

Stay At home 281

Chapter 281: A War With The Chamber Of Commerce

Although very weak, the tree was alive again after 30 years. Xixi could feel it growing inside her belly like a baby. She felt really happy.

She had nourished the World Tree in her belly for several decades before it gave up its life to save hers.

It was practically her baby, and now this baby had been revived; the wounds deep inside her were starting to heal.

Now and then, Lulu picked up some chicken and put it in her rice bowl, but he never took a bite.

“Eat with me, Lulu. We have enough for both of us,” Xixi said with her mouth full.

“I’m not hungry. Eat up. It’s good for you.” Lulu looked to the kitchen, in which Mag was busy cooking. “The owner is incredible. This dish is as delicious as it’s magical. If it can make the World Tree grow faster, we’ll bring our children here every day to eat it. I’m sure they’ll get strong in no time.”

Xixi swallowed the food in her mouth. “Yeah. It’s so good, and I feel so warm and comfortable! I think I can eat 10 more bowls of rice!” She smiled, and went back to eating.

Lulu turned back to look out through the door, worried and wary. *I hope they won’t find us.*

Robert and Rood gave a burp together. They looked at each other’s empty bowl, and exchanged an embarrassed look.

“This sweet tofu pudding is as good as roujiamo, Boss,” Rood said, abashed since he had harbored doubts about this restaurant. But, at least he was an honest man. “The two dishes are good enough to take the first two spots. Besides, they are cheap at twice the price!”

“I’m sure they are good, but I think the first and second place should go to savory tofu pudding and braised chicken and rice. Tofu pudding is best eaten savory,” said Robert.

“That’s because you haven’t tried the sweet one, Boss. It’s simply divine. I can’t imagine the taste if it’s savory.”

“And you haven’t tried the savory one, either. The zha cai and little shrimp are mouth-watering.” Robert smiled. “Let’s just agree to disagree and move on from this issue.”

Rood did as his boss said.

“Excuse me, could you bring me the check, please?” Robert said.

Amy walked over to their table with the kitten. “A braised chicken, two bowls of rice, two bowls of tofu pudding, a roujiamo. That will be 1,550 copper coins,” she said, holding out her hand.

Robert was surprised at how quickly she had done the calculation. *Even many adults can’t do it so quickly.* He gave her a dragon coin, five gold coins, and five silver coins.

“Thank you,” Amy said, and held the coins in her both hands.

When Robert was about to leave, he turned the menu over, and saw several rules on the back: a, no yelling in the restaurant; b, cash only, no credit allowed; c, no fighting and no one is allowed to threaten the owner or any employees, or he/she will be banned for life.

These are some strange rules, Robert thought. Normally, restaurants in Chaos City only have rules like no demons allowed or something.

Robert put the menu down and looked at Mag. *He hires a half-dragon, he has strict rules, and he cooks delicious and magical food. This restaurant is one of a kind.* He walked out of the door, and then looked back. “If a restaurant that isn’t a member of the Chamber of Commerce took the top five spots, wouldn’t it be interesting?” he asked Rood.

“It would, and if the dishes here can’t make the top 5, I think the food competition will become a joke.”

Robert nodded grimly. “Right. What good is this event if customers don’t trust it? And right now, we’re losing their trust.” Then he smiled. “This Mamy Restaurant may be our way to turn the tables. Customers are no fools; they may force the Food Association to make some changes, and then we may have to start a war with the Chamber of Commerce.”

A war? Rood’s eyes started shining with excitement. He quickened his pace to catch up with Robert who had stridden off.

Chapter 282: Five Stars

After two bowls of braised chicken and six bowls of rice, Xixi put the earthenware bowl that she had licked clean on the table, belched, stroked her bloated belly, sat back, and smiled at Lulu. “I’ve never eaten more in my life, Lulu. I’m extremely satisfied.”

The customers nearby were shocked; they had never thought such a skinny girl would be able to eat so much.

Lulu smiled. “Then we’ll come again.”

“But you haven’t eaten a bite.” Then she suddenly realized some dishes were still not served. “Excuse me, can we have the other dishes now?”

Yabemiya nodded. “Sure.” She cleared away the empty bowls and walked to the kitchen. She was surprised at how much Xixi had eaten, but she never showed it. She envied her for having such a doting lover.

When Yabemiya brought the food, Xixi’s eyes lit up again, but she was so full that she could barely move right now. “I want to have a bite of that rainbow fried rice, Lulu.”

“Okay.” He scooped up a spoonful and held it up for her to taste.

“Mmm, it’s very good, and—” She tasted something familiar in it. *Spring of Life?!* She chewed a few times and swallowed. She could feel her body being soothed, although not very clearly.

The Spring of Life is the holy spring of elves; only royals and some noble families can approach it. How did the owner here get his hands on its water? He is related to elves? Xixi wondered.

“What’s wrong?” Lulu asked as he had seen the change on her face.

Xixi’s smile returned quickly. “Nothing. I’m full. You can eat it all.” Then she saw the sweet tofu pudding with red syrup, and picked up the spoon. “But I think I still have room to eat this.”

“Eat it slow, and don’t stuff yourself too much.” Lulu started eating the fried rice; his stomach had been rumbling for a while. *It’s different from braised chicken, but it’s good.*

“I like this sweet tofu pudding!” Xixi said after taking a bite. She sat straight and started stuffing herself.

Most people—except some bitter sweet tofu pudding people and savory tofu pudding people—were giving five stars when filling out the ballots.

When Robert and Rood came back to the ballot boxes, the other staff had also just come back from lunch, and were ready to start working.

“Deputy President,” Arvin said, “is that restaurant cheating? By the way, we ate in Drews Restaurant for lunch. We ordered that roasted mutton, which ranks 68th.”

“If it’s cheating, we’ll ban it,” said another staff member. *Many shady deals were going on in the dark; we’re well aware of that. But, at least they were doing it in the dark.*

Rood handed his ballot to Arvin.

Arvin was shocked when he looked at it. “What?! Rood, were you bought off?”

Rood smiled and looked to Robert.

Robert gave them his ballot. “No.”

They were knocked for a loop. Knowing Robert, they never expected to see so many five stars, but they knew that the Deputy President could never be bought.

“That restaurant is very busy. I don’t think he needs to hire fake customers,” Robert said solemnly. “The foods there are extraordinary and well worth the prices, the environment is great, and the service is outstanding. They deserve five stars.”

“Looks like it’s really a dark horse,” said a staff member. “I can’t wait to try the food there.”

“You all should go there someday,” said Rood. “Their dishes are simply unbelievable. You must try the sweet tofu pudding.”

“I like the savory tofu pudding better,” Robert said, and left.

“That’s a first!” a young staff member exclaimed. “Deputy President never recommended any dish before!”

They watched Robert leave with astonished eyes.

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The six hunter-like men were walking in the Aden Square, looking around warily as if searching for something. Or someone.

“Hey, old woman, where is the best place to eat?” the youngest one asked a woman who looked to be in her 30s.

The woman rolled her eyes in distaste. “Are you blind or something? I’m still a girl!” She stomped on his foot and walked off angrily.

“F*cking broad!” The young man revealed the darts in his sleeve and pointed them at the woman’s back.

The whiskered man grabbed his hand. “Focus on our mission!” he warned.

Chapter 283: I Don’t Think The Owner Is A Bad Man

Lulu put down his spoon. He had finished eating everything. “Are you full?” he asked while Xixi was licking her bowl.

“Yes.” Xixi smiled, putting the bowl down. There was some syrup at the corner of her mouth.

When Lulu reached out to wipe it off, Xixi stopped him and licked it. “That’s my syrup,” she said.

Lulu smiled. “We can order two bowls of the sweet one for you next time.”

Xixi shook her head. “No, we can’t. We must follow the rules. We don’t want to get banned.”

Lulu didn’t want to risk getting banned, either, because the braised chicken meant very much to them. Their future was riding on that dish. He respected Mag who had done them a solid.

“Excuse me, check, please,” Lulu said.

Amy walked up to them, thought a moment, and said, “That will be 25 gold coins, Big Bear.” She held out her hands.

“Wow, how do you do that? I don’t think I can calculate it that fast,” Xixi said, surprised. *She’s such a cute, funny, bright, and lovable girl.*

“Father taught me,” Amy said proudly. “Will you come back tonight?”

“We will. But we ate too much for lunch, so we may come back later tonight and eat away.”

Amy nodded happily. She found Xixi very kind, and was deeply impressed by how much she could eat.

“There you go.” Lulu carefully put 25 gold coins in her hands. Amy had embarrassed him several times today, but he was still smiling at her. It was because Xixi liked her, and because she was the owner’s daughter.

Xixi stroked Amy’s head and pinched Ugly Duckling’s cheek. “I’ll see you later.”

“Bye, Sister Xixi, Big Bear,” Amy replied, and watched them leave.

Dryads love nature, and that's why they like kids and animals? Mag wondered. He was pretty interested in the probably last two dryads.

"What are these?" Xixi asked after they stepped out.

"That elf said they're ballots," Lulu answered, casting a hostile sidelong glance at Sally, who was busy collecting money.

Xixi held his hand. "She's still a child; she may not even know of the massacre. Also, she's a powerful magic caster. I don't think we can defeat her." She dragged him off. "But I fear the owner is related to elves," she whispered. "His daughter is a half-elf, so her mother is an elf, and I tasted Spring of Life in that fried rice."

"Spring of Life?" Lulu looked grave suddenly.

"Yes. 25 years ago, we bought some water from the Spring of Life. I still remember its taste, so I'm very sure."

"Then we must keep our heads down from now on. Most people might have forgotten us since it's been over 100 years, but elves are everywhere nowadays. Besides, those dogs are still after us. We'll have to leave if it becomes a dangerous place."

"Let's not go vote. I have a bad feeling about going there." Xixi gripped harder on his hand.

Lulu nodded and looked around.

"I don't think the owner of the restaurant is a bad man; after all, his girl is so cute and thoughtful," said Xixi.

"Maybe he isn't, but still we have to be careful. Not everybody is able to hire such a powerful elf magic caster as a waitress."

"Perhaps she works there so she can eat the food for free. You have to admit that the food there is irresistible."

"A magic caster works in a restaurant so she can eat?"

"There's nothing wrong with that. Maybe she doesn't like doing quests like men. She gets to stay elegant and comfortable working there."

They walked towards a secluded corner of the Aden Square.

...

The six hunters were looking up at the magic screens.

"There're so many restaurants, Boss. Where do we start?"

"From the first one," the whiskered man said, pointing. "Dukas Restaurant."

"That's a wise decision, Boss. I'm sure they came here and saw this list. They must be in one of these restaurants, waiting for us to find them."

"I think I've caught her scent," a middle-aged hunter said, sniffing. He looked around, his eyes bloodshot.

Chapter 284: She Recognized Mag And Amy

"Which direction, Blacky?" Anselm asked. They were all looking at the middle-aged man, excited.

"West, east, north, and south," Blacky said earnestly, pointing.

Anselm slapped him on the head. "You may as well have said they were on this continent!" he said angrily.

"I'm saying they are probably still in this square, Boss," Blacky said, aggrieved.

Anselm nodded, thoughtful. "Memorize this list and let's go!" he told his men.

They found themselves in a bit of a predicament—they could never memorize so many items.

"I found the same list here, with addresses, Boss," the youngest one said, picking up a golden-red piece of paper beside a ballot box.

"Good," said Anselm. "Let's go! Keep your eyes open!" They walked towards the Dukas Restaurant.

"They look suspicious, Boss," Monkey said to Barzel.

"One of them wanted to kill a woman just now," Barzel said gravely. *I sensed bloodlust in them. They are killers. Dangerous killers. The whiskered one may be even stronger than me.*

These hunters had aroused suspicion not long after they entered the city. That was why the crime rate here was 10 times less than that of Rodu.

"Go to Mamy Restaurant, Monkey. Tell Lord Brandli about this when he comes out. They might have not committed any crime, but I fear they will soon. They're dangerous," said Barzel.

"Yes, Boss!" Monkey ran towards the restaurant. *The boss said they're dangerous, so they must be above 5th-tier. The population is dense here; we have to make sure they don't hurt anyone.*

...

"Don't forget to pick Amy up in the afternoon," Krassu said to Mag after he paid his check.

Mag nodded. "I won't."

"Bye, Master Half-beard!" Amy said, waving at Krassu.

"Bye, Amy." Krassu smiled, and took his leave.

The busy lunch hours were finally over. "How many ballots did you give out?" Mag asked Sally.

Sally counted the ones left in her hand. "380," she answered calmly. Still, she couldn't hide the excitement in her eyes. After all, it was she who had given them out, and they would decide if the dishes would make the list or not.

Mag nodded. *2,000 ballots are not enough. Dinner time is longer and busier. I think we can hand out over 1,000 today.*

“All the five dishes deserve to reach the top 10. No one is a better cook than you, Boss,” Yabemiya said.

Mag smiled. “It’s not easy to get into the top 10.” *Many people come to the square every day. There is a lot of large restaurants that can hand out thousands of ballots each day, and some of their dishes are even more expensive than mine.*

Mag didn’t care much about the rankings as long as one of his dishes ended in the top 30. At this rate, he was convinced he could do it. He had an inkling that he would get more missions like this one soon, so he didn’t want to rank too high; otherwise, the system might ask him to rank first next time.

“Your dishes should take the first place, Father. They’re marvelous,” said Amy.

Mag smiled and touched her head. “One day they will.” He lifted her up in his arms. “Let’s go take a nap, and then I’ll take you to school.”

“Yes, Father.” Amy put her head on his shoulder and closed her eyes.

“Meow, meow.” Ugly Duckling clawed at Mag’s leg and looked up at him with a sad face. It was afraid to be left behind.

“I almost forgot you.” Mag crouched down and picked it up. “I’ll leave the rest to you,” he said to Yabemiya and Sally. “You can get some rest first if you’re tired.”

“Yes, Boss.” His two waitresses nodded and watched him go upstairs.

“You have got even better, Aisha. You’re such a quick learner,” Yabemiya said, and gave her a thumbs-up.

“Thank you, but I still have much to learn from you.” There was a glimmer of joy in Sally’s eyes.

When Mag and Amy came back downstairs, the restaurant was super clean. Sally had left, and Yabemiya was leaning on a table, sleeping.

“Let’s be quiet and not wake her up. She’s very tired,” Mag whispered.

Amy nodded, and shushed Ugly Duckling with a forefinger to the lips. They walked out softly with the bike.

It was past lunchtime, so not many people were walking on the street, but they stared when they rode by.

On the second floor of a teahouse stood a girl wearing the same white dress as she had worn when she met Mag the other day at the west gate. She recognized Mag and Amy.

Chapter 285: A Box And A Ring

Elizabeth watched until they vanished behind a corner. *They look like normal people, but why do I have this strange feeling that they are dangerous?*

A middle-aged man wearing a white long gown pushed the door open and walked in. "What are you looking at, Elizabeth?"

"Nothing. Just two strangers." She turned away from the window to look at the man. "You said you found something that belonged to Father, Uncle. He had been missing ever since he fought Alex."

The man raised his hand, in which a small ice blue box appeared. It then flew towards Elizabeth. "I found it at an auction, but I'm pretty sure it's his. It's sealed by magic, and only your blood can open it. That's why I wrote asking you to come here."

Elizabeth caught the box with shaking hands. She took a deep breath and opened it carefully.

Inside the box she found a ring with a sapphire.

"It's Father's ring!" she exclaimed, excited. She picked it up and suddenly looked worried. "It's his favorite space magic ring; he carried it with him all the time. Something must have happened to him..."

"Some adventurer found it in the wild. He thought it was just a normal ring and auctioned it, and I happened to be at that auction with a friend. I caught your father's scent on it and bought it. You should open it. There might be some vital clues."

Elizabeth nodded. Suddenly, an ice needle appeared between her fingers, and she pricked her finger's tip with it. A blue-silver drop of blood fell onto the sapphire, and got absorbed right away. Suddenly, a magic screen appeared, with a long white-haired middle-aged man on it. "I knew you would find this, Elizabeth." He smiled.

"Father..." Elizabeth said as she looked at the disheveled man who had once been the king of frost dragons—Rankster. *What happened to you?*

"You may want to know what happened to me," Rankster continued. "It's a long story, but I'm still alive. I threw the ring away. There's nothing in it, so don't worry if someone is there with you. They'd be crazy if they wanted to rob you of it."

Then the magic screen disappeared.

"Father!" Elizabeth reached out her hand but then let it drop, distressed.

"Is there anything else in the ring?" Fox asked, nervous.

Elizabeth was surprised when she checked the ring, but she didn't show it. Instead, she put on a sad face and put the ring back in the box. "It's empty."

Fox was very disappointed. He knew his niece was never good at concealing her emotions, so one look at her face and he decided she was telling the truth.

"Can I keep this ring, Uncle?" Elizabeth asked, her face still sad.

Fox had recovered his calm. "Sure. I'll take my leave, then. You rarely come here. Why don't you stay for a few days?"

Elizabeth nodded. "Okay." She put the box away and watched Fox disappear in a blue-silver light.

Elizabeth waved her hand to close the window and took out the box again. “How did Father know that I wouldn’t be alone when I opened the ring? What’s exactly in it?” she whispered.

Chapter 286: A Golden Dragon Sister

Elizabeth opened the box again. She waved her hand, and a large frost barrier appeared around her.

Only frost dragons could do this. They were stronger within their barrier, and nobody outside could sense their magic wave.

After she made sure Fox could never catch her magic wave, Elizabeth picked up the ring.

Between what her father had just said and Fox’s strange behavior, she could tell her uncle didn’t really care if his brother was alive or dead. *He expected to find something in the ring*, Elizabeth thought.

Elizabeth waved the ring, and then a letter and two palm-sized boxes came out—one golden, one silver—and also a strip of paper, with some black scribble on it. “Put on a disappointed face if you’re not alone, and say there’s nothing inside.”

That was why she had lied to her uncle. When she told him the ring was empty, she had glimpsed the icy blue light around his fingers disappearing.

Fox was a 9th-tier magic caster. She didn’t stand a chance against him; she couldn’t even break his frost barrier.

Uncle was always nice to me. I considered him one of my closest family members. But, he wanted to kill me because of this ring? What happened to Father? Why didn’t he come back? She had so many questions.

She looked at the two boxes inlaid with precious stones, and picked up the letter. It was cold and hard like a piece of ice.

Suddenly, a silver light arose from the silver envelope and circled around Elizabeth. Then it flew back into the envelope; the ice broke, and out came the letter.

Elizabeth opened the letter. “Elizabeth, my daughter, I’m so glad you’re reading this, and I’m sorry for having left without saying goodbye,” the message read. She felt her eyes grow wet as she recognized her father’s writing.

“Don’t waste your time looking for me, ’cause I’m also looking for someone. You are to become the queen of frost dragons. They thought I lost to Alex and then died from a serious wound or something, right? No. I didn’t come back because I have an important matter to attend to. Also, I want to find Alex. I don’t think he’s dead.

“I have to tell you something. 17 years ago, I fell in love with a human girl. Her name was Gillian. She was pregnant with a girl when I left her to take care of some business; she should be 14 by now. If I was right, she should be a golden dragon, like your grandmother.

“I’m sorry that I fell in love with another girl. Your mother’s death was a great blow to me. Gillian comforted me and gave me peace. I didn’t want them to get in trouble because of me, so I never went to visit them after I left. Also, I felt ashamed. In the two boxes are two dragon pearls. I want you to eat the frost dragon pearl at your 20th birthday. It will stimulate your frost dragon blood, and make you become the first in the line of succession to the throne. They will have to make you the queen.

“But I want you to find your sister and her mother first. It shouldn’t be too hard to find a half-dragon in Chaos City. Give her the golden dragon pearl at her 18th birthday, and she will become a real dragon. You can trust her, but don’t trust anyone else. Not even your family. I killed many dragons standing between me and the throne. They will bow before you as long as you’re stronger than them.”

I have a golden dragon sister? Elizabeth looked at the letter with mixed emotions. Then it suddenly broke into pieces, which fell down on the floor.

My mother died because of you, but she never said she hated you. How could you have fallen in love with another woman? Elizabeth clenched her fists, her face white. She looked at the two dragon pearls, thoughtful.

You left her when she was pregnant. Is the throne that important to you? You have time to tend to your so-called important matter, but you never visited them even once... The anger in her eyes was gone as she suddenly felt sorry for them.

...

After Mag took Amy to school, he went to a bookstore and bought some history books about this world.

No species had ever dominated the whole world before, so the history books were many and varied. Mag didn’t know if he could trust these books, but at least they could serve as a good mean to kill time.

Since his memories concerning the elven princess might have been erased, Mag actually didn’t fully know the continent.

He knew little, among other things, about Dragon Islands and Ghost Islands. Irina had to have been with him when he went to those places. So, he had to read books to understand this world better.

...

Mag did some reading in the afternoon, and then went to pick Amy up from school. After dinner, when he opened for business, he found about 100 people waiting outside, which served as a perfect advertisement.

Amy ate a braised chicken and rice in front of them, and more people ordered this dish than during lunchtime.

After Yabemiya told him how many bowls of braised chicken had been ordered, Mag said to the system, “I want to buy another earthenware pot.”

“You have no right to buy—”

“If I make more money every day, it will take me much shorter to earn enough to upgrade the restaurant.”

“The earthenware pot is ready in the cupboard! 10 gold coins has been deducted! Thank you!”

Mag took out the new pot, which was exactly the same as the old one. Braising chicken was a time-consuming process, so he had bought another pot to increase efficiency.

...

“We’ll keep on eating— no, looking for them, Boss?” Blacky asked as they walked out of a roasted meat restaurant, bloated from eating too much.

“Of course! We have eaten— no, looked for them in 88 restaurants. If we stopped now, it would be all for nothing!” Anselm touched his stomach and walked towards their next destination.

“I can’t eat another bite. It’s getting late. I think they might have left,” Blacky said, worried. They hurried after their boss.

Chapter 287: I Found Them!

“Why haven’t Sister Xixi and Big Bear come?” Amy was sitting in the long-legged chair with Ugly Duckling, looking to the door with her chin on the counter. It was already dark outside.

She really likes them, Mag thought. Maybe Xixi reminded her of her mother. He sighed. He might be a great father, but there was one thing he could never give her: maternal love.

I can’t go look for her mother until I’m strong enough. And to get stronger, I need to work harder to make more money so that I can buy strength from the system. It’s the fastest way. But, I also need to work out at night.

“I’ll have two bowls of braised chicken, one sweet tofu pudding, and one Yangzhou fried rice tonight!” Xixi said excitedly as she walked backwards, facing Lulu.

Lulu nodded, smiling. “Okay.” He was not carrying the basket this time. He pushed aside the slender willow branches behind her, and looked around warily.

“We have to eat faster. If they have followed us here, it’s very likely they are looking for us right now,” Lulu whispered.

Xixi nodded. “I know.”

It was almost 8 PM when they arrived at the restaurant. Some patrons were still waiting for their seats.

“You’re finally here, Sister Xixi,” Amy said the moment they pushed the door open. She climbed down the chair and walked over to them happily.

“Good evening, Amy. We have come to eat your gourmet food,” Xixi said, stroking Amy’s hair with a smile.

“Come on in. Father’s cooking is the best in the world.” She frolicked around her with the kitten.

The patrons hadn’t thought Amy could be so adorable. After all, they had seen her set a lava demon on fire.

...

"It's settled, then. I'll ask Urien to come here, and we'll work together to make a super magic staff for my disciple," Krassu said, putting the diagram away, and looked at Novan who was sitting behind the desk in his office.

"No problem. Just don't forget your promise: half an hour every month for the students here."

"You really want me to teach them? I may lead them astray."

"You're the Lord of Fire. Nobody is more qualified to teach them magic than you."

Krassu looked Novan in the eye and didn't reply.

"Melee magic is important to magic casters," Novan said. "You have shown the world that a melee magic caster can be as strong as a ranged magic caster, if not stronger. That's reason enough for to learn it. I'm leaving it to the children to decide which kind of magic they want to learn. Maybe magic casters will not have to fear hand-to-hand combat one day."

"If someone else had said that to me, I would have thought he was out of his mind, but I trust you." Krassu smiled. "I have to make one thing clear, though. There're some things I'll only teach my disciple. They can learn from me, but I only have one disciple."

Novan smiled. "All right. Amy is also one of our students here."

"Oh, one more thing. I need a place to build a magic room."

"How large is it?"

"Larger than the one I'm using now."

"10 times larger?"

"No. I'm not moving the whole Magus Tower here."

Novan laughed. "But if anyone can move it here, it's you. You can use the buildings just outside the magic school. They're our school's property."

Krassu nodded. "Thank you. Come on, let me treat you to dinner. I'll show you some divine food."

"There's no food I haven't tried in this city." Novan sounded uninterested, but he rose to his feet anyway.

"Don't be so confident. I can promise you you never tried it." Krassu walked out.

Novan looked at his back incredulously, and followed him out.

...

The band of hunters belched, their bellies swollen. They had come to the western corner of the square.

"According those restaurateurs' accounts, they are here, Boss," said the youngest man. "But we have eaten in all the restaurants on this paper, and still haven't found them. What do we do now?"

“Smells good! And it’s nothing like anything we have eaten,” Blacky said, sniffing. He looked around, and then fixed his eyes on Mamy Restaurant. “I found them! Over there!” he shouted, pointing, his eyes red from bloodlust.

Chapter 288: It’s Been Years Since I Last Beat Dogs

Anselm frowned. “Are you sure?” he asked, his bow in hand.

The moon was up. A full moon. The other hunters were all gazing at Blacky, excited.

“I’m sure,” Blacky said, his eyes blood-red. “I’ve been after them for decades. The scent is strong. They are definitely in that restaurant.”

“We don’t have much time. We can’t let them slip away this time,” Anselm said with a cruel smile. He had already notched an arrow to his longbow. “Time to hunt.”

The other hunters grabbed the longbows on their horses, smiling cruelly. The moon seemed to have painted the clouds red.

The air around them was thick with bloody fog. Black hairs sprouted from their arms, claws and fangs protruded, and their eyes were blood-red. They fanned out and moved quietly towards the restaurant.

Not far from Mamy Restaurant, Monkey was leaning against a tree, yawning. He took a look at them, and suddenly became wide awake. *Sh*t! I don’t think they’re going there to have some dinner!*

Monkey had been following them from noon, but all they had done was eat and drink in every restaurant like hillbillies who had come to the city for the first time. Brandli had ordered Monkey to follow them and report if anything bad happened.

Money felt they were looking for someone, and now it seemed they had found their target in Mamy Restaurant.

Both Brandli and Barzel had ordered him to make sure nothing happened to Mamy Restaurant. He had to call for backup immediately.

A shrill whistle pierced the silence of the night.

Barzel’s face darkened; he looked in the direction of Mamy Restaurant.

“What’s wrong, Boss?” Bob asked.

“I was right. They were looking for someone, and have just found their target. Ride back and report! A 7th-tier threat!” Barzel said, and ran to the restaurant with his sword in hand. He was grateful to Mag for his help the other day, so he wanted to protect his restaurant.

“Yes, Boss!” Bob ran to the horse with a grave face. He understood the severity of this incident—even Lord Brandli was just a 7th-tier magic caster, and Barzel was only a 5th-tier knight.

...

Five lava demons were walking beside Sargeras—Monde, Kil, and three strange faces. They were all looking adoringly at their leader.

“Burning Legion! That’s such a badass name, Boss! And you’ve become even stronger than before!”

“For the Burning Legion! I like the sound of it.”

“By the way, where are we eating tonight, Boss? I could really use a drink.”

“I can’t take credit for the name. Also, our catch phrase isn’t ‘for the Burning Legion’,” said Sargeras. Now his Burning Legion had six members, and more were on the way here.

“Then who came up with this name?” asked Cossus, who was clad in red armor. One of his ears was missing.

“And what’s our catch phrase?” asked Markza, who had a cross-shaped scar on his forehead.

“What are we going to eat?” Calzac grinned.

“We’re going to eat the food made by a talented cook that will change our fate: roujiamo,” said Sargeras. “It is the same cook that came up with our name. As for our catch phrase, it is: for roujiamo!”

“For roujiamo!” echoed Kil and Monde.

The pedestrians nearby cast them a confused look.

Cossus, Markza, and Calzac didn’t understand. “You wanted us to come here because of this roujiamo, Boss?” Cossus asked.

Sargeras nodded. “Yes. You’ll understand after you eat it. I want you to always keep in mind that that restaurant is basically our holy land. The future of lava demons is riding on it. We have to keep the owner and his daughter safe no matter what, and we must always follow the rules there.”

“Why don’t we just take the cook by force, Boss?” Calzac asked. “We can make him cook roujiamo for us every day.”

Sargeras laughed. “By force? You’ll have to go through two 10th-tier magic casters first. Can you do that?”

“I can’t,” Calzac said, and stroked his bald head, grinning like a fool. They walked on; other pedestrians kept their distance from them in fright.

...

Urien was making magic potions in his shop. “Werewolves?” He took a sniff and looked out his door, surprised. “It’s been years since I last beat dogs...”

“Dogs! Six! Six dogs!” Black Coal cried excitedly in his cage.

...

Lulu and Xixi had just seated themselves. Xixi was enjoying her braised chicken and rice, while Lulu took a bite of roujiamo and smiled happily.

Abruptly, Xixi raised her head and looked to the door. "They're here!" she cried.

No sooner had she spoken than a black arrow pierced the door and flew towards Lulu's back.

Chapter 289: Warning! Warning! We're Under Attack!

The black arrow pierced through the door, leaving a hole as large as a human head. It was flying towards Lulu's back, its rear end shaking, the arrowhead bright and sharp.

Huge as Lulu was, he was quick and nimble. He pushed himself into the air, grabbed Xixi by her arm, and pulled her up. The arrow went through his shirt, narrowly missed his back and her hand, and thudded deep into the counter, thrumming.

"Warning! Warning! We're under a 7th-tier attack!" the system shouted. "The door is not able to hold!"

Mag froze for an instant when he heard the loud noise of his door breaking. He rushed out of the kitchen with his golden knife in hand and stepped in front of Amy. He was relieved when he saw she was all right. Then, he frowned at the arrow.

Amy was still sitting in the long-legged chair. She took a look at the arrow and stuck her head out from behind his back. "Bad guys have come looking for trouble again, Father?"

"Yes. Stay behind me. They're very strong," Mag said gravely. *Maybe Amy can handle 3rd-tier enemies, but these guys are clearly much more powerful.*

"This arrow could have killed me!" Mag said to the system.

"No. I had it under control. I adjusted the course of the arrow so that it didn't hurt any customers, and I cleared up all the wood dust instantly so that it wouldn't disturb the customers. You should be thanking me instead of yelling at me."

Mag felt more reassured. *Clearly the system won't let me die, but it seems I have to upgrade the restaurant to reinforce its defense systems after all. Moreover, I have to do it as soon as possible.*

Lulu held Xixi's hand and landed back on the floor with his right arm around her waist. He looked toward the door, angry.

"They found us," Xixi whispered, clenching her fist. Green lights arose from her and linked her with Lulu like a green band.

The people in the room suddenly realized they were in danger when they saw the hole in the door and the black arrow. Some shrieked, and many looked around, worried, wondering what was going on.

Some people got down under the tables, but most of them didn't move.

Sally found herself standing slightly in front of Mag with a worried look in her eyes. "This arrow packed a lot of power. Come here, Miya," she said.

She was a 7th-tier magic caster and a marksman. She was well aware how hard it was to kill two people with one arrow—and through a door too.

She didn't feel any magic waves on the arrow, so she decided the archer had to be 7th-tier or above.

Sally didn't want to risk blowing her cover if she could help it, but she didn't want to see Mag, Amy, or Miya get hurt, either. *Obviously they are not targeting us, so I should be able to protect them. If Amy's or Mag's life was in danger, I'm sure Urien would not just stand by.* A blue light appeared around her fingers.

Yabemiya walked over to them, frightened. But, she stepped in front of Sally, holding the tray vertically before her. She mustered up her courage, and said, "Don't worry. I'll protect you."

Sally was first surprised, and then touched. *She knows she's not strong, but she chose to protect her friends.*

Urien was standing outside of his shop. He looked to the restaurant and nodded approvingly at Sally, his black robe inconspicuous in the dark night.

I haven't seen werewolves for years, Urien thought. Is that old dog still alive?

The six hunters had pulled back their bows, their bodies glowing red. The air smelled of blood. They were still in their human forms, but their eyes burned with red.

...

"Brandli, what happened?" Novan asked in his carriage at the entrance of the Aden Square.

Brandli recognized Novan's voice and reined up hard. "Principal Novan! A bunch of people are making trouble. They're quite dangerous."

"Where?" Krassu asked. He was in the same carriage.

"Mamy Restaurant, Lord Krassu." He was in such a hurry because he knew that restaurant was not just any restaurant. He shuddered to think what Urien and Krassu would do if anything happened to Amy.

"To Mamy Restaurant!" Krassu urged, worried and angry.

Monkey knew it was not his place to speak, so he just led the way.

Two horses and a black carriage were running towards Mamy Restaurant.

...

"Come on out! Or the people here will suffer the same fate as the villagers 20 years ago!" Anselm called out. He tossed his bow aside and clenched his fist. Five 30-centimeter-long claws protruded from his knuckles, shimmering in the moonlight. His eyes burned red. The air had become cold.

Chapter 290: Let's Go Help Her

The restaurant fell silent; they gazed at Lulu and Xixi. Nobody decided to help them, for they didn't know who the couple were; besides, many could tell their enemies were vicious and strong.

However, they didn't worry too much that they would kill all the people here. With the two powerful magic casters being Amy's masters, nobody dared do that, not even the Gray Temple.

Mag was furious. *They must be out of their minds, threatening my customers like that!* He asked the system, "How much for a Barrett M82A1?"

"You can't afford it."

"Loan me some money!"

"No. Oh, by the way, your Elephant Check Later can pay up to 100 gold coins for you, but still, you can't afford it."

The system must have priced it very high, Mag thought. It knew a gun like that would change this world dramatically.

Where is Urien? What did the couple do to infuriate them that much? Maybe it has something to do with the massacre of the dryads. Mag didn't know if Urien had noticed what was happening here, so he decided to stand behind Sally. He knew Sally was a 7th-tier magic caster. He found Yabemiya a little silly, but he was touched by her altruistic behavior.

Xixi frowned and clenched her fist when she remembered what had happened 20 years ago. They had stayed in that village for only one night, but their enemies had slaughtered the whole village, sparing none—including babies.

They lived in the woods for three years afterwards, trying not to get anyone killed because of them.

But now, it seemed the brutal tragedy would happen all over again. *They're ruthless killers. They will kill them!* Xixi thought.

"Don't worry. I won't let it happen again," Lulu said, holding her hand tightly.

Amy stood up on the chair, put Ugly Duckling on one of Mag's shoulders, and stuck her head out from behind his other shoulder. "Sister Xixi, those bad people are looking for you?" She didn't look worried at all.

"Meow!" the kitten cried, scared of being up so high, struggling to keep itself from falling down.

Lulu's grip gave her comfort and strength. She turned to look at Amy and nodded. "Yes. It's time to say goodbye, Amy. I'll miss you."

"Why? Don't go, Sister Xixi. You should stay here and come eat Father's food every day." Then she looked at the door. "I can help you take them out."

Xixi gave a woeful smile. It was hard for them to leave now that they had found a way to resurrect the World Tree, but they didn't want anything to happen to the people here.

Lulu stroked her hair. "Let's go." Suddenly, he turned into a black bear about three meters tall. He ran towards the door, busted it down, rushed out, jumped up high, and brought his iron-hard paw down on Anselm's head.

“Goodbye, Amy,” Xixi said, and turned into a white cat. Green lights arose from her feet. She followed the bear out, nimble and fast.

The green band was still linking them together. Meanwhile, the customers were left dumbfounded.

I have to buy a new door, again, Mag thought. “Do you have spare doors in stock, system?”

“Of course.”

“You sound like you already knew the door would break again.”

Amy’s eyes widened. She threw her arms around Mag’s neck. “Big Bear is really a bear, and Sister Xixi is a beautiful cat. But why does she look like Ugly Duckling? Oh, we should help them, Father! Hurry!”

“No. It’s too dangerous.” Mag untangled her hands from around his neck and turned around.

“Remember, Amy, you can help others, but on the condition that you don’t get hurt. I don’t want to see you put yourself in danger.”

Amy looked at the door, her eyes blue and clear. “But I like her. Aren’t we supposed to protect the ones we like?”

Mag fell silent for a moment. Then he smiled. “You’re right. Let’s go help her.” He picked her up and walked to the door with his kitchen knife. *If a man doesn’t want to protect the one he loves, then he doesn’t love her.*