**Chapter 91: Aspiring Master's Foot Scrubber and Sandbag**

“Oh⋯”

I was entranced as I lifted the small, cute creature named "Prickly One of Wind Valley."

Shiny blond golden eyes, ears slightly shorter than Ellie's, but longer than a human's.

She was lightly dressed in a loincloth and a bow of light fluttered from her waist.

General assessment: cute.

“Uhhh. Sorry.”

I grabbed her wings and lifted her up, and she made a loud noise.

I obediently followed her instructions.

It was soothing to watch the cute creature's antics.

I gently lifted it in my palm, and the Prickly One nodded in satisfaction.

“Hmph. Hmph!”

The Prickly One nodded again, tapping the palm print on my palm with her tiny paw.

“Hands as thick and hard as the stony rocks deep in the Wind Valley, a body that no man can easily possess, just as that wicked woman said!”

I shook my head in silence.

I felt taken aback by the sudden compliment.

‘Besides, what do you mean, a vicious woman?’

“Who told you that about me?”

“That's not the point, Ji, that's not what's important right now, your name, Balkan, right?”

“Yeah.”

“Then you should join our party right now!”

The spirit shouted with a smug look on her face. Her wings fluttered with such pride that they flapped.

I was taken aback by the suddenness of the offer, but I knew what to say.

“I'm sorry, but I must decline. I have a party at the moment.”

A party consisting of Joy Hog, Jubeel, Hitolis and Lammel.

I don't know how long it'll last, but they're in the top 1% of explorers in terms of personality, and they're a pretty likable bunch.

“Well, what the hell!”

I declined the offer and the spirit collapsed into the palm of my hand with a shocked face.

“Well, then I can't help it⋯ the party is precious⋯ hee hee⋯ I'm going back⋯!”

-Papapapap!

The Prickly One of Wind Valley flapped its wings eagerly and flew off somewhere in the distance.

Her shoulders were slumped, and the dead eyes were clearly visible even from here.

“⋯What the hell was that?”

I asked, dumbfounded at the sudden party invitation, and then at the instantaneous flight when I turned her down.

“You have a good heart, my child.”

A low, muffled voice said.

I turned around to see a wiry old woman with a wooden cane looking at me with a big smile on her face.

Judging by the pouch of money at her waist, she was a client of the Explorers' Alliance.

“Do you know about that fairy?”

“She is not a fairy, but a spirit. They have the beauty of elves, the dexterity of dwarves, and hearts purer than those of men.”

The old woman chuckled.

“Far better beings than those fools who fall prey to envy, jealousy, greed, and impulse. You'd do well to follow them.”

The old woman laughed in a deep voice and headed for the window.

I glanced at the mysterious old woman, then back at the place where Prickly One of Wind Valley flew away.

“Hmph.”

My personal interest was piqued.

‘Apparently, Denshi was blessed with an increased affinity with the wind spirits.’

[Bonded Slaves: Denshi LV.29]

The last time I checked, she had leveled up quite a bit.

A party, a mean woman, a bumbling girl who asks people to join the party but then ignores everyone around her.

"No way?"

The odds are slim, but it's worth pursuing.

I glanced at Diana’s watch on my wrist for a moment and I had a little time before I had to get to Zirnier.

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“Holy shit. That was fucking fast.”

She was flapping her wings, but her speed wasn't normal.

My training with Idelbert had drained me of stamina and strength so I couldn't get up to speed.

In the end, it was a waste.

I looked around and saw a familiar scene.

Explorers searching for armaments, dignitaries inspecting fancy weaponry for display in their mansions, and guards patrolling the streets.

In my frantic chase, I've already come this far.

I looked at my watch again. It was already getting late and it was almost night.

“I should get going.”

I gave up trying to find the Wind Valley's Prickly One.

She seemed to be an explorer, and since she found me first, I figured there would be another chance to meet her in the Union someday.

“Ah. You're here, please wait a moment. I'll contact Ms. Zirnier.”

I pushed open the door to Zirnier's Weapons Shop and was greeted politely by a staff member who recognized me.

She then used a courtesy finger communication artifact to alert Zernier to my arrival.

“⋯Maid. What's with that man, he doesn't even wait to see Zirnier as soon as he arrives, even I, a noble, am in the queue. Why is he treated so well?”

“Well, I don't know about that, but I'm guessing he must have some sort of relationship with Zirnier to be able to meet her so quickly.”

A blonde bun-haired noblewoman in dress armor glared at me in exasperation, but it was no big deal.

“Number One should be here any minute.”

-Puhhhhhh!

At the same time as the employee said that, the door to the underground workshop opened with a tremendous burst of heat and steam.

-Ding, ding, ding!

The sound of a mechanical arm jumping back and forth and climbing up the stairs could be heard. He's so cute, too.

Soon, No. 1 emerged from the stairs and revealed itself, accompanied by a very, very plain-faced woman.

‘Fuck. What the fuck?'

I instinctively reached for the axe in my waistband, but stopped myself.

Feeling strangely uncomfortable, I instinctively furrowed my brow and scanned the woman.

I didn't hear any footsteps. It was too quiet, even for me, even if I hadn't activated my perception.

Furthermore, the aura around her, in contrast to her plain face, was very creepy.

[Inte■t LV. 6■]

[Blessings currently possessed by Inte■t: ■■: ■]

The status was censored which means she’s a level 60 great powerhouse.

Even the details of blessings and curses were hidden.

“Hmm.”

I looked at her through the status window, and she smirked at me.

“You've got an axe, huh?”

I interpreted it as a death threat. “How dare you hold an axe in front of me?” I thought.

Grabbing the weapon first in front of an unknown opponent is like conceding the point, an obvious mistake.

“What a nice guy. You’ll be great. That guy should have been taken care of, but why on earth did it take that many years…Tsk.”

But there was an unexpected reaction.

The plain-looking woman clicked her tongue and walked past me.

“Don't draw your weapon until you've seen your opponent, sometimes it's better to shake hands first.”

I glanced back and the woman's figure had vanished like a mirage.

“She looks like a commoner, and she’s in good form! Could she be an explorer?!”

“She's obviously skilled, as she has access to Ms. Zirnier's workshop, but hmm⋯ at least I've never seen her before. She might not be an explorer.”

“Gosh, you’re really catchy.”

The mannered bun-headed dressed armored lady and the maid chatted. I chimed in from the side.

‘⋯What the hell is going on today?’

First was Wind Valley's Prickly One and now an old woman with a strange atmosphere.

I feel like I've been meeting strange people one after another.

-Bam! Bam!

When I woke up, No. 1 was flicking my hand, drawing my attention.

[Follow me].

Scribbling on the floor, No. 1 skillfully led me to an underground workshop.

I followed him down the stairs, my mind replaying the sequence of events.

The enormous furnace was visible from a distance and the wind blowing in from the furnace instantly heats me up.

Even the summer of 2055 in the future will be as cool as an air conditioner in Zirnier's workshop.

-Gulp. Gulp.

“Phew!”

As I walk along the first street, I see Zirnier in the distance, lying on an anvil, cracking open a bottle of wine.

It was quite a distance, but I could already smell the alcohol.

There were about twenty bottles lying around with not a drop of alcohol left in them.

“No. How much have you been drinking?”

“Heh. Ugh! Balkan, are you home?! Hehe.”

Zirnier, obviously drunk, looked back at me, her face flushed from the heat of the workshop.

She’s bouncy blonde with tanned skin and a slightly different tone than Idelbert's healthy pale brown skin.

Sweat beaded on her flat abs and she wore a blacksmith's trademark chest bandage.

Her face was flushed with alcohol and her eyes were slightly open.

It was hard to keep my eyes on any one of them so I sat down on a nearby anvil and asked.

“What the hell happened to you? What did you drink?”

“Ha ha. That bitch. Hmph.”

Zernier drunkenly grinds her teeth.

“You mean the one who just left?”

“Yeah! That bitch! She's a dying bitch, with all her limbs, and she doesn't even realize how lucky she is to be alive-! Heh.”

I can't believe Zirnier reacted so passionately.

‘No, now that I think about it, she was always a bit of a fighter.’

At least she didn't use such harsh words in front of me but now, Zirnier was lying on the anvil, waving a bottle of wine in the air.

Given the woman's plain face and cheap air, I could only think that something must have happened.

Just as I was thinking about it, Zirnier burst, drunk as hell.

“That bitch! How dare she ask me to make her a crossbow and a dagger! Hmph!”

Zirnier hiccupped drunkenly, hugging the bottle tightly between her thighs.

“A crossbow? Not even a bow…My pride absolutely cannot tolerate that…”

“Huh.”

As I feared, it wasn't for the wrong reasons.

Greatsword, axe, heavy armor—romantic artisan Zernier despised making mere spoon weapons.

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Intert walked into an ordinary inn near the weapons shops.

Intert's face gradually changed back to its original state as he opened the door to the inn that had been soundproofed.

 From a plain-looking woman, she became a tired-looking beauty with dark circles under her eyes.

Two more arms sprouted from her wing bones, revealing a total of four mechanical arms.

“Ma, I invited him to a party, like you said.”

“Really?”

“Yes, I am! I can promise you on the honor of the Wind Spirit!”

“What did he say?”

“Yi, he said that he’s already in a party!”

"...! Really?! Hehe. As expected of you, Master. You still remember our memories together."

Two more voices could be heard in the inn room besides Intert's.

“You're already trying to get personal.”

Inert said to the woman who was poking and prodding the spirit in her hand.

The woman smirked, as if she were imagining something pleasant.

“No, a little later. First, we need to get our revenge in the outlaw district. Those Blues Clan bastards.”

“Don’t make too much of a fuss. Do everything in moderation.”

“Oh. And you said you’d give me a month off if I cleared the 10th floor of the labyrinth. Why? Didn’t you expect me to achieve it so soon? Hehe.”

 The woman smirked.

“I'm afraid of my unique talent too. How blessed is my master to have my body and mind on a leash with such talent?”

-Boom!

The woman pulled the leash taut around her neck.

Intert raised her eyebrows as she watched the woman tug on the leash, then lie down on the bed and reach between her thighs.

“You're crazy. Crazy bitch.”

“Hmph. Think what you will⋯”

“Heeeeek! Let me go and tell me! Where are you taking me!!!”

 “Aha.”

Inside the tumultuous inn room, tugging at her leash, the woman, Denshi, remembering her master's large, strong hands, muttered quietly.

“A member of the original party will be with you soon, please wait a little longer, master...hehehe.”

Just recalling the nostalgic face of the master she hadn't seen in a long time, she was able to lightly climax.