing, Master!”

“You’re a monster, dude.”

By the way, Plan A was just winning with the initial flood of water if he didn’t open up a hole, and Plan C was being forced to conquer the dungeon legitimately if he somehow managed to stop and get rid of the water completely from the inside. Ideally, things would have gone according to Plan A, but life is rarely that generous.

I bought the fire hose with DP, and it was pretty expensive. I technically had to buy a lot of them to get the length I wanted, so yeah. I’m pretty sure I ended up buying close to 100,000 DP’s worth. It would have been a waste to convert gold coins to DP, so I borrowed the DP I didn’t have from Rokuko. Without interest.

...It was still the most expensive expenditure of this battle by far. You might think it was a waste of money, but come on, I wanted to attack the fire dungeon with water... uh, I mean, it’s a necessary tool for conquering the rest of the dungeon after getting past the fifth floor. Flooding the dungeon with water is the fastest way to conquer floors, so yeah. We definitely couldn’t conquer fifty floors in one day any other way. Also, the hose will be useful for inn-related stuff, so it was worth it. Definitely. Yep.

Though I really gotta wonder if fire hoses belong in the misc goods section of the Catalog... eh. Whatever. The fact I can connect them into one big hose is pretty convenient.

“So like, doesn’t this mean I’m being totally useless? Why don’t we just attack from the hole and ignore the front? I’m feeling kinda like a waste of space right now.” I had given Ichika command of the golem platoon that was starting from the first floor and conquering the dungeon through normal means.

“...No harm in getting used to doing things the normal way, yeah?”

“I mean, you’ve got a point, but now that Plan C’s out the window, shouldn’t I just abandon this joint and invade through the hole too?”

“Yeah, true. Come back to base for a bit. Niku, how are things on your end?”

“The squad of reconnaissance rats discovered surviving enemies. I am taking

the guerrilla golem squad to finish them off.” This time, the rats were serving as scouts outside of the dungeon. I had carried them in boxes and unleashed them right outside. I didn’t want us to get attacked from behind by any monsters who survived getting washed outside.

“Keima, he opened up a new hole on the fifth floor this time. And I’m pretty sure it leads to the Boss Room.”

“Hahaha. Guess we’re not gonna be able to drown the boss, then.” But really, Ittetsu pulled an impressive move there. As effective at defeating the flood of water as it was, he just opened up a path directly to the Boss Room from the outside. That wasn’t the kind of trick a sane person would pull. *Not that I have any right to be saying things like that.*

By the way, the Boss Room was an actual boss room in that we couldn’t advance past it until we defeated the boss. The door leading deeper wouldn’t let even a single drop of water pass it by, which meant we had no choice but to defeat the Red Dragon. *We gotta beat the final boss on the fifth floor of a fifty floor dungeon? What kinda crappy game is this? Totally unbalanced. Just awful.*

“Looks like the flood plan failed. ...I never figured out a way to beat the dragon. Did you, Keima?”

“...Guess I’ll just show you my answer. Let’s enjoy our front row seats to a dragon getting exterminated.”

An armored golem peeked into the hole to the Boss Room.

“GAAAAAAAAAH!!!”

The monitor was immediately overwhelmed by bright white light, then went dark. The other golems saw what had happened. Dragon fire. The armored golem was enveloped with fire so hot it melted his equipment, burning him to ashes in an instant. *Uh... How freakin’ hot does fire have to be to melt stone equipment? Holy crap.*

“Gahaha! How do you like my fire breath?!” Redra cackled loudly, brimming with confidence. The power radiating from her body forced me to recognize her as a fearsome foe, far stronger than I could have anticipated from how she looked when she was with the gullimander.

“K-Keima? Can we beat her?!”

“...No idea.” With the violent might of a true Red Dragon in front of me, I honestly didn’t know whether or not it was a creature we could hope to defeat.

“GYYYAAAAAAAAOOOOOOOH!”

The ground shook each time Redra roared. I was only watching her through the monitor, but I still felt immense pressure. *So this is a dragon, huh?*

“...I’m sorry, Master, but I just peed myself.”

“Hahaha, don’t sweat it. I came close to doing that myself... {Purification}.”

“Hyafu...! Th-Thank you very much.” I cast {Purification} on Niku, cleaning her up in a bubbly flash. *I wonder if Rokuko and Ichika are holding up okay.*

“Yeah girl, don’t feel bad. Red Dragons are strong enough that a party of A-Ranks should feel lucky to scrape by with only a few dead allies. If I were looking at that dragon up close, I definitely woulda peed myself too. That’s just how it is. Are you okay, Rokuko?”

“I’m fine, I can cast {Purification} myself.” Rokuko, voice shaking, had fallen to the same fate as Niku. *But anyway, putting all that aside, I’ve gotta do something about this Red Dragon. I said all that about watching a dragon get exterminated or whatever, so yeah. Heeey, Mister Goleeem. Do the thing I told you abooout.*

Ittetsu’s Perspective

“Gahaha! I knew these small fries would be nothing to me!” Redra laughed loudly while melting golem after golem with her fire.

“That’s my Redra. But be careful, ya hear?”

“You worry too much, 112! Just look, they haven’t even hit me!” The flood of water had definitely surprised them, but thanks to how quickly Ittetsu had opened a hole to divert the water flow, the only real lasting effect were the puddles of water covering the floor. The only thing that held Redra up was the fact that all the water was marked as an enemy on the map. Her mind raced, considering whether the water was filled with slimes or something smaller, but

her thoughts were cut short after a new golem came marching in.

“Hah, they wanna die that much... w-wait... what?! H-Hold on!”

“Ah? What’s up, Redra... Oh, this is...” Redra started to breathe fire, but hurriedly swallowed it back down. That threw Ittetsu off for a second, but he understood after seeing the golem. It was holding a crystal statue as a shield.

“H-Hey! Isn’t that the statue he said he’d give me if we won?! The match of the one we already have!”

“Hahaha! Can’t use your fire now, huh? What a fucking guy.” If she breathed fire at the golem, the crystal statue would likely be damaged in the process. They had agreed to the Dungeon Battle largely because Redra wanted that statue. It was the worst possible thing he could have used as a shield.

“Ngh, then I’ll just use my claws!” Redra tried using her claws to crush the golem directly. But the large claws of a dragon weren’t capable of movements that delicate. They were meant for swiping away hordes of enemies at once. It wasn’t likely that she’d be capable of deftly crushing the golem while leaving the statue unharmed.

“Grrr...” They were in trouble. She couldn’t do anything. Even growling didn’t do anything since they were facing a golem. A normal monster with an animal brain would have dropped the statue and fled in sheer terror. The statue-wielding golem, on the other hand, drew its sword and charged in swinging. Unable to swipe him away, she had to sit there and take the blow. Screech! The blade let out an odd noise and dug into Redra’s scales.

“Uwooooh?! A Magic Blade?!” She hurriedly took a step back. But the tip of her wing nearly clipped the crystal statue. She folded them as tightly as she could against her body to try and prevent that from happening again.

“Ngh, this is tough...!” The golem came charging again, with its statue shield held up high. Redra, in turn, backed off again. She didn’t want to harm her precious treasure. That was all she could think about.

“Ngh, what can I do... here? What?!” In the midst of her running away, Redra noticed that the floor had at some point become submerged by water. Each step she took sent water flying everywhere. She looked around and saw that

the vent hole they had opened was being blocked up by golems. The water filling the room was likely the same enemy-water as before.

“Tricky...!” She inhaled deeply to let loose a wave of fire on the golems blocking the hole, but the golem she had been fighting with dashed over to them, crystal statue gleaming brightly.

“AAAAH!!!” She once again had to swallow her fire before letting it loose. A puff of heat blasted through her lips.

“Then I’ll just use my claws! I’ll destroy them and the tunnel!”

“Hold up, Redra. They’re outside of the Boss Room. If you leave the Boss Room... they’ll have conquered the floor.” The Boss Room had such a firm lock precisely because the boss existed within it. Turning that around, without the boss inside of it, the door would open and the water would flood down to the next floor. In other words... the fifth floor would be conquered and they would lose. However, that being said, Redra couldn’t bear to remain in the room unable to attack her enemies. She was physically strong enough that she could continue chasing the golems around for the rest of the day, but not mentally.

“What should I do?! This isn’t a fight! DO SOMETHING, 112!!!” Do something. Redra, the Dungeon Master, said that to Ittetsu.

“...Aaah. Here we fuckin’ go...”

And Ittetsu, Dungeon Core Number 112, had to grant that wish by any means necessary. Even if it guaranteed their defeat. All he could do was try to make their defeat as painless as possible while minimizing their long-term losses.

Keima’s Perspective

“Hey, Keima... How ’bout we make a deal?” Ittetsu contacted me while I was giving orders to the golem carrying the crystal golem shield. *A deal, huh?*

“Depends on the deal.”

“I want you to give us that crystal statue. If you do, we’ll let you pass the fifth floor.” *In other words, they don’t mind losing if I give them the statue.*

“And, uh... I’d appreciate it if you don’t pull any more tricks that make it

impossible for Redra to attack you.”

“I don’t mind handing over the statue to get past floor five, but that second part is a bit much. I’ll make it work if you take us straight to the bottom floor without getting in our way, though.”

“Aaah? Ah... Redra can’t fight like that. You’ve gotta at least let us fight in the final Boss Room.” *Wait, really? I just said that for the hell of it, I can’t believe he actually went with it. Really though, something about what he just said feels off somehow... Ah. He must be under the influence of Absolute Authority right now. Redra did just scream “I can’t fight, do something about this.”*

“Better this than you flooding our dungeon and making us open a bunch of holes. Let’s take this to the real Boss Room and settle things there. Deal?” *Ah, yeah, that makes sense. The flooding must be really rough for him. Rough for the monsters and stuff in this fire-based dungeon to survive a massive flood of water. I knew flooding his dungeon was the right call.*

“...Alright, which means you won’t get in our way as we travel to the Boss Room. Unlock all the doors in your dungeon and deactivate the traps. We’ll have a one hour long ceasefire. ...Ah, and that hour doesn’t count in the twenty-four hour time limit.”

“Alriiight! It’s a deal. Hey, Redra! There’s gonna be a one hour ceasefire!” Thus, our victory was secured and completing the bonus conditions became a lot easier.

“...Um, ah... Keima? I’m not really sure what just happened... but did we win? Did we beat Core Number 112? And the dragon?” Rokuko looked at me with a stunned expression on her face.

“Yeah, I guess we did. We took the dragon down. Now we just gotta touch the Dungeon Core on floor fifty for the complete victory. And of course, that’s what we’re gonna do.”

Rokuko’s eyes widened.

“Are you serious? Wait, what am I talking about, of course you’re serious...”

“You bet I am. The whole reason I negotiated with Ittetsu at all was to set this up, y’know?”

“...But we can’t use the statue as a shield anymore, and we can’t use any strategies that make her unable to fight... How are we gonna beat her?”

“Well, naturally, I’ve got a plan. The one you gave me.”

“The plan... I gave you?” Rokuko tilted her head in confusion.

Ittetsu’s Perspective

“Grrrrrr...”

“Why the long face? I did something about it, Redra.”

“B-But now we lost the Dungeon Battle... I’m sorry, 112! If only I hadn’t been so selfish...!” Redra was acting timid in a way very unlike herself, but Ittetsu just laughed it off.

“That’s not what the Redra I know would say. And who cares? We got the second crystal statue, that might as well be our win. Won’t be getting the gold coins, though.”

“But now we gotta let them down all the way to floor fifty...”

“So what? You’re not gonna lose, Redra. Keima woulda reached floor fifty no matter what if he got past the fifth floor, it’s all the same.” Not only that, but had the flooding attacks continued, the entire dungeon would have ended up underwater with severe damage to all its monsters and traps. Ittetsu figured that out and knew that the resulting repair costs would be far greater than 500,000 DP.

“And now we got a promise that you get to have a nice, fun fight. Pretty sure we’re the ones who came out on top here. You’ve got my trust, Redra.”

“Yeah...! I’ll give’m hell!”

“I’m countin’ on it. You can fight all day without needing to rest, yeah? Go as wild as you want!”

“Yeah!” Redra cheered up immediately as Ittetsu rubbed her head in satisfaction.

Keima's Perspective

A platoon of golems marched down the staircases, guided by a Red Minotaur as Red Lizards and Flame Hounds watched from afar. It was a truly surreal sight.

"Redra's ready to fucking fight. I'll guide you to the bottom, so hurry it up, alright?" I could hardly believe my ears after Ittetsu told me that. Absolute Authority must have been messing with his head or something. I followed the minotaur he sent over and it really did guide me to the downwards staircase. He had even built a bunch of new staircases to take us directly to the bottom. It felt more like an apartment building staircase than a dungeon staircase. We got past the first forty-nine floors after only about an hour of walking. *Self-confidence is fine and all, but isn't this a little much? Though I'm guessing this is probably just better for him than me flooding his whole dungeon.*

...We still had over twelve hours left. Redra likely intended to fight for that entire time. Red Dragons were dragons specialized for battle, and one could easily fight for over a day at full potential. They were basically cheaters in that although they had to inhale first, they could breathe as much fire as they wanted. Also, all my dragon knowledge came from Rokuko. According to her:

"All dragons are really strong, but Red Dragons are built for combat! Their fire breath and claws are top class! Haku's White Dragons are more like jacks of all trades, so they might lose in a head to head fight. But listen, listen! White Dragons are..." And so, even though I asked her about Red Dragons, Rokuko wasted my time for a solid hour talking about White Dragons. Thanks to her, I knew more about dragons than I ever wanted to. Apparently, she had dreams of following in Haku's footsteps and summoning a lot of dragons. Since she couldn't afford any right now, she spent her time learning more about them. *If you love dragons that much, why didn't you spend your 100,000 DP tip on one... huh? If you're gonna buy a dragon, you don't want a subspecies, you want one of the strongest ones? Hahaha, how cute. How much DP do you think real dragons cost? Even a baby costs millions of DP.*

"So, what's their weak point?"

"Apparently the best thing to do is get on your knees and beg for mercy! Or run away!" Rokuko beamed a confident smile. *Uh... That's not really fighting*

them. Or winning. I ultimately didn't learn anything about a weak point or something similar. The tip that dragons loved shiny things was proving more useful than anything Rokuko knew. That's Haku for you, our dungeon's goddess of good fortune.

The golem platoon reached the Boss Room. Break time was almost over.

"Okay, Keima! It's time for a full-on battle with a dragon! Don't worry, I just used the bathroom!"

"Wait. Now that I think about it, didn't you say that Dungeon Cores don't need to use the bathroom?"

"...I'm a human type. If I eat, well, stuff will come out." *That's news to me.*

Niku and Ichika used the bathroom while they could, and of course, I did as well. Now I don't have to worry about pissing myself when Redra starts spitting fire everywhere!

Ittetsu's Perspective

"GRAAAAAAAAH!" They were in a Boss Room more than wide and strong enough for a Red Dragon to wield their strength to its fullest potential. In the middle of said room was Redra, spinning her head around while breathing fire. That alone was enough to destroy nearly a hundred of the armored golems surrounding her. Though each broken golem was quickly replaced with a new one.

"Gahahaha! This is it, this is what I've been waiting for!" Redra laughed, extremely pleased. She swung her tail while cackling, knocking back the golems behind her and sending them flying into a wall that shattered them on impact. Her fire breath melted the ground and started turning it into magma, but Ittetsu quickly fixed it before things got that bad.

"Come on! Dance, dance, dance until the sun comes up!" Which would run out first, Keima's stock of golems or the time limit? Either way, Redra wasn't going to get tired out. She could easily fight for an entire day straight. Given their affinity with the fire element, Red Dragons had an extremely high

resistance towards heat that allowed them to shoot out fire as hot as they wanted—fire so hot other dragons would burn their throats and mouths attempting to do the same.

Dragons were unbeatable in a fight. Nobody wanted to fight a dragon, especially a Red Dragon. As a result, few adventurers ever challenged the [Flame Caverns], and this was the first time in years of boredom that Redra could really stretch her wings in battle. She was strong enough that she could invade a nearby kingdom and do serious damage, but Redra wasn't one to enjoy bullying the weak. She also had her duties as Dungeon Master to take care of, and Ittetsu was her husband. She didn't want to leave Tsia Mountain if she could help it.

With all that in mind, it should be clear why she was having so much fun mowing down golems boldly challenging her. She was having so, so, so much fun. The golems even wielded Magic Blades, somehow, which could harm her scales. There were hordes of them, and they all worked together to inflict damage on her. They were basically flies tickling her if she paid attention, but if she let her guard down, they would really hurt her.

And that's exactly what she wanted. A battle with proper *enemies* to fight.

"Aaaaah, I'm loving this! How many of you are left?! How much longer is this fun gonna last?!" It must have cost a fairly sizable amount of DP to buy full sets of equipment for all the golems. That worried Redra, as it meant there might not be many for her to fight. But her fears were relieved by the sight of a new golem. It was carrying an egg about the size of a small watermelon. Redra didn't understand why.

"Is that an offering or something?! Guess I'll make some fried eggs!" She breathed out fire all over the golem holding the egg. But the golem didn't melt. Or to be more precise, the golem's stone armor and helmet melted, but both it and the egg were fine.

"...What?! I've never seen a golem like this before...!" It was kind of white and kind of yellow... The same color as an egg. That made the actual egg harder to see, as if it were being camouflaged.

"Well, not like that matters!" This time, she launched her claws at it. That

naturally broke the golem apart... but it threw the egg away moments before impact, straight towards Redra's mouth. She had been in the middle of sucking up air to breathe fire again, so the egg flew perfectly right between her wide-open rows of teeth.

"Ngggh?!" She reflexively swallowed the egg. But it got stuck midway down her throat.

"Mgggh?! Ngh...!" The egg had stopped itself in her throat as if it had suddenly grown arms and legs.

(Wh-What's going on?!) Her airflow wasn't completely blocked. It may have been a large egg, but a Red Dragon's throat was by no means small. But it was still hard to breathe. And before she could fully process what was going on, the egg crawled down her windpipe, avoiding the way down to her stomach. Soon it reached something else entirely... her lungs, from which she breathed fire.

"Nnn, nggh! This feels, so gross...! Wh-What the heck is... ngggh?!" Slice. A sword sprung out of the egg and stabbed her lungs.

"Gah! Aah, ghaaah?!" Redra stumbled, feeling pain and suffering unlike anything she had ever felt in her centuries of life. Although dragons had incredibly sturdy bodies, they were still beyond vulnerable to internal attacks on their scaleless organs. Lungs weren't equipped to deal with things going inside of them. She weakly spat out fire and blood in a cough that forced the egg out of her body.

"Ngh, cough... Wh-What the heck...?!" She had swallowed adventurers and been attacked from the inside before. But it didn't hurt nearly as bad then. Dragons were strong enough to easily melt armor and weapons inside of them, anyway. A dragon's insides shouldn't even flinch from being stabbed by a normal blade.

"This must have been that something Ittetsu was talking about... Ngh! Cough, cough!" She spat out all the blood that had pooled within her lungs. The cuts were already sealing on their own, proof of how sturdy dragons were.

"But they shouldn't have any more of those eggs, ri—ah?!" Redra looked around and saw that she was surrounded by nearly a hundred golems, each holding an egg. Of course, that was enough for even Redra's blood to run cold.

“A-Aaah! Uwaaaah!” She immediately started destroying the golems and eggs. Only once all the golems and eggs were destroyed did she take a deep breath. No golems came forth to replace them.

“Hah, hahaha... What, already finished...?” Redra’s wings relaxed as relief washed over her. She then glanced at the floor and saw an egg just sitting there. Perhaps she just missed it earlier.

“Hmph!” Smack! She crushed it with her tail. Finally, every single egg was des — Suddenly, right before Redra’s eyes, light gathered and the egg revived.

“What?! The heck is with this thing...?!” She crushed it with her claws. But within seconds, it revived again.

“Aaah!” She crushed it again at the same time. Revive. Crush. Revive. Crush. Revive...

“Whaaat?! The heck is even with this thing?! Uwaaaah!” Redra, descending into a craze, continued attacking the continually reviving egg.

Keima’s Perspective

“Alright, just as planned.” Redra had become completely enslaved by the egg (meaningful wink). She was having a lot of fun dancing around and playing with it. While sobbing.

“Hey, Keima. That’s Phenny, isn’t it?”

“Yup. Your plan was right, he can revive no matter how many times she kills him. He’s doing great!”

“This isn’t exactly what I had in mind...! Couldn’t you have had him, like, do something a lot cooler than just die over and over?!” *C’mon, he’s an actual egg, not the protagonist of an action movie. Don’t expect too much from him.* By the way, the egg golems I made from collected phoenix eggshells naturally did not revive upon death. They were ultimately just golems, after all. But they were golems built from the eggshells of a bird that lived amongst fire. I experimented with the eggshells and found that they had enough fire resistance to easily survive direct exposure to the thermite process—that is, a fire of about 3,000 degrees initiated by mixing metal and aluminum. It didn’t even leave a mark.

Which led to today's strategy: Rokuko's genius (?) egg attack plan. At first I thought I'd try to recreate what happened in the Inch-High Samurai folktale, but dragon stomachs turned out to be a lot stronger than I expected in more ways than one. So, I shifted my focus to their lungs instead. The egg-shaped golems had their Magic Blade-ified arms and legs inside of their outer shell, waiting to come out whenever necessary. I had ordered them to sprout their limbs upon entering the throat, and of course, to hide them when spat back out.

But the egg-shaped golems were very light. A dragon could easily blow them out of its throat without much trouble. That's why I ordered them to quickly stab Redra's throat before being spat out, thereby traumatizing her. I would then have the real phoenix egg—which looked identical to the egg-shaped golems—roll out and attack her. I also had a platoon of golems carrying egg-shaped golems surround her just in case she wasn't panicking—that is, in case she wasn't traumatized yet and needed another egg in the lungs to set her straight. The results were as you saw. All I had to do was stealthily place the real phoenix egg on the ground and the deal was sealed.

"This is horrible."

"Thank you." Rokuko gave me her valued opinion. In reality, though, I could have had the egg explode in Redra's lung and killed her on the spot. I only didn't do that because it would have made me feel pretty terrible. Plus, I didn't want Ittetsu swearing to get revenge or anything like that. Being on good terms with your neighbor is important for sleeping well. It'd be hard to catch a nap if someone was beating on your walls all the time. And so, I hurt her enough to immobilize but not kill her. For a second I wondered if stabbing her lungs alone would be enough to kill her, but I figured dragons were strong enough to blow it off. Worst case scenario, we lived in a world with Restoration Magic. We could work something out.

"So, how are you going to win now?"

"...Take a look at this."

"Oh, the map... wait, what? Why is there a friendly signature on the other side of the boss door?"

"Remember that Crystal Golem I gave Ittetsu?"

“Eh? Crystal Golem? You mean the crystal statue you just gave them?”

“No, not that one. Remember? Waaay back before the dungeon battle even started?” Indeed. I was referring to the crystal statue I gave Ittetsu the day we negotiated the terms of the Dungeon Battle. Or, in other words, the Crystal Golem I gave them.

“Didn’t you give that to them?!”

“I said they could take it, but I don’t remember saying it was theirs.”

“But, but, didn’t you call it a present for them?”

“That was if they bought the gold coins for 500,000 DP. The deal changed after that, so yeah.” It was some pretty harsh wordplay, but since I didn’t actually give it to them, the statue still belonged to us. And despite how it looked, it was a golem, which meant it was our pawn. A part of our army.

...Even if they locked it up in some treasure room, it was still worthwhile. If the storeroom was below the fifth floor, part of our army would have technically gotten below it, which secured our victory. And if luck was on our side, it might’ve even ended up close enough to the Dungeon Core for us to touch it. That was my plan in a nutshell.

A certain tactician once said, “The results of a battle are determined before it begins.” He was completely right. Ittetsu ended up placing the statue in their bedroom for a night, and then storing it in their treasure room, located on the very bottom floor of their dungeon—the fifty-first floor.



“Isn’t that against the rules or something?”

“Nope, and it worked out perfectly. Thanks to the golem, I heard Ittetsu himself say that the dungeon had fifty-one floors total, which was a major factor in me deciding to go with flooding the dungeon.” I had used the golem to eavesdrop on them, which I kind of felt bad about, but hey. Gotta do what you gotta do to win.

“...Wait. Doesn’t this mean that you knew we were going to win no matter what from the start, Keima?”

“Yep. This is a battle we had no chance of losing. The only thing left was securing the bonus victory. Do you remember that deal I made earlier?”

“The deal...? Ah. Unlocking all the doors in the dungeon... You said that so he’d unlock the treasure room’s door, didn’t you?”

“Yep. The golem in the treasure room is our ultimate trump card. I’m gonna finish this battle off while Ittetsu’s distracted by Redra.” I controlled the Crystal Golem, making it exit the treasure room and look around.

“Now, where’s the Dungeon Core...” The fifty-first floor had nothing but the treasure room, Ittetsu’s bedroom, and a staircase up to the fiftieth floor. Nothing else. *Oh yeah, Haku’s [Ivory Proving Grounds] had its core right after the fifth floor Boss Room.* I made the golem climb up the staircase one step at a time. Soon, it got close enough to hear Ittetsu desperately calling out to Redra to try and calm her down.

At the top of the staircase was the shut door to the Boss Room and a faintly glowing Dungeon Core. Ittetsu was right beside it, talking to Redra through the menu. *I get it now. They put the Dungeon Core right after the Boss Room, and then put the treasury after that. The idea must be for adventurers to ignore the Core and go straight for the treasury.*

...The stand supporting the Core was exquisitely designed. But it was short enough that even the somewhat small Crystal Golem could climb it. I stealthily made it stab its tiny sword into the pedestal like a climbing pick so it could reach the top. And so...

“Hey, Redra! Get a grip! C-C’mon... Wait, what?! The hell is this thing doing

here?!”

“And, touch.” Ittetsu noticed at the last moment, but it was too late. Using my trump card, the Crystal Golem, I successfully touched their Dungeon Core.

Epilogue

I met with Ittetsu the day after the Dungeon Battle to discuss the terms of his defeat and reap my rewards. We would have done so yesterday, but he needed a lot of time to calm Redra down.

“Hahaha, you’re a real piece of work, Keima. That statue was a fuckin’ golem too, wasn’t it? You got me. I’ve never seen a crystal golem that small before. I didn’t suspect a fuckin’ thing.” Ittetsu laughed, seemingly not worried that much about his loss.

“Haha. Yep. You, uh... You don’t think that was cowardly or anything?”

“C’mon, what do you take me for? It’s my bad for not noticing the trap. Don’t ya think so, Keima?”

“...Well, yeah, basically. Though I only pulled a nasty trick like that cause I couldn’t figure out how to beat your lovely dragon wife head on.”

“Heheheh. I’m pretty sure you figured out a way to kill Redra. Thanks for holding back. You may be a friend of the traitor Number 89, but I’ve got your back if you ever need it, Keima. Number 695 too.” Ittetsu grinned, though it was kind of hard to tell on account of his lizard face.

“A’ight, time to give you what I owe. You can have the space for your tunnel.” *Uh... huh?*

“Wait. Wasn’t our deal that I got half of Tsia Mountain?”

“Huh? That was only if you touched the Dungeon Core on the bottom floor of my dungeon.”

“Yeah, and I did, with the crystal golem.”

“The hell are you talking about? The bottom floor of my dungeon is the fifty-first floor.” *Ah...! Holy crap. He got me.* I had touched the Dungeon Core behind the boss room on the fiftieth floor. The actual bottom floor, the fifty-first floor, only had a treasure room and a bedroom. No Dungeon Core. In other words, I

never even had the chance to beat him completely. I was doomed to a minor victory from the start.

"...You've gotta be kidding me."

"Hahaha! It's your bad for not noticing the trap, am I right, Keima?" Ittetsu intentionally repeated the phrase I had just agreed with myself. *I get it now. He made us wait to have this meeting until today so I couldn't recover from this trap. Even if I could think of some way to get the Dungeon Core to the bottom-most floor and touch it again, it's too late. The Dungeon Battle is already over. It ended while I was sleeping, relieved that we had won so quickly.*

"You trick me and I trick you, yeah? Heheh. Now we're equal." *I thought this guy was just a gullible salamander, but I guess not. He's good. I'll accept a tie this time. And... yeah. We're definitely gonna have a long and fruitful friendship.*

"...By the way, why would it cost 500,000 DP to make room for the tunnel? Shouldn't it cost you nothing to remove territory from your dungeon?"

"Y'see, there's this... Core-kinda thing in the middle of Tsia Mountain. Destroy that and this place'll stop being a volcano. Building another one somewhere else will cost about 450,000 DP. Then we gotta rebuild some tunnels, so... Gah. Wish it could be a little cheaper."

"...Can't you just move it? The tunnel's not that big, you could just move it down a little or something." Ittetsu opened his eyes wide in surprise.

"...Oooh?! I didn't even think about moving it!" *Seriously? C'mon, gullimander, are you dumb or not? I can't tell anymore.* Ittetsu's roaring laughter echoed throughout the tunnel.

Day 90

And so, we completed our tunnel through Tsia Mountain. We named the Tsia tunnel... just that. Tsia Tunnel. It was straight from start to finish, but it was long enough to take a few hours of walking to get through. Though it would take several days to loop around the mountain, so a few hours was a pretty big time saver nonetheless. Plus, it would encourage people to stay in our inn before making the trek through the tunnel or after getting through it.

Since Ittetsu ultimately got to move the mountain core for cheap, he offered to help me hatch Rokuko's phoenix egg. *Being on good terms with your neighbor is a really nice thing. I can't wait to see what a phoenix hatched from Red Dragon fire looks like. The egg got a little fire breathed on it in the Dungeon Battle, but it didn't hatch. It feels like it should soon, though.*

But putting that aside. I went through the tunnel to reach the other side of Tsia Mountain, and there I saw the ocean. There was a faint scent of salt drifting in the wind. The air around here was definitely a lot different. There was a tall hill nearby that I climbed to take a look around. I could see a port town in the distance. I believe it was named Pavella. Apparently, Ichika was born there.

...I wonder if fish are the same in this world. You know, I think I'll celebrate the tunnel's opening with some seafood tonight. It might be a good idea to let Ichika visit home for a little while too. Though her family probably won't be too happy about her being a slave now.

"Aaah... This is a great view, isn't it?" Rokuko, long blonde hair fluttering in the wind, had at some point stood beside me.

"Yup. Is this the first time you're seeing the ocean?"

"Uh-huh. I've heard about the ocean before, but the gathering of Dungeon Cores I go to never really bothered with it." I didn't really know much about that gathering of Cores or whatever, but I did know that Rokuko had never left her small cave aside from going to that gathering. She was always by herself. *Well... She's got me and the others now. She'll learn more about the world as time goes on.*

"Hey, Keima. We really got tricked this time, didn't we?"

"Ngh... Well, I mean... yeah. I didn't expect Ittetsu of all people to pull a trick like that."

"I was surprised too. I thought you were going to win for sure." We didn't score a complete victory, and they figured out our trump card. We technically won by getting past the fifth floor, but from my perspective, we lost hard.

"But, you know... We may have missed out on getting half of Tsia Mountain, but we did actually beat Dungeon Core Number 112. I think that's more than

good enough. Plus, I'm sure you'll figure something out with the space we do have. Right, Keima?" Rokuko smiled.

"Yeah. We don't need to worry about the mountain too much." I said it before, but if we couldn't get the mountain we could just expand outward inside. There were plenty of roads we could take. *Hm... Yeah. Roads. I should really think about what kind of entrance fee I should set up for the tunnel. Maybe I could charge more based on weight? Like, make some golem scales and... eh, I can think about this more later.*

"This tunnel is going to make our dungeon even more amazing, right?"

"Yep. 'Cause now we can earn money without doing literally anything!" The tunnel was already built. All we had to do was charge people for using it. Our dungeon had finally gotten a way to earn free money. *Free money. Aaah, that sounds so nice. I've been really busy managing the dungeon, building an inn, working in that inn, and buying a bunch of monsters and items while adventurers invade. On the other hand, I can just sleep while people pass through our tunnel. At worst, I'll have to count their entrance fee.*

"I don't really know what you mean by free money, but it sounds amazing!"

"Oh, it is. It sure is!" *Long live free money! Goodbye work, hello passive income. From this day forth, I will spend all day every day sleeping. I love it!*

Ah. Right, right. I need to ask Ichika how much to charge for the entrance fee. Teach me, oh wise and mighty Ichika!

"Mmm? I'm gonna say that, like, fifty coppers is the absolute max. People are gonna have to walk here since there aren't any good roads in the mountain, so yeah. And like, that means they're only gonna have as much stuff as they can carry. Can't really charge'm much for that. We're totes gonna earn way more from the inn. Specially 'cause of all the people who'll come for our dungeon... What? You're gonna sleep through it? Hahaha, what're you talking about Master? This is a new dungeon, for beginners, with an inn right beside here. Things are def gonna get busier from now on, for sure. You're gonna have a lot to do, Master. There's just sooo much only you can do, y'know?"

...Wh-What...?

Extra Chapter: Keima's Earth Cooking Class

Apparently, the inn really needed me to function.

Repairing broken furniture, commanding golems.

Cleaning rooms and doing laundry with {Purification}.

Buying food with DP.

Oh man... The inn really is over-reliant on me. And so, I decided to train my employees so I wouldn't have to do anything. I gathered everyone in the kitchen after closing hours.

"In conclusion, I will teach you all to cook so I don't have to work anymore!" My goal was to, worst case scenario, teach them just enough cooking that they could function without me if I were to be unavailable for whatever reason. Rokuko could use DP to buy food as well, but for whatever reason, the food she bought tasted a lot worse than mine. I figured that had to do with knowledge and experience influencing the DP Catalog. But her [Melon Rolls] alone were as good as mine, so I found it likely that if I taught her how to cook, the quality of the food she bought would go up as well. If she ended up able to make the food herself, well, all the better.

"Keima. I've never cooked before in my life."

"I can like, kinda cook? I'm def more of an eater, tho."

"I'll... I'll do my best." *Yeah, Rokuko doesn't even need to eat, and Ichika will probably just eat whatever food she makes, so... Good luck, Niku.* I had a problematic team before me, each difficult in their own way. *Heheheh. That just makes this more fun for me.*

"So, what are we making? [Melon Rolls]?"

"Don't be crazy. We're definitely gonna be making everyone's favorite [Curry Rolls], yeah?"

"...I would like to suggest that we make [Hamburgers]." The easiest thing to

make out of all of those was hamburgers.

“Making rolls would be a little too hard for beginners like you three. So, this is what we’re starting off with!” I set a jar of milky white cream onto the table with a thump.

Mayonnaise.

When it comes to cooking, some good seasoning will go a long way towards improving flavors. Mayonnaise tastes great, is simple to make, and can turn a simple pile of vegetables into a fantastic salad just like that. Naturally, putting mayonnaise on something technically counts as cooking. In other words, it’s perfect for beginners learning how to cook.

“Oooh, sweet sweet mayo. A hero totally invented that stuff.”

“I think it’s pretty good. Vegetables taste a lot different with it.”

“Mayonnaise isn’t bad on hamburgers, either.”

My students were all fond of it as well. The fact she instantly thought about how well it’d go with hamburgers shows that Niku might just have what it takes to make an excellent cook.

“Alright, I’ll start off by showing you how to make it.” I took out all the ingredients necessary to make mayonnaise. Eggs, salt, vinegar, and oil. I then looked over the recipe I bought with DP.

First, I needed to mix the egg yolk with the vinegar and salt. Apparently, vinegar could be replaced with lemon juice or something else like that. Then, while mixing all those ingredients together, I needed to slowly add in the oil. The ingredients would eventually melt into a soft cream. Add more vinegar to that, mix a bit longer, and that was that. Mayonnaise.

“Hey, what about the egg whites?”

“The recipe says just the yolk.”

“I wonder what would happen if we used the egg whites instead. Let’s try it out!”

“Stop, Rokuko! Beginners have to follow the recipe religiously! This is an iron law!”

“Egg whites and hamburgers... hmmm?”

“Niku! Enough with the hamburgers, please!”

We haven’t even started yet and shit’s already hitting the fan.

“Alright, I think I’m gonna start by separating the yolk from the egg white.” I cracked the egg shell on the rim of the bowl and separated the two halves while being careful not to let their contents spill out. Next came separating the whites and yolk. I poured the egg whites into the empty half of the shell, and once only the yolk was left in the other one, I poured it into the bowl.

“And that’s how it’s done. Give it a try.”

“Ummm, like this?” Rokuko slammed her egg against the rim of the bowl, shattering it. *Yeaaaaah... Guess I should have started by showing them how to crack eggs first. I’ll just let her try again. If she destroys like, five eggs, I’ll step in.*

“Rokuko, girl, you gotta be a lot more gentle. Like this, just give’m a nice little tap.” Ichika deftly cracked the egg and separated the yolk from the egg whites. Her experience quickly made her into my shining beacon of hope.

“Hyaah, hyaah!” Niku was somehow managing, in her own weird little way.

“...Rokuko, let’s not make this any worse. You should stop wasting eggs and just let Ichika take care of this for you.”

“Ngggh! I can’t help it! This is my first time doing this!”

“Yeah, I know. It’s not your fault. It’s your first time.” I decided to just move onto the next step.

“Alright. Now we mix the yolks, salt, and vinegar... Rokuko, let me just make this clear. Work with Ichika! Follow her lead!”

“F-Fine. Let’s do this, Ichika!”

“You got it. Leave everything to me!”

“I’ll help.”

After the ingredients got decently mixed together, we needed to add oil. First, one cup. After that, just slowly add it in. Rokuko managed to mix the ingredients together without messing anything up thanks to Ichika’s help.

Apparently, if mixed improperly, the ingredients would separate without hardening at all and instead turn into something like dressing. *I'm glad things went well.*

Then we added extra vinegar, stirred it some more, and once everything looked good we were done. Well... Putting aside the egg cracking, the whole recipe was basically just a bunch of tedious mixing. *I wish I had a hand mixer.*

"...Hey, Keima. Couldn't we just make golems do this?" Rokuko just went and said it. *Yeah, yeah. We should've just left this to golems. Or at least, I should've made some hand mixer golems for us.*

"...We'll do that next time. This time was all about, uh, experience. Yeah, experience."

"Experience is totes important."

"Agreed."

Ichika and Niku were both totally fine. *Maybe because they're actually physically fit.*

"...Actually, isn't this exactly what the Wearable Golem's assist is for?"

"I was thinking the same thing."

Th-These two... are good! But anyway, we worked hard and have been rewarded with mayonnaise. Let's go ahead and eat some. I cooked the leftover egg whites in a frying pan, then added cucumbers and tomatoes. Plus some sweet potatoes.

"Hey, Master, my dude. Didn't we use raw eggs for this mayo? Should we really be eating it like this? It's not gonna kill our stomachs, right?"

"Nope. Don't worry, all the eggs I buy with DP are totally safe. We'll be fine." We did need to keep that kind of thing in mind, though, thanks to salmonella and whatnot. *Maybe {Purification} can kill bacteria like that.*

"Ahaha, it is mayonnaise I made myself, it'll definitely be fine! Now, Keima, eat this and cry tears of joy!" Rokuko stuck a cucumber into the mayonnaise and held it out for me to eat. Just like that.

"No thanks, I'll get my own."

“Come on, let me feed you. Come ooon.” She thrust it further towards my face. Any further and I’d get mayo on my nose. Having no other choice, I took a bite. It tasted like normal mayo.

“So? It’s delicious, isn’t it? Of course it is. I made it myself.”

“Yeah, it’s pretty much normal mayonnaise.”

“What do you mean, normal?! Give it the praise it deserves!” *Please. A beginner following a recipe won’t end up making miracle food. Normal is fine. Actually, it’s great. Abnormal food doesn’t tend to be good.*

“Nmm... It’s delicious.”

“Hell yeah, mayo. But y’know, Master, I’m surprised you’re eating it with vegetables like anyone else. I totally thought you were gonna smear it on my feet and ask to lick it up.” *Woah, hold up. What kinda guy do you think I am? I wouldn’t do that. Though I really want to. Sounds amazing, honestly.*

“Anyway. It looks like the inn’s mayonnaise stores will be just fine without me now.” *Just the mayonnaise, though. This is the first step of a long journey towards my freedom. It may be a small step for me, but I’m certain it’s a huge leap for the inn. Definitely.*

“By the way, won’t you still need to buy the ingredients yourself, Keima? I don’t know which eggs are safe or anything like that.”

“...Ah!” *Cooking class is over! We... We didn’t waste our time, I’m sure of it! This experience was valuable! Somehow!*

Afterword

The second volume got sold, so here I am. It's Supana, the author. It's thanks to all of you that I get to write a second afterword like this. Volume three is next. I hope to see you then, too.

This afterword's also limited to two pages, so I thought about saying something funny here, but decided not to. I don't want to start a trend of having clever, funny afterwords. I feel like I'd have to be clever every time to avoid letting people down. That sounds like a lot of work. No thanks.

So, let's talk about the deep lore of volume two. Ichika is part of the Keima group now. In contrast to Keima's incessant hunger for sleep, Ichika has an incessant hunger for food. The only thing left to form a perfect trio is a character with an incessant hunger for sex. I'd really like Niku to fill that role (geheheh), but naturally I can't have a literal child acting like that. And so, our main cast must do without a perpetually horny loli for now. This light novel is all-ages, after all. Which also means they might have to make do without one forever. That seems likely.

Now, about Ittetsu. The truth is, I decided his Core number by rolling a dice. I rolled a D100 and got 12, so 112. The only thing I decided beforehand was to have his number start with a hundred.

I really love dice. When playing games, I usually decide my name by rolling dice. In many ways, dice are extremely powerful. When you have multiple options and don't know what to do, you can roll a dice to decide for you. That usually makes your feelings more clear, and even if you find yourself wishing the dice had landed on another number, you can just make the other decision anyway. And if you really don't care either way, you can actually let the dice decide for you. It's a win-win situation. (Though if you regret the decision afterwards, be aware that you have only yourself to blame for rolling dice to choose for you.)

It's for that reason and more that I carry dice around with me wherever I go. I

recommend anyone who has trouble deciding things to do the same. You'll save all the time you would've spent worrying, which feels great.

Oh, I got pretty off topic there. I'd get fired if I got off topic like this in the actual story. You can only get content like this in afterwords, am I right?

It looks like I'm almost out of pages. I'll use the rest of my space to express my thanks. First, thank you, Youta-san for drawing everything from frilly maid dresses to a Yakuza salamander. Your art was just as good this time as last time. I'm looking forward to your work on volume three.

Thank you to the stores selling this book and thank you to those who bought it. It's thanks to all of you that the first volume got a second print run. And of course, I mustn't forget all those reading the web novel version. I hope you continue to read and enjoy this story. Thank you.

And finally, thank you, whoever is holding this book in their hands right now.

That's it for this time. I hope we meet again in volume three.

Supana Onikage

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Lazy Dungeon Master: Volume 2

by Supana Onikage

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Original Japanese edition published in 2016 by OVERLAP, Inc.

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Ebook edition 1.0: October 2018