

Afterwards the members, who finished laying out the traps, came back except for the lookouts. It looks like they have stationed lookouts to make sure that no other animals get caught in the nets which were laid out at great pains. They will be watching until the prey will be lured in by placing the bait on-site tomorrow morning.

As almost everyone had gathered, it became time for dinner, but Katia, who has joined them as helper just like us, started to have her meal together with us.

"Sorry, Elise-san." (Katia)

"Don't worry, eating with a large number of people makes the food more delicious." (Elise)

It seems Katia's character, or rather her disposition is the exact opposite of Katharina's. She joined us in a casual manner to eat dinner with us, but Elise and the others accepted her readily. Having an advantageous character that doesn't make others think of her as too shameless or overly familiar, she was skilled at joining circles of people in a natural way.

"There's only men over there, you know?" (Katia)

"Now that you mention it, you're right."

"I guess it's because it will spell trouble to mix men and women together. Especially with that many people."

It's not rare to have a mix of men and women if a party consists of several people, but once it comes to parties at the size of the 『Dragon Fighters』, there are only few cases that have women joining their ranks.

Since there are many situations where they stay in remote areas for an extended period of time for a dragon subjugation, it's obvious that there will be less trouble with women not being present.

"Usually I go solo. At the times when I join adventurer parties as temporary helper, I often sleep and eat together with them as there are usually women with them." (Katia)

"After all there might be male adventurers that plan rude things, right?" (Luise)

While saying so, Luise looks in Erw's direction.

"Hey! That's an outrageous lie! I don't do something like that! Or rather, Wend tell them, too!" (Erwin)

"For me that misinformation is a good thing." (Wendelin)

I mean, I don't need any more wives!

Rather, before that, I never worked together with any adventurers besides Erw and the others. So, how am I supposed to make a move on other female adventurers?

"If that happens, I lower their attack power by completely beating them up. I pay attention to setting up a distance before I temporarily join." (Katia)

"I guess that means you won't suffer an embarrassing defeat." (Luise)

"It's the same for you as well, isn't it Luise?" (Katia)

"Well, you're right there." (Luise)

Infiltrating in the dead of the night to secretly attack Luise; that's impossible for an ordinary person to begin with, no?

"But then again, I might be happy if Wend comes to make a sneak visit at night." (Luise)

"I'm here as well though..." (Ina)

Ina, who always sleeps next to Luise during camping, protested.

"Then a threesome." (Luise)

"I won't do that..."

"As if I'd do that!"

Even if it's during our resting time, there's no way I'd do something like that during work.  
I will do it after returning to the mansion!  
In the end I'm a Japanese who's serious about his work.

"You guys are really close to each other." (Katia)

"Erw, Luise, me and Wend have been in one party from the very beginning." (Ina)

"Then I joined them." (Elise)

"Next I joined. The end." (Wilma)

"Wilma-san, I'm here as well..." (Katharina)

"I forgot." (Wilma)

"Please don't!" (Katharina)

Katharina, who has a loner disposition despite her flashy appearance, retorted to Wilma who declared that she had forgotten about her existence.  
It's not like she has really forgotten her. It's the usual vibe between these two.

"I also tried to join various parties after becoming an adventurer, but there wasn't any that fit me well enough. That caused the pattern of joining as helper to establish itself. This works out unexpectedly well for me. I'm not troubled for work to earn money either." (Katia)

We won't know her actual fighting strength until tomorrow, but as it seems that she's acquainted with many adventurers and knows Golf-san, Katia is probably one of those people who has the 『Gift of Gab』.

If she were to look for a job in Japan, she might be able to find employment at a good place right away.

On the other hand, Katharina would likely struggle a lot...

"Wendelin-san, did you think something rude just now?" (Katharina)

"No, that's out of the question." (Wendelin)

I shook my head while trembling.

"It would be great if there was some kind of dessert."

After finishing dinner, all of us continued to chat, but as expected, we are an adventurer party with a high ratio of women.

Moreover, because even the person, who joined temporarily, is a woman, they started to want sweet things.

From Elise looking at me, I understood that she probably wants me to take something out of my magic bag.

"Given that I was treated to a meal by you, I suppose I will provide it." (Katia)

At that point Katia stated that she would prepare a dessert.

When I wondered from where she would get something like that, Katia took out a magic bag.

"A magic bag, huh? Is it possibly a general purpose one?"

"Of course. If I use a magic bag for magicians with my amount of mana, the capacity will be too small." (Katia)

Katia readily answered Erw's question.

The storage capacity of a magician's magic bag is decided by their maximum amount of mana.

At the least when hunting wyverns and flying dragons, the capacity of such bag should be insufficient with Katia's mana.

"It was quite expensive, but it's convenient." (Katia)

"Just the fact that you could buy one is already amazing enough."

"That's true. Even in Mizuho general purpose magic bags are very expensive." (Haruka)

As expected, even Mizuho, which lowered costs by excelling at mass production, seems to struggle with general purpose magic bags.

"It looks like we will be provided a dessert. I will prepare tea then." (Elise)

Tea is the best for sweet desserts.

And, the one most skilled at making tea among us is Elise who has a personal philosophy on teas. She started to carefully brew tea as usual.

"Sorry, Elise. Today noon the tea was made by a young guy over there. But, as it seems as if they are thinking that it becomes more delicious the stronger they make it, it was really nasty." (Katia)

"That person was simply not used to it, I think." (Elise)

"A newcomer serving the tea, huh? That's a likely explanation."

Erw says, but as a matter of fact he doesn't have the experience of having made satisfactory tea either.

Though nobody asks him to make tea since it will be disgusting anyway.

"They were entrusted with the chores because they are newcomers."

It was the same in Japan, too.

When I was a new employee, I was also scolded by my boss due to my bad skill at making tea, being told 『How's a guy, who can't at least make proper tea, going to be able to do the job?』

Back then I thought that it was both were unrelated to each other, but this is also the sad fate of a company employee.

Although I reached a fairly good level at making tea, I'm afraid to say that I can't win against Elise at all.

"However, tea made by a woman is really delicious."

"Certainly, it's just as you say, Erw."

In the end it's an issue of feelings...though those are actually quite important as well.

"Occasionally it might be fine for me to make the tea."

"I think that's not necessary."

After all you're also thinking that it'll be fine as long as the tea is strong, just like that newcomer of the 『Dragon Fighters』.

"Erw-san, I will prepare some tea, too." (Haruka)

"Woohooo——I'm sure you're good at making tea, Haruka-san." (Erwin)

Haruka, nice follow-up.

If Erw prepares the tea, he will mix the mate tea's unnatural sweetness and bitterness, and the tea-cake will become unappetizing.

"So, what's the tea-cake?"

"This." (Katia)

Katia took out several lumps with the size of a fist out of her magic bag, but we remembered having seen those.

"Maroimo, eh?"

"Earl Baumeister-sama, you know it well. It's the special product of my hometown." (Katia)

What! Katia is saying that she originates from that Eulenberg territory.

"Really? That territory currently goes through...ugh!" (Erwin)

Because Erw was about to yap his mouth about unnecessary matters, Wilma and Katharina quickly blocked his mouth.

"(Why?)" (Erwin)

"(The situation with the tunnel is a secret. Even a child would understand at least that much.)"  
(Wilma)

"(Even if Katia-san might be a resident of the Eulenberg territory, we will be scolded by His Majesty if we carelessly reveal the secret here.)" (Katharina)

"(Sorry...)" (Erwin)

After all we will be troubled if the information is leaked to other nobles through Katia. As she's related to dragon subjugation, she might have acquaintances among nobility.

"Is something wrong?" (Katia)

"No, it's nothing."

"Katia-san, actually there was a person who offered this Maroimo to our family."

Elise skillfully glossed it over.

In reality Elise probably dislikes lying as a priestess, but as a wife of a noble, it's inevitable this time.

"Earl Baumeister-sama is famous, so I guess it's only natural for such people to exist as well."  
(Katia)

"Those Maroimo are truly sweet and tasty."

"My home is a rural area with nothing but farming, but these Maroimo are our pride. I will prepare them at once." (Katia)

Katia took out a largish pot and some big leaves out of her magic bag.

"Oh, aren't those the leaves of trees growing in the Demon Forest?"

Katharina noticed it first, but it's banana leaves.

"I was born and raised in the Eulenberg territory, thus I have been taught how to steam Maroimo

deliciously by my parents." (Katia)

First Katia washed the prepared Maroimo with water, then she holed them with a fork at several places.

Next she wrapped them up in banana leaves, put them into the pot where she had laid out tree branches at the bottom, and then put the lid on the pot.

Heating the pot over the campfire at a low fire, she occasionally pricked the Maroimo with the fork, and checked the condition of their heating.

"You're really going all out, aren't you?"

"Really? In the Eulenberg territory everyone steams Maroimo like this. They use the leaves of other trees though." (Katia)

"So it's a distinctive way how your home area steams them." (Ina)

Ina admires, but in reality it closely resembles the way of steaming sweet potatoes.

For sweet potatoes to become delicious, you have to heat them slowly. That's probably why she keeps the fire low, wrapped up the Maroimo in leaves and laid out tree branches so that the Maroimo won't touch the pot's bottom.

"Wend, as usual you have detailed knowledge in weird areas."

"Does it matter?"

Since we're going out of our way to eat Maroimo, it's better for them to be tasty.

"Well then, I think they'll be done any time soon." (Katia)

At the end Katia checked the heating with the fork and confirmed that the Maroimo were ready.

"Since I took a large amount with me when I visited my home last, eat them without holding back." (Katia)

"Isn't that your precious stock?"

"For outsiders it might seem so, but the people at my home place eat them often. Even I'm allowed to take such a great amount from my family." (Katia)

I guess it makes sense that she can get her hands on them easily since her own family is cultivating Maroimo.

""""""""Good appetite!""""""""

At once we eat the steaming hot Maroimo, but they are more delicious than the ones we cooked ourselves before.

Until I saw Katia's cooking method, I had forgotten about the trick behind steaming sweet potatoes skillfully.

I will make sure to steam them properly next time.

No, wait.

I suppose I have to hasten the production of the special cooking equipment...

"They are sweet and delicious, aren't they dear?" (Elise)

"Your home is not a Maroimo cultivation area for nothing."

"Anyone can learn around this much, no? Please cook them like this from now on." (Katia)

"It's quite difficult for us to get them, though." (Elise)

It's just as Elise says. Will we be able to buy them if we go to the Eulenberg territory next time?

"I'm someone from the Eulenberg territory after all." (Katia)

"Your family are Maroimo farmers?" (Luise)

"Well...you can say so." (Katia)

Did she somewhat hesitate to answer Luise question?

I wonder, was it my imagination?

"Let's go sleep in preparation for tomorrow once we finished eating."

"Sure. Tomorrow we have to get up early."

I was slightly curious, but there's probably no mistake that Katia is hailing from the Eulenberg territory.

Having finished eating the Maroimo, we retired early.

\* \* \*

"Whoa, how cruel."

"They are pitiable, but fresh blood is necessary. This smell of blood will lure the wyverns and flying dragons, you know." (Katia)

◆◆◆◆

The next day we traveled to the forest where the members of the 『Dragon Fighters』 spread out the nets after finishing a simple breakfast.

We will bait the wyverns and flying dragons into this forest, where one can see the Greater League Mountain Range in the north.

"Are these nets going to be alright with their thin wires?" (Ina)

Ina expressed her doubt while touching the nets, that were set up at points with wide spaces between the trees where the dragons will likely pass.

"Ina-san, it's better to not touch the nets carelessly. It's different if the skin is sturdy like that of a dragon, but a humans skin will be easily cut."

"Is that so?" (Ina)

Being cautioned by a young member of the 『Dragon Fighters』, Ina removed her hand from the net in a hurry.

"The metallic wires used for the nets are thin so that the dragons have troubles seeing them. Because of that the spaces in the mesh are narrow, though."

"It won't tear?"

"They do since the targets are dragons. We have several spares with us, and we will repair them after they've done their job."

They seem to be nets using a special alloy. I'm pretty sure the repair costs are high. Even so, once the dragons are caught in these nets, I guess it will become safe as it will be possible to attack from a distance with arrows and throwing spears. And, the bait to lure the dragons was a bear that had been captured alive yesterday. It has around the same size as the bear which got beheaded by Wilma's blow before. Hanging it down from a tree while upside down, the arteries at its neck and paws have been cut open. The bear was losing large amounts of blood while crying loudly.

"It sure smells."

"Yeah, it does."

Luise and Wilma were sensitive to the smell of blood.

"The wyverns and flying dragons are even more sensitive to smell. Now then, since all preparations are in order, everyone, take your assigned positions."

Upon Golf-san's order, the members of the 『Dragon Fighters』 wait at the positions that had been decided in advance.

We also moved to our designated spot.

"How many are going to come, Wend?" (Erwin)

"Plenty, it seems." (Wendelin)

I tell Erw the information I heard from Golf-san.

"I think it's good that they won't see me as prey, once they hear that crying."

"It can't be helped since that crying is also a lure to draw the wyverns here."

The bear, who isn't allowed to die despite bleeding intensely after being cut all over its body, looks pitiful, but it's really a well thought out hunting method, I think.

"I think that it's a method with a good efficiency."

Wilma, who's likewise a professional at hunting, praised the thought-up strategy of the 『Dragon Fighters』.

"That's true."

An excellent leader, who can command a big number of people, is essential. Large amounts of equipment items and goods are necessary. They have to also repair the nets each time, but theoretically they can kill dragons even without magicians being present. Of course it's better if they are present, though.

"Still, there's no doubt that it's dangerous."

"That's only natural." (Katia)

If they receive an unexpected counterattack once the nets end up torn, it's nice when it only ends at injuries. It looks like occasionally there are casualties as well. However, if they split the expenses, even the newcomers will be able to earn overwhelmingly more than normal adventurers. Wyverns and flying dragons are treated as lower-ranked, however they earn money by defeating dragons with their own lives at the stake.

"Wend, they are here." (Luise)

"Your 『Detection』 is as fast as ever." (Wendelin)

"It's my special technique after all." (Luise)

While were were chatting amongst each other, Luise confirmed the responses of dragons approaching this place. Next I perceived them as well. Going by the response, it's three wyverns, huh? For normal adventurers they would be a troublesome threat, but with our good lineup today they are nothing but prey.

"So they did get lured by the blood smell."

"It's best if the bait's fresh."

"Oh well."

Ina, who readies her throwing spears, said while looking at the bleeding bear. It's a sight that would likely trigger some animal rights group on Earth, but in this world it's a very

effective method to entrap dragons.

The wyverns, which descended towards the forest after gliding through the air from the Greater League Mountain Range, close the distance to the bear while skillfully passing through the gaps in the trees that allow them to get through.