

### **Chapter 3 - The Dual-Wielding Dragon Killer Girl**

"Milord, how about a refill of tea?" (Amalie)

"Amalie-san, we are inside the mansion, so feel free to call me as usual." (Wendelin)

"That's no good since I'm in front of Elise-sama and the others." (Amalie)

"I'm telling you it's fine. Now, go on." (Wendelin)

"But..." (Amalie)

"What's the need in holding back? I'm Earl Baumeister, the most important person in this house. That very person is telling you to call him as usual. In other words, this is also an order. Come on now." (Wendelin)

"Then, without reservation...Wend-kun." (Amalie)

"Yes. Please give me another serving of tea." (Wendelin)



Thanks to the information provided by Arnest, we succeeded in discovering the tunnel running through the Greater League Mountain Range.

However, because the entrance on the other side is part of an insignificant territory called Eulenberg, and not the Breithilde Margraviate, we ended up returning home for now, burdened with the problem of what to do about the tunnel's management.

That's because the rest requires a decision by His Majesty and the ministers.

On the way back home I took Amalie-san with us from Paul-niisan's territory.

The reason is that she needs my 『Teleportation』 to regularly meet with her children as it has been decided that my nephews, Karl and Oskar, will be given into the custody of the Meinbach household, which is located far away, for the sake of education.

Even for me that's quite convenient. Since Elise and the others gave their permission as well, she has returned to the mansion together with us.

The next morning I was served upon by Amalie-san in a maid uniform.

Essentially she's treated as my concubine, but her official social position is that of our Head Maid.

Because she said that she has to be at least slightly useful, her focus became taking care of me.

"The tea isn't too strong, is it?" (Amalie)

"It's fine. This isn't our old home." (Wendelin)

"That's right, isn't it? In the past we used the tea leaves until they lost their color in hot water." (Amalie)

"Even when they still had color, it was tasteless tea." (Wendelin)

"How very true." (Amalie)

It sure is nice with Amalie-san here as we can wallow in old stories. The old Knight Baumeister household was stingy. We reused mate tea leaves to the very limit. Usually the leaves had barely any color left at the last use, and they had absolutely no flavor left. We nostalgically remembered those times.

"Once they finally lost all color, we scattered them on the floor during cleaning or removed the stench by throwing them into the sink." (Amalie)

"Really? You did something like that?" (Wendelin)

Cleaning with the washed-out leaves or removing the stench in the kitchen with them, I suppose that the so-called practical livelihood knowledge. I think the biggest reason was economizing, but I think not being able to obtain detergent and deodorant in the former Knight Baumeister territory played a big role, too.

"Of course now I won't go as far anymore, however." (Amalie)

"Makes sense." (Wendelin)

After all even the Knight Baumeister household succeeded by Hermann-niisan and Paul-niisan's household have become normal noble households nowadays. That means such poverty is a good memory—though I don't know whether it's truly good—of the past.

"I have to pay attention since I often end up making the tea too thinly out of habit." (Amalie)

"Really?" (Wendelin)

Once I'm told that, it might be slightly weaker than the tea prepared by Elise, but it's not like it's so thin that she has to feel anxious about it. Since I was sweaty after the morning training, there's absolutely no problem with it being on the slightly weaker side. Rather, it's just right to down it in one go.

"As I was sweaty, the tea might be just right with this intensity." (Wendelin)

While saying so, I drained the tea which had been brewed by Amalie-san. Just when I was thinking that I might have had enough tea by now, Elise arrived while bringing a pot.

"Dear, you have to intake plenty of water after sweating." (Elise)

I admired that such knowledge exists in the church as well, but right now I'd like to refrain since my stomach is somewhat full.

"Thank you, Elise. But I will drink it later, okay?" (Wendelin)

But, things seldom go as one wishes.

"Dear, please don't hesitate." (Elise)

While saying that, Elise pours mate tea into my empty cup. It was her usual, calmly smiling expression, but the smile didn't reach her eyes.

"(Eh? Why is Elise so unhappy?)" (Wendelin)

Did I do something to make her angry?

I casually looked for help from Erw, who was eating breakfast at the same table, but at such crucial time he was happily chatting with Haruka while eating, not noticing my plead for help at all.

"(Erw——!)" (Wendelin)

And, in addition to Elise, even Ina, Luise, Wilma and Katharina turned up next to me while holding tea pots.

"Wend, it's no good if you don't drink more as you sweat a lot during your morning training." (Ina)

"Yeah, yeah, drink it down in one gulp without any reservations." (Luise)

"If it's you, Wend-sama, you can still go for a while until you're full." (Wilma)

"Certainly you're not going to say that you can't drink anymore, now are you?" (Katharina)

"No..." (Wendelin)

I succumb to their pressure. Due to me drinking plenty of mate tea in the morning, my stomach swelled up like a balloon.



"Why did something like that happen?" (Wendelin)

My stomach was still full to the limit, but since I was bothered why it had turned out like that, I decided to consult with the experienced-looking Therese.

At such times it's really convenient that her mansion is close-by.

"As usual thou are somewhat slow. Elise and the others put the conflicts in their hearts behind them for now and accepted Amalie. And yet thou can't possibly expect that it will be fine with thou only getting happily along with Amalie." (Therese)

"But you know, I have to make sure that Amalie-san, who just came to the mansion, won't become isolated there." (Wendelin)

After all it's painful to be a loner.  
I know that as someone who experienced it.

"Thou got it backwards. Because your sister-in-law is the newcomer, thou should actually display a stance of prioritizing Elise and the others while allowing Amalie to only act as thy waitress in the beginning, right?" (Therese)

"Now that you mention it, it makes sense." (Wendelin)

She has devoted herself to being my caretaker. Come to think of it, she called me 『Milord』 while staying discrete, but it was me who made her change it to the usual 『Wend-kun』.

"Even Amalie has no choice to call thou like that if ordered by thou, has she? Listen, Wendelin. Since thou are the family head, thou can freely order the people of thy household around, but there are also times where thou will cause harm with thy orders like today morning. Make sure to remember that." (Therese)

I think that the majority of people believe it to be enviable to have multiple wives, but it's also a fact that there are many situations where you must pay attention to balance or hierarchy.

"Aren't Elise and the others good wives? It's exactly because they thought that thou would be sad if they lashed out at Amalie that they glossed it over by making thou drink plenty of tea, Wendelin." (Therese)

I suppose they gave me a warning by openly showing their jealousy.

"I wonder, do I have too many wives?" (Wendelin)

"If thou think so, pay attention from now on." (Therese)

"I will reflect on it." (Wendelin)

"Good that thou understand. An obedient Wendelin who reflects on his mistakes, huh? Isn't that cute?" (Therese)

Somehow Therese lately often behaves like an elder sister...  
Leaving aside her inner workings, she's actually older than me, so it's no problem, but isn't my mental age that of a grown-up?

"Uuh...you're older, all the same..." (Wendelin)

"There are many nobles that have several wives, but it's rare that all of them get along like at thy place, Wendelin. There are also many cases where they form factions and oppose each other. Thou better appreciate such thing not happening." (Therese)

"Got it." (Wendelin)

I'm really grateful that I immediately get an answer if I consult with Therese at such times.  
There were issues on the first day, but Amalie-san was accepted properly in the Earl Baumeister

household, and the cases where I consulted with Therese increased, too.

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"So, I just have to carry out public works? Or is it the usual and boring aristocratic tasks?"  
(Wendelin)

"As a matter of fact an emergency task has arisen that's very suited to you, Milord, and your friends as it's quite close to adventurer work." (Roderich)

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The next day after we returned to the mansion, we listened to Roderich about today's schedule. Just when I thought that it would be the usual public work within the earldom, he mentions another job.

Moreover he says that it's a job with a strong component of adventuring, huh?

"An adventurer-like work? You mean monster subjugation or such?" (Luise)

"Plainly said, it's just as you say, Luise-sama. The wyverns and flying dragons inhabiting the Greater League Mountain Range have suddenly increased their activity at various places lately. It's necessary to quickly thin out their numbers to some extent." (Roderich)

"I wonder, did they maybe get provoked by the frequent flight traffic of the magic airships?" (Ina)

"Since I can't believe that dragons, even if they are lower-ranked ones, propagate so easily, it might be mostly as you have mentioned, Ina-sama." (Roderich)

Because the Baumeister Earldom has made progress with its development, it reached the point of several magic airships regularly traveling the skies over the Greater League Mountain Range. I guess the increased activity of the wyverns and flying dragons is owed to that.

"Wyverns and flying dragons don't possess such high reproduction rate. But, even if few of them are being born, there's always a considerable number of them around, given that they have no other natural enemies besides humans in contrast to animals and other monsters. Their surroundings becoming noisy seems to be the most probable reason for them being agitated." (Roderich)

"It could be that they believe their territory to be invaded." (Luise)

Is Luise's thought correct?

The monsters' mode of life isn't that different from wild animals after all.

"Let me add further to that. Plenty of humans, potential prey, are moving around." (Erwin)

"Hey." (Wendelin)

Erw, I think that you're right there, but your remark was a bit imprudent.

"Once the tunnel is opened, they might become even more active."

"Even until finding the tunnel's entrance, we took on quite the number of them."

Back then Wilma and the others fought back the wyverns and flying dragons which came flying from the mountains over and over again.

Won't people get attacked by them if we proceed with the development even further from now on?

"That's something we can't let slide. Wyverns and flying dragons are powerful monsters. There's probably few people who can deal with them, so it's our turn, just like the other day." (Katharina)

"There it is! Katharina's certain death technique of 『A noble's duty』!" (Erwin)

"Certain death...haven't you been born into a noble family as well, Erwin-san?" (Katharina)

Having been teased by Erw, Katharina rebutted with that question.

"Right now I'm a retainer of the Earl Baumeister household as I have lost my nobility when I became an adult, you know? If milord orders so, I will go." (Erwin)

"Please show a bit more motivation!" (Katharina)

These two seem to have a really questionable compatibility. I often catch sight of Katharina flaring up at Erw.

However, in most cases Erw dodges her skillfully.

Given that Erw's communication skills are high, he might be hard to deal with for Katharina who has a loner disposition instead.

"It's the same for me and Haruka-san, but it's a very pragmatic reason: It's the general rule to face wyverns and flying dragons in a group." (Erwin)

"That's right. We are swordsmen, so we mainly face opponents in interpersonal combat or monsters that live on the ground. Once it comes to facing an enemy that can fly like wyverns, the most we can do is to deliver a single blow while at the same time avoiding an incoming attack." (Haruka)

"As Haruka-san and I can't use magic, we are unable to fly, too. This is your time to shine, Katharina." (Erwin)

"If you cut the wyverns' wings, causing them to fall to the ground, we will be able to deal with them as well." (Haruka)

"I see. If it's like that, it sure is my domain as someone who's strong at wind magic." (Katharina)

Nothing less of those two who will be married soon. They cleverly matched their arguments and restored Katharina's mood.

"This time it's not a job where you will be done after hunting one or two of them. It's necessary to hunt them efficiently as a group. That means you will thin out their numbers drastically in one go. Well, it might be unreasonable, but I'd like you to hold back on making them go extinct."  
(Roderich)

"Why?"

"It's an economical issue." (Roderich)

"I suppose there are people who make a living out of circulating the raw materials of wyverns and flying dragons on the market by regularly hunting them." (Elise)

"It's as you say, Elise-sama." (Roderich)

A long time ago it was rare to hunt wyverns and flying dragon in the Greater League Mountains. But nowadays many adventurer groups specializing on dragon hunting are permanently staying in the Knight Baumeister territory.

There are also plans to establish such hunter bases along the Greater League Mountain Range outside the Knight Baumeister territory.

Accordingly goods such as the hunted dragons' dismantled meat and other materials will begin to widely spread on other markets.

In other words, if the dragons were to be annihilated just when they might turn into a source of livelihood for many people, those people would lose that very livelihood.

"We have to hunt the wyverns and flying dragons without damaging the dragon hunt as industry while thinning out their numbers enough so that they won't cause damage to the people. A sophisticated ability to judge is indispensable." (Roderich)

A bit of political judgment might be necessary as well, but different from the public work so far, it's a job that's quite close to that of an adventurer.

Grasping how many of them we can hunt in total is Roderich's domain. It's nothing we can judge while on-site.

"Please leave it to us, Roderich-san. One who is a noble has to wield their power when it counts to protect the livelihood of the common people."

That's exactly the time when a noble has the duty to save their people with their power.

Something like that was called noblesse oblige, wasn't it?

It's not like Katharina will decide how many dragons are to be hunted, but she seems to regard this as a job appropriate for a noble, causing her to be in a really good mood.

"As expected of you, Katharina-sama." (Roderich)

"「Oh——ho ho. Even though I might look like this, I'm still a noble after all." (Katharina)

"If we don't do at least that much, we won't be able to demand taxes either." (Wilma)

"That's certainly true, but...isn't that a bit too blunt, Wilma-san?" (Katharina)

She states that it's a noble's task to proactively carry out such work. Moreover, being praised by Roderich for her attitude, Katharina's tension was boosted, but once Wilma bluntly pointed out the simple facts, she became quiet right away.

"Wilma-san, you're a noble too, aren't you...? Since you're the adopted daughter of that Minister Edgar, giving it your all..." (Katharina)

"I'm his adopted daughter. Also, the higher ranking the nobility with a long history, the more disillusioned you become, unexpectedly. Besides..." (Wilma)

"Besides, what, Wilma-san?" (Katharina)

"This is work. We just have to carry it out efficiently and calmly." (Wilma)

I suppose that means there's a big difference in the way of perception regarding work between Katharina and Wilma.

I think it's not like either is correct, though.

"So, Roderich-san, where are we going to carry out the extermination of wyverns and flying dragons? Or, are we lacking manpower with just our group?" (Elise)

At that point Elise asked Roderich about the details.

"Of course it's not just your group. There are several places where wyverns and flying dragons appear in the Baumeister Earldom. Many veteran adventurers and dragon-hunting specialists have been deployed." (Roderich)

As expected of Roderich. He's not going to entrust this job solely to us. He mentioned that he already arranged the deployment of personnel besides us.

"Until the assigned number has been hunted, we will give an incentive by paying extra for the raw materials." (Roderich)

I guess he wants to make sure of quickly finishing the hunt of the scheduled number of dragons by paying extra until the norm is reached.

Once the extra payment for the raw material comes to an end, the veteran adventurers will likely discontinue hunting the dragons as it will be more efficient to return to the Demon Forest. Since returning to their home base won't result in any costs for the dragon-hunting specialists either, it will be possible to prevent over-hunting.

"That's all fine, but is it really alright with having groups of dragon-hunting specialist around?" (Erwin)

"Yeah. What if they start a dispute again?" (Ina)

Erw and Ina not having a good impression of the dragon-hunting specialists is probably owed to the group of the Margrave Browig household — the matter with Thomas and his men — having caused a rebellion in the Knight Baumeister territory before.

They pretended to be a dragon-hunting specialist party and infiltrated the Knight Baumeister

territory.

"Erwin, Ina-sama, those were fakes that called themselves dragon-hunting specialists. The real specialists won't do something that likely brings them no profit, but only risks. The dragon-hunting specialists are an assembly of strict folks." (Roderich)

They hunt dragons as efficiently as possible in a group, and share the reward in order to not squabble.

Certainly, the real dragon-hunting specialists probably won't assist in crimes.

"Roderich-san, you're quite well-informed, aren't you?" (Luise)

"Luise-sama, despite my appearance I belonged to a famous group of dragon-hunting specialists in the past, albeit only for a short time." (Roderich)

"Roderich-san, you're really well-versed." (Luise)

Surely we didn't expect him to have experience in having worked in such field.

Luise was surprised by the abundance of Roderich's work experience.

"For that reason I asked a group of acquaintances to help with this time's job. There won't be any need for your group to move all over, milord. The area you are in charge of is here on the map." (Roderich)

Roderich spread out a map and pointed at a specific area.

"Isn't it slightly far away from human habitation?"

Location-wise it's at the halfway point between the Knight Baumeister territory and Paul-niisan's territory.

It's an uninhabited place where the development hasn't started at all yet.

"This place?"

"I don't know why, but even though this place is deserted, the wyverns' and flying dragons' activity around here has increased. I judged that it would be best to exterminate them to some extent. The reason why it has been assigned to your group is because Elise-sama will come with you." (Roderich)

"Healing magic, huh?"

"Yes."

If it's an area close to inhabited places, it's possible to get injured people treated by carrying them there, even if there's no healing magician with the adventurers, but if it's a place in the middle of nowhere, it will be difficult to get medical treatment without a healer.

It will cause a big difference in regards to the survival rate of injured people.

"No matter how specialized on dragon hunting they might be, there are few groups with healers. All

the more if it's adventurers that participate temporarily. Accordingly, your group that has Elise-sama is in charge of the area that's the furthest away from human settlements." (Roderich)

"I see. As long as His Majesty and Margrave Breithilde don't say anything, the matter with the tunnel won't proceed anyway. I guess we will treat ourselves to a dragon extermination for a change of mood." (Wendelin)

"If the situation makes progress in some way, I will contact you, so please focus on this work for now." (Roderich)

"Got it. It's time to depart then, huh?" (Wendelin)

For that reason it was decided that we will participate in the thinning out of wyverns and flying dragons.

The place appointed to us by Roderich is a mountain slope.

Because the dragon-hunting specialists have headed out ahead of us, we first moved to the Knight Baumeister territory with 『Teleportation』, and then decided to move by magic car (T/N: four-wheeler, but I can't be bothered to type it out anymore) from there.

"Sorry. Today I have no time. These are the presents."

"It can't be helped if you're busy. Souvenirs from the Empire, huh? Thanks."

On the way we made a very short visit at the Knight Baumeister territory, and I talked about our current job while passing souvenirs from the Empire to Hermann-niisan.

"Is this place doing fine?" (Wendelin)

"Yeah, since that incident, real dragon-hunting specialists are permanently staying here in turns. Because the wyverns and flying dragons are hunted regularly, it doesn't feel real to us that they've become more active." (Hermann)

Since the new family head, Hermann-niisan, is making the Knight Baumeister territory grow, the production of honey and honey liquor has increased, the reclamation of farmland is advancing, lodging is offered to the adventurers specialized in dragon hunting, and even dismantling contracts for the hunted dragons have been established. The territory has developed quite significantly compared to before the Empire's civil war.

Honestly speaking, there's a world of difference if compared to the past Knight Baumeister territory.

"However, we don't have the leeway to send people over from our side. If this place becomes short-handed, we won't be able to cope with their attacks." (Hermann)

"That makes sense. But, you don't have to worry about that."

Since a remarkable group of dragon-hunting specialists had been sent in, it will be an easy victory if they struggle together with us, according to Roderich  
If Roderich goes that far in his praise, it should be fine.

"We're heading on-site then." (Wendelin)

"Be careful. Come for a visit when you've got spare time. The children are looking forward to it as well." (Hermann)

While receiving Hermann-niisan's farewell, we headed towards the spot where the wyverns and flying dragons increased their activity, but...



"Bah! Isn't their car pretty fast?"

It would take time to walk to the location. Thus we decided to use the magic cars, like the time in the tunnel, since I never went to the place with 『Teleportation』 so far. Everyone should have properly practiced driving, but the speed of the magic car with Erw's group seems to be oddly high... Last time everyone practiced it diligently, but did I overlook something?

"Hey, Wend." (Luise)

"What's wrong, Luise?" (Wendelin)

"Did Haruka actually practice driving? I don't remember her having done it, but what about you?" (Luise)

"..." (Wendelin)

Certainly, if I'm asked like this, Haruka didn't participate at the time when we headed to the tunnel while practising with the magic cars as she was busy with her marriage preparations. That means, she's driving a magic car for the first time today, isn't she?

"Isn't she skillful for it being her first time?" (Wendelin)

"Though she's terribly fast."

I'm certain it's 'that'.

Haruka is usually quiet, but she's probably one of those people who speed too much, or rather whose personalities change once they grab the wheel.

Even in this world there are people whose character changes after mounting a horse, so it's not such an odd story either.

"There's no particular harm in it, is there?" (Wendelin)

As we're driving across plains, there are hardly any obstacles.

Something like a traffic accident shouldn't occur that easily.

She's also skilled at driving. The most relieving element was the fact that it's not our magic car.

"You know, Wend, don't you think that it's slightly strange?"

"Strange? What is?" (Wendelin)

Isn't the other car with Elise, Ina, Luise and me inside running well, too?  
I feel like we are slightly fast as well, but at present that's nothing particularly weird either.

"Elise is really good at everything."

Today Elise volunteered to drive for a change.  
But, she's a perfect superwoman after all.  
I'm bothered about her being a bit too quiet, but that doesn't mean that it's particularly...odd, right?

"We're normally catching up with Haruka who is driving too fast, though."

"It's because it would be a hassle if we got separated and lost sight of them." (Wendelin)

This place is no mountain slope, but once we get close to our destination, it's possible that we will be attacked by wyverns and flying dragons.

Elise is probably taking that point into consideration, too.  
Isn't she driving well while making sure to not lose Haruka?

"Nothing less of Elise. She can deal with it even without being told anything." (Wendelin)

However, the situation immediately changed after that.

"Wend, somehow Erw's face is pale as he's sitting on the passenger's seat of the magic car over there."

I can't see it well from here, but it appears as if Erw is saying something to Haruka...

"Erw, that moron, don't speak to someone who's driving. Won't it be dangerous if they get distracted?" (Wendelin)

Even if it's a plain with no obstacles, that's a rule he has to observe at least.  
I think I have to scold him later.

"To me it looks like he's trying to stop Haruka though..." (Luise)

Immediately after Luise said that, the speed of the magic car driven by Haruka went up a notch all at once.  
It's a velocity as if she's driving on a German Autobahn.

"The speed meter is completely swinging. It can get even faster! Incredible!" (Wendelin)

I couldn't hide my surprise towards the magic car that exhibited an performance that wouldn't lose out to cars on Earth.

"Wend, this is not the time for admiration. Look." (Ina)

Ahead of where Ina with her good eyesight pointed we could see Wilma, who had hardened like a Jizo statue, and Katharina, who was seeking help by turning our way, on the rear seats.

"This is truly unexpected..." (Wendelin)

For Haruka to be a speed maniac...

"Elise, you don't have to forcibly match speed with the other car, okay?" (Wendelin)

Katharina should be able to handle it somehow with magic if they have an accident in worst case...otherwise they will surely get injured heavily, but...although I spoke to Elise to drive safely, she stayed silent for some reason.

No, she's saying something to herself, isn't she?

"...I can't catch up...unless I raise the speed a lot more...I can't yield...more speed should be possible..." (Elise)

"Umm...Elise-san?"

Isn't her vocal tone different from usual?

"It's alright, we can still go for much more...I'm speeding up!" (Elise)

Once she shouts all of a sudden, Elise pressed down the accelerator to the limit in one go.

"Uwaah!" (Wendelin)

""Kyaaaa!!""

Due to the sudden acceleration, Luise, Ina and I were pressed into our seats, but the car driven by Elise has overtaken the car driven by Haruka in one go.



"What are you going to do after overtaking them!?" (Ina)

"Ahaha...Ina-san, since we must not get separated..." (Elise)

Elise answered Ina's protest, but once I looked properly, Elise's eyes were completely fixated. Even her laughter is weird and different from usual.

"Did Elise also love speeding!?" (Wendelin)

No way, for even Elise to be a speed maniac...  
An unexpected truth came to light, but changing the driver in this situation is impossible.  
Furthermore...

"Haruka's magic car passed us again!"

And when her car passed us, we could see Erw's ghastly pale face, Wilma who has turned into a Jizo statue after all, and Katharina who seems to mumble something to herself while holding her wand.

As expected of a speed maniac. Moreover, Haruka seems to be the type that hates to be overtaken by someone else.

"Tsk..." (Elise)

"Luise, clicking your tongue is vulgar." (Wendelin)

"Wend, it wasn't me. It was Elise." (Luise)

"Haa? No way." (Wendelin)

While thinking that there's no way for Elise, who was strictly raised as noble lady of a high-ranking noble, to click her tongue, I look at here as she clutches the wheel once more, and...

"To overtake me...you've got guts. But..." (Elise)

"...We completely failed at our selection of drivers. I guess I will pay attention next time..."

"Wend! As if that's the issue here!"

"I will somehow manage if we have an accident." (Wendelin)

Just like Katharina, I take out my wand and prepare for the worst case.  
In my case a wand is unnecessary to cast magic, but it might spare us injuries if I can invoke my magic as quickly as possible.  
Besides...it can't be helped that I feel anxious if I don't hold my wand.

"Wend, you're calmer than at the time with that roller coaster, aren't you?"

"It looks like I got used to it...though it's a nasty way to get used to it..." (Wendelin)

The roller coaster in that amusement part was a really bad experience.  
But, as I can somehow cope with Elise's reckless driving thanks to that, it hasn't been such a bad thing, I think?

"I can't pass them..." (Elise)

"Elise! It's fine even if you don't pass them!"

"No. Our husband is on this magic car, thus...what are we going to do if the family head of the Earl Baumeister household is not the one in the lead?" (Elise)

I guess she thinks that it's wrong for the retainer's car to drive ahead of the car with the lord on it. So far as it goes, it follows a certain logic...

"No way...since Erw's my guard, there are many situations where he steps in front of me."  
(Wendelin)

I'm sure Elise just wants to overtake the magic car driven by Haruka.

"Say, Wend. It wasn't that difficult at the amusement park, was it?"

I'm sure it's 'that'.

Elise has a character where she won't rest unless she's the fastest when holding the steering wheel. Until now I didn't notice because Elise only drove during practise.

"For Elise, who usually has a gentle character, to have such a side to her, eh?"

Also, Haruka is the same, huh?

Is it easy for normally gentle people to become like this?

"How enlightening." (Wendelin)

"This isn't the time for adoration, now is it!?" (Ina)

"Wend, should I change with her?" (Luise)

"No, if that was possible, I would have done it long ago." (Wendelin)

It's inevitable that I'm scared as well, but I keep escaping reality by thinking about various things like this.

"Tsk!" (Elise)

Since Haruka's car passed us once again at that point, Elise's mood got bad.  
Once again stepping on the accelerator with all her power, she overtakes Haruka's car.  
Once I see the faces of Erw, Wilma and Katharina just as we overtake their car, it's obvious that they have given up.

"(Elise and Haruka will be banned from driving magic cars from now on, I guess?)"

"(Wend, you have to definitely see that through!)"

"(Absolutely!)"

"Dear, if you look ahead, you will be able to see such a wonderful, blue sky." (Elise)

"Yeah...you're right..." (Wendelin)

It's because she overtook Haruka's car on this uninhabited plain.

Once Elise can see the sky with nothing in front, her mood brightens up

After that it was a back and forth between Elise and Haruka until we reached our destination. It was a repeatedly, intense dead heat like in a certain street racer manga.



"Dear, we arrived at our destination ahead of time, didn't we?" (Elise)

"You're right, Elise." (Wendelin)

We arrived a lot faster at the point, where a large quantity of wyverns and flying dragons comes forth, than initially planned.

It's simple.

You could even say it's natural since we traveled while Elise and Haruka competed against each other with all their might.

It's great that we arrived early, but everyone besides the two was staggering unsteadily due to dizziness as we climbed out of the cars.

The effectiveness of the anti-travel sickness medicine we received from Arnest was a big help, but without it, everyone besides the drivers would have collapsed on the spot.

"(Well, if we had continued driving at such a speed...)"

"(So your side as well? Since Elise's eyes were glazed as she was grasping the wheel, I guess that means same happened with Haruka...)" (Wendelin)

"(The gap to her usual manner is too much!)"

"(I'm still reeling.)" (Katharina)

In a place, where Elise and Haruka couldn't listen, Erw and the others talked about their bitter experience.

"Dear, driving a car is very fun." (Elise)

"So that's what you think, Elise, I see." (Wendelin)

"You don't feel the same, dear?" (Elise)

"Look, cars are just a means for traveling. They are similar to riding a horse." (Wendelin)

"It's not like you like horse riding that much. But, that speed is irresistible." (Elise)

"Fast is sure nice, isn't it?" (Wendelin)

Elise proved the fact that she's a speed maniac, but once she came out of the car, she chatted me up with her usual smile, as if an evil spirit had finally left her.  
Maybe she reduced her everyday stress by driving.

"I want to drive on the way back, too." (Elise)

"Umm..." (Wendelin)

As I was thinking how to refuse without hurting Elise, I felt several looks stabbing my back. Once I look in the direction from where they come, Erw and the others are urging me to do something.

I'm pretty sure that they want to tell me, 『You must decline by all means!』.

"(Don't worry, I share the same opinion) Since there might be developments in the Eulenberg territory while we're subjugating wyverns, we have to reduce the travel time by using 『Teleportation』 on the way back. There will be other opportunities for you to drive, okay?" (Wendelin)

"That makes sense. I of all people had completely forgotten about the matter with the tunnel." (Elise)

"What if you drove as hobby in your free time, if you like it so much?" (Wendelin)

Given that the cars are precious, excavated items, they should be appropriate as a noble's pastime. It's like horse riding.  
Besides, it also means that the more she drives by herself, the less she will drag others into it.

"Is that alright?" (Elise)

"That much should be fine. These are items we excavated to begin with." (Wendelin)

Parking one car in the mansion's courtyard and Countess Baumeister driving it as hobby in her free time shouldn't be a problem at all.  
Given that Elise might have accumulated stress since the Empire's civil war, it's a cheap price to pay if Elise can get rid of it by driving a car.

"I'm jealous, Elise-sama." (Haruka)

Having heard that, the second speed maniac, Haruka, donned an expression showing how very jealous she was.

"Won't it be fine if simply drive together, Haruka?" (Wendelin)

"Is that okay with you, milord?" (Haruka)

"I don't mind at all." (Wendelin)

As long as those two can keep the speed contests between themselves, no harm will befall us. Rather, it's very welcome.

"Elise-sama, I'm looking forward to it." (Haruka)

"Yes. I cannot help but look forward to it from now on, too." (Elise)

While saying so, the two beauties giggle happily. However, once they grab the wheel, their characters change completely. Well, there are no humans that don't have more than one face. It's no major issue if they only act like this at times of driving a car. Besides, I will definitely not get on the car with them.

"A 『Drive』 with just the two of us as couple would be dreamy. Sometime ago I had Arnest-san show me the documents he found in the tunnel." (Elise)

That shitty demon!  
Don't prattle to Elise, you stupid pointy-ear!  
Going on a drive means that I have to keep her company, doesn't it!?  
Take your sponsor into consideration and read the mood!

"『Drive』, you say Elise-sama?" (Haruka)

"Couples and married men and women depart on a journey in a car. It seems that's a 『Drive』." (Elise)

"I also want to go on a drive together with Erw-san." (Haruka)

"That's really great. That also means we can take off somewhere together in two cars." (Elise)

A drive with Elise and Haruka behind the wheel...? Won't that definitely turn into a speed contest!? Moreover, I'm expected to participate! Once I accidentally look at Erw, his face has become pale after it was decided that he will join in, too. Certainly there's no way for him to refuse a wish from Haruka.

"(Everyone! Eh...? Why are you looking away?)"

Ina, Luise, Wilma and Katharina averted their eyes from Erw and me. Relief is showing on their faces as they are probably thinking that it finished without them getting involved. They don't want to get on a car driven by Haruka or Elise anymore. Their opinion seems to match on that.

"It would be great if we could quickly get some time to go on a drive, right Haruka-san?" (Elise)

"Yes, Elise-sama. I'm looking forward to it very much." (Haruka)

The two looked very happy, but because it was decided that Erw and I would be regularly dragged into their reckless driving in the near future, we felt depressed at what's awaiting us.

\* \* \*

"You guys are Earl Baumeister-sama's party, huh? I've heard about you from Roderich...you're already tired, Earl-sama? Was it such a long journey?"

"There are various reasons..." (Wendelin)

"I guess it's difficult to be a noble."

Having gotten off the cars, we walked for a bit and then arrived at the appearance point of the wyverns and flying dragons.

As Roderich said, a party of dragon hunters with several dozen members has put up their tents there. The leader of that group gave us his greetings.

His age is around 50 years. He has a sunburnt skin, a trained, slender body, and wears an eyepatch as he apparently can see on his left eye.

"I'm Golf, the leader of 『Dragon Fighters』. I think we are fairly famous as party of dragon hunting experts." (Golf)

"I'm Wendelin, the leader of the 『Dragon Busters』." (Wendelin)

"So that's your official name, Earl Baumeister-sama? My bad, I heard the story from Roderich a long time ago." (Golf)

Since we're working as adventurers today, I introduced us with our party name, but it really feels like it's been quite a while since we last used the name 『Dragon Busters』.

"I actually had forgotten all about that name." (Erwin)

"Hey!" (Wendelin)

What's with the forgetting?

I scolded Erw.

...In reality was starting to forget it as well, though.

"I guess there's also the work as Lord-sama of this area. Since we've heard of your abilities, your help is greatly appreciated. So...you got exhausted from traveling to this remote place, right? We're taking a rest as well, so come this way." (Golf)

"Thanks." (Wendelin)

Given that we were exhausted in mind and body thanks to Elise's and Haruka's driving, it was a big help that Golf-san and his group had put up the tents already.

He guided us to a big tent.

Since the 『Dragon Fighters』 is a large-scaled dragon hunter party, several tents had been put up at the site that became the campground.

Smoke was rising at several places as they were preparing food, but the ones cooking are working very efficiently.

"They are a big party, thus they have people specialized on cooking with them, too." (Elise)

Elise, who cooks the most among us, admired the efficiency of the big party which she sees for the first time.

"Milady, what you focus your eyes on is slightly different from other adventurers, I suppose. Since we're always traveling with these numbers, the meals are left to cooking experts. They are young, but since they are fellows who want to open a restaurant after saving some money here, I can guarantee their skills." (Golf)

"What about battle?"

"As expected, they are amateurs at fighting as they wish to become cooks. We have them keep weapons for self-defense just in case, but during the hunt they withdraw." (Golf)

With these numbers they are rather a small military force than an adventurer party.

I mean, there are even people working as logistical support who don't participate in the hunts. Once we entered the big tent, a young apprentice prepared some tea at once.

"In addition there are also guys that maintain our weapons, armors and traps, supply goods such as food, and take care of the accounting. Roderich not only did the accounting, but also joined in on the hunts, however. He's always been a skilled guy. I thought that it would be fine to make him the next leader of the 『Dragon Fighters』, but I guess now he's the household manager of the Earl Baumeister household. He really became someone completely out of our reach." (Golf)

We immediately talked about Roderich's time in the 『Dragon Fighters』, but I ended up admiring him for being able to do anything.

"It looks like Roderich-san can make a living anywhere."

"I truly think there's nothing that puts Roderich in a bind."

Accordingly it may be taken as him somewhat being a Jack of all trades and master of none.

"Wend-sama, you shouldn't have any trouble to make a living either." (Wilma)

"Guess so." (Wendelin)

As Wilma says, I should be able to live quite luxuriously if I work as adventurer as I'm a magician.

"If you say that, same also applies to Katharina, doesn't it?"

"A magician can continue to live adequately even as solo adventurer. There's no lack of means to earn income either."

In addition to this, Katharina seems tougher than me. She has a high loner resistance, too.

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

"That's out of the question. Ah——, the tea is delicious." (Wendelin)

I drink the tea to dodge Katharina's questioning.

"Golf-san, it's no problem for us to take a rest?" (Haruka)

"It's fine, young lady. Young lady, you're a person from Mizuho?" (Golf)

"You're quite knowledgeable, aren't you?" (Haruka)

Haruka was surprised that Golf-san had noticed that she's from Mizuho. That's because there are unexpectedly many people who don't know about Mizuho in the Helmut Kingdom.

"Once you become famous as party specialized on dragons, there are many occasions to make connections with nobles thanks to the requests. There are also situations where we receive actual goods such as Mizuho products as reward." (Golf)

Nobles request dragon subjugations and raw materials of dragons. I guess they will give Mizuho ware as part of the reward.

"I see, so that's how it is." (Haruka)

"I possess countless pieces of porcelain, too. I like them since they are slightly unusual." (Golf)

Once you become the leader of a famous dragon hunter party, you probably become smarter than other adventurers, or rather, earn money differently.

He maintains a party that hunts dragons, and properly moves a few dozen non-combatants in addition.

I guess it's not a job suited for an incompetent person.

"We also only arrived here a few hours ago and set up our camp. I have them prepare for tomorrow's hunting. That means today we rest to be ready for tomorrow." (Golf)

"You sure are cautious." (Ina)

"That's only natural." (Golf)

Golf-san answered Ina's question as if it's the most natural thing in the world.

"We aren't that strong after all. Thus we don't do the unreasonable." (Golf)

"Are you weak? I mean, you're a party specialized on dragon hunting..."

"Of course there are several guys, including me, that are stronger than your average veteran adventurer. But, there are also those who are weak. There are always several newcomers with us. What's necessary for a dragon hunter party is teamwork." (Golf)

"Teamwork?"

"Aye. A magician at Earl Baumeister-sama's level can defeat a wyvern by himself, right? We do the same with these numbers. There's no way that we are strong, is there?" (Golf)

That was Golf-san's explanation to Ina, but I still think that he's too modest.

They should be able to hunt other monsters a lot easier.

It's a group specialized on team combat, apparently allowing them to quite efficiently hunt the monsters called dragons, which are close to being the strongest, without having many casualties. That's why they are the 『Dragon Fighters』.

"Just for caution's sake we have set up lookouts in shifts, but since the wyverns won't come here, it would be best to take a proper rest for now. As your party will participate this time as well, Earl Baumeister-sama, I think it will be quite easy, though." (Golf)

"Golf-san, you previously mentioned that there are people doing the preparations..."

"Milady, we have a system of assigning roles. There are members who are busy with the preparations for tomorrow, but for us, who will do the work tomorrow, it's important to rest. That's also part of the job." (Golf)

"So each member has their own fixed job? By the way, how are you actually defeating wyverns?"

"That is..." (Golf)

How are they going to defeat the wyverns and flying dragons who have gotten more active?

The method seems to consist of luring the dragons by making use of their ferocity.

"Our comrades are in the process of planting traps in a forest close to the Greater League Mountain Range around one kilometer away from here." (Golf)

"They are spreading a great number of sturdy nets made out of metal between the big trees of the forest," Golf-san explained.

"The resilience of our metal nets is a secret of our party. Since you naturally can't catch them with only that much, we attract them with bait." (Golf)

They employ living wild animals and monsters as bait after having prepared them beforehand.

"It's slightly cruel, but we leave them half-dead and hang them into the nets while still alive." (Golf)

I see, if they hang there like that, the animals and monsters will cry loudly while losing a lot of blood. I suppose the wyverns and flying dragons will be lured in by the stench of blood and the crying.

"Since I've heard that milady is a person of the church, I feel slightly bad for explaining it, though."  
(Golf)

In the church it's no sin to hunt monsters and animals as food for the sake of survival. However, it looks like they occasionally receive a sermon from priests who regard it as pitiful to deliberately wound those creatures so that they don't die, even if it's for the sake of baiting dragons.

"Certainly, I can't really welcome it, but seeing as the wyverns and flying dragons might appear in inhabited areas at this rate, it's probably unavoidable." (Elise)

"It's a big help for you to say so, milady." (Golf)

Golf-san was relieved that he didn't get scolded by Elise.

"Is scattering prepared monster blood in advance and imitating the crying no good?" (Wilma)

"Indeed, in that way you wouldn't need to gruesomely kill each and every single monster, right?"  
(Katharina)

Katharina praised the the alternative plan provided by Wilma.

"Blood is scattered in addition around the bait. However, only scattering the blood won't work. The dragons might see through that. It's the same with the crying, I think. If that method had worked, we would have used it long ago already. It's not like we are doing it like this because we like or prefer it." (Golf)

Even if they might be wild animals and monsters, they don't want to make them suffer a slow, gruesome death.

"You catch the monsters while still alive, right?"

"It's quite laborious."

"If we weaken the monsters too much or kill them at the time of catching them, they won't be useful as bait," Golf-san explained to Erw.

No matter how many they might be, since it needs ability to catch big monsters and animals while still alive, Golf-san and his group shouldn't be weak after all.

"The preparation of the bait will take place just before tomorrow's hunt. You can leave the trap placement to us." (Golf)

That means our job is to finish off the dragons that got caught in the nets after being lured in.

"Otherwise it will be the subjugation of targets that didn't get caught in the nets despite having been lured into the forest. Since your group has a lot of magicians, Earl Baumeister-sama, I'd like to

request that you focus your efforts on those." (Golf)

Come to think of it, I sensed that there's no excellent magician in the 『Dragon Fighters』.

There's just one at elementary level...no, make that two.

Even with just two, that's already considerable. After all the number of magicians in our party is abnormal.

Even so, I guess what makes the 『Dragon Fighters』 famous as dragon hunting specialists is their teamwork and Golf-san's leading skills.

"Only two magicians?"

"Two? Ah! I suppose great magicians are sense other magicians. Well, in fact we only have one exclusive magician." (Golf)

It seems to be a young man, but since he's still a rookie as adventurer, he's in the middle of being raised.

"Accordingly I asked an adventurer friend for help. She's young, but already accustomed to dragon hunting. If possible, I'd like her to join us, but somehow she likes to act as a lone wolf. She's well-connected and someone that doesn't turn down requests for help, but..." (Golf)

"I'm coming in."

Just when Golf-san was talking about the helping adventurer, a young mana possessor entered the tent.

And it resulted in me being surprised by the outward appearance of that person.

"A woman?"

"A female adventurer isn't particularly rare, right? Golf-san, the placing of traps will be done very soon."

"Thanks for expressly coming here to inform me about it, Katia." (Golf)

"I was in the vicinity anyway. I'm in charge of the prey that got caught in the nets after all. Be that as it may, I heard the rumors, but wow. For there to exist a party that has this many magicians." (Katia)

The girl, who looks at us while saying so, seems to be called Katia.

Her wording is awfully gallant, or rather manly, but her appearance was that of a beautiful girl with good looks, just like a doll.

Her height is no more than 155 cm. She has dark brown, close to black, hair with pigtails that flow down until her knees.

Her attire and equipment is that of a typical adventurer. A white tank top, short pants that resemble denim fabric, boots that reinforce her defense, thin protective tekkou, a chest protector, and, for some reason, a headband.

I wonder, had the headband been imported from the Mizuho Dukedom?

Her main weapons seem to be the two narrow longswords on her back.

The straps with the scabbards crossed at the front of her body.

"Those are sabers, aren't they?" (Erwin)

"Sabers, eh...?" (Wendelin)

Erw, whose hobby it is to collect swords, told us that the two swords of Katia are sabers. Now that he mentions it, I feel like I've seen a saber at the martial arts tournament.

"Erw, are sabers rare?" (Wendelin)

"Since they are pretty much swords, it's no problem even if nobles use them, but for some reason they are unpopular and regarded as inferior." (Erwin)

"I see." (Wendelin)



It's apparently said that they lack the dignity of normal swords.

If you look for them, I think you will also find sabers that possess a feeling of dignity, but since they are regarded as inferior compared to normal swords, there seem to be extremely few nobles that use them.

Is that the reason why I have almost never seen them?

"There's also the estoc, a sword that's handled in a similar way, right? Given that it's a slender sword that focuses on thrusts, they are considered as weapons of cowards." (Erwin)

"It's not cowardly in particular, right?"

"The nobles just consider it like that on their own accord."

If I remember correctly, I've never seen a noble wearing a saber or an estoc at the waist in the capital. Even at the martial arts tournament the number of people using them was low.

"Those two swords put emphasis on being light weighted."

It's a sword shape that stresses slashing in a different way compared to Japanese blades. Katia's combat style was focused on speed if you look at her light weight armor. Long swords, as they are used by Erw, probably don't suit her body type.

"Also, take a look at her waist." (Erwin)

"Daggers? Knives?" (Wendelin)

Ten small throwing swords were visible at the belt coiling around her waist.

"Since she fights with a focus on speed, she will throw these while closing in."

Even if it's a small knife; it will pierce you, if you ignore it.

Given that they are especially often aimed at faces, opponents that fight against Katia will be forced to repel the knives, which come flying at their faces, with their swords.

That means she plans to draw close while using the opportunity created by that.

"I see." (Wendelin)

I grasped Erw's explanation.

Nothing less from someone whose swordsmanship talent has been recognized by Warren-san.

"Wendelin-san." (Katharina)

Next Katharina tugged my robe.

I know what she wants to say.

It's about Katia being a mana possessor.

She falls slightly short of intermediate level, but she should be considerably powerful if you add that mana to her sword skills.

"I will introduce you. This is Katia, who occasionally helps us out." (Golf)

Just when we finished appraising each other, Golf-san timely introduced the helper Katia.

"So, you're helping out in the same way..."

"I know you. You are Earl Baumeister-sama and party, right?" (Katia)

Katia seems to know about us.

"You're celebrities that crop up in various talks. Your abilities are guaranteed, so I have to also be careful that my prey won't be stolen." (Katia)

"It will be fine if it's you, Katia, right? Besides, this time there's plenty of prey."

"Looks like it. A big haul in a long time." (Katia)

To call dragon hunting a big haul, the girl called Katia is a considerably powerful person with a good appearance.

I have to make sure to not be deceived by her outward appearance.

"Umm...you're a magician as well, aren't you?" (Katharina)

For a change it was Katharina that took the initiative and called out to Katia.

"Strictly spoken, I don't consider myself a magician since the magic I can use is very limited." (Katia)

"Body strengthening...magic to increase your speed?" (Katharina)

"Hoh, nothing less of 『Storm』, I suppose." (Katia)

"You know of me?" (Katharina)

"Even though it may seem differently, my history as adventurer is longer than yours. 『Storm』, you're a famous magician." (Katia)

I thought that Katia would be my age or a little bit younger, but it seems like she's actually older than me.

Even so, our actual experience is little, but Katharina herself was quite the celebrity as magician. If she's with us, she doesn't stand out much since there are many people with distinct personalities around her.

Mostly Doushi.

"Golf-san, you seem eager to hunt a lot more than usual, don't you?" (Katia)

"I don't want to lose to the dragon hunting parties and adventurers at the other places. The purchase prices for the raw materials are lavish as well. We have to do our best while leaving the ones getting through the nets to you, Katia." (Golf)

"Then I should work hard at the gleaning, huh?" (Katia)

To treat the wyverns and flying dragons that aren't caught in the nets as gleaning...it seems Katia is more powerful than expected.



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.

And then they got stuck in the nets that had been spread out between the trees along that path.

""Gyaaa——""

Two wyverns were stuck in the net.

In case of normal nets, they would have likely been torn apart easily, but even the dragons can't break through these nets, which had been knitted with special metal wires, with ease.

The caught wyverns release cries full of pain and anger.

"Now!" (Golf)

At this point the go sign was given by Golf-san, and the members of the 『Dragon Fighters』, who had waited in hiding, all at once attack the wyverns with throwing spears and arrows.

The wyverns, who couldn't move much, had their bodies struck by those projectiles.

"Aim for the heart!" (Golf)

Golf-san ordered in order to quickly finish off the wyverns which are still struggling.

Aiming for the head is actually the most reliable method to kill them, but even now their heads can be sold for a high price to rich people and nobles after stuffing them out.

It seems that craftsmen, who create stuffed animals, will buy undamaged wyvern heads for a lot of money, meaning, Golf-san has them aim for the head in order to increase their earnings.

Since the plan has worked out and the wyverns can't move, I guess it's not that dangerous as long as they pierce the heart with arrows and spears quickly.

"Having said that..."

"It's quite difficult."

Erw, who's using a bow for the first time in a long while, and Haruka, who likewise shot arrows while using a Mizuho-made Yumi, had slight troubles targeting the wyverns' hearts.

They do hit the wyverns' body, but directly hitting the heart proves to be difficult.

"So you can even use archery, Haruka?" (Wendelin)

"Once you join the Battou Unit, you also practice other weapons, albeit only the basics." (Haruka)

Compared to her saying that it's only the basics, her skills were quite good, considering that she's hitting the wyverns properly.

"(The Haruka-san, who prepares her bow, is so dignified...) Ouch! Wend, what are you doing?"  
(Erwin)

"Hurry up and hit the wyvern's heart!" (Wendelin)

Because Erw sometimes stared at Haruka as she was setting up her bow and broke into a smile, I lowered my fist on his head from behind.

"This location is bad." (Erwin)

Certainly, I suppose it's true that it's not the best location there is. Although it's not to the extent of being in a blind spot, the wyverns don't expose their chests readily in our direction.

"Should I target them with magic?" (Wendelin)

"Wend, obey Golf-san's instructions."

"Aye, aye." (Wendelin)

Since it looks like wyverns and flying dragons will come one after the other to this place from now on according to Golf-san's prediction, Luise, Katharina and I had been prohibited from making a move on the wyverns that were caught in the nets.

We won't get involved with dragons that can be dealt with by the 『Dragon Fighters』, Erw, Ina, Haruka and Wilma.

Us three are the ace in the hole, so-to-say.

Because Elise was in charge of healing, she naturally didn't participate in the battle.

"Now!"

At this moment Ina capitalized on a small chance and succeeded in stabbing the heart of a wyvern. As the power of her throwing has gone up in proportion to her mana increase, she only needed one hit once she managed to reach the heart.

"Alrighty!" (Ina)

Next one of the 『Dragon Fighters』 succeeded in finishing off the other wyvern, bringing the subjugation of the first two wyverns to a successful end.

"We did it!"

"But, Wend-sama, there's one more wyvern around." (Wilma)

Now that she mentions it.

Three wyverns came down from the mountains, but only two got caught in the nets.

The remaining one apparently made its way through the trees without getting stuck in any of the nets and escaped.

"How regrettable." (Wendelin)

"Even if it comes back, it will take you only one hit to finish it off, Wend-sama." (Wilma)

"I suppose that's true as well." (Wendelin)

We are here for the time when wyverns and fly dragons, which didn't get stuck in the nets, come back or when additional dragons arrive here while everyone's busy dealing with the dragons caught in the nets.

"But, maybe you don't have to worry about it." (Wilma)

Wilma looked in the direction where the remaining wyvern had fled to, and immediately readjusted her big ax.

There's a response on my 『Detection』, too. It looks like it came back after all.

"Hurry up and get them out of the nets!" (Golf)

Since the members of the 『Dragon Fighters』 were in the middle of removing the two killed wyverns out of the nets, it's my turn now, eh?

I prepared myself to be able to release my magic at any time.

"Wend-sama, it looks like it's unnecessary." (Wilma)

"...I got it." (Wendelin)

I haven't seen Katia since the hunt begun, but it appears she's finally starting to do her job. The third wyvern was in the middle of approaching the members of the 『Dragon Fighters』 who are still busy with the two dead wyverns, but in the instant its shadow crossed a certain point, a shadow fell on it from above, causing it to crash to the ground while spurting blood from its neck. It slid along the ground while digging up several meters worth of soil, and then came to a stop.

Apparently Katia, who hid atop a tree, sped up, landed on the wyvern close to its neck, and cut the wyvern's neck with her specialized twin blades in an instant.

Even if it might be a dragon, it will still die after losing large quantities of blood if its neck carotid artery is cut apart.

There's no doubt that this is the fate that befell the wyvern.

"Fast."

She waited for the prey atop a tree while completely erasing her presence, and then powerfully cut the neck of the sturdy wyvern in an instant, using the sharpness of her two blades and the falling speed reinforced by magic.

That's something a normal adventurer isn't capable of.

"Even though she fell to the ground while boosting her speed with magic, she didn't crash onto the ground?" (Wendelin)

Since she had to cut the tough neck of the wyvern, she should have increased her speed considerably.

An ordinary person would have likely hit the ground, resulting in heavy injuries or death. As the tree where she hid is a fairly big tree, she started her attack from a very high altitude.

"Wend-sama, you will understand if you look at the place where Katia landed once more." (Wilma)

"Did you see it, Wilma?" (Luise)

"You should have seen it as well, Luise" (Wilma)

I suppose both of them have a very good kinetic vision.

It's extremely unlikely that I can win against them in regards to combat sense.

"Another batch has shown up!" (Ina)

Ina, the 『Dragon Fighters』, and Katia, each killed one wyvern. Just as they finished collecting the corpses into magic bags, wyverns that were lured by the smell of blood once again...

"I think this time flying dragons are mixed in as well."

"The method to kill them is still the same. It would be nice if it would be our turn this time." (Katharina)

"If you wait a bit longer, you will become busier than you like anyway."

Right now we have nothing to do, but since everyone will probably get tired, we should get busy very soon.

It looks like many dragons inhabiting the Greater League Mountain Range in this area have noticed the smell of blood.

"That means we are the last trump card."

"It would be better if Elise-san wouldn't get a turn, though." (Katharina)

Katharina prayed that there would be no injured people requiring Elise's healing magic. Having said that, it's not like everyone gets out of this without any injuries so easily.

"Are you alright?" (Elise)

"Yeah, I was negligent, thinking that it was dead. It's pathetic to receive a bone fracture after being sent flying by its tail."

Driving the dragons into the nets spread out between the forest's trees, they finish them off with arrows, throwing spears and some magic from a distance. The 『Dragon Fighters』 earned their income by scoring one dragon after the other with this method, but occasionally there's an injured person that has to be treated by Elise.

"This time it's really relaxing since we have an excellent healer with us. Thank you."

"Please don't move your fractured arm with full power all of a sudden. It will take some time until you can move it as before." (Elise)

"I will try to hold back."

The middle-aged man, who was healed by Elise, returns to the dragon hunt after expressing his gratitude. The income of the people belonging to the 『Dragon Fighters』 is big, but it's very obvious that their risks are accordingly high as well.

After all a little carelessness might lead to their death.

Even so they continue to finish off the caught dragons in succession, remove the dead prey from the nets and put them into the magic bags of the 『Dragon Fighters』.

It will become impossible for new prey to be caught in the nets, if they leave such huge bodies hanging in there, and given that the dragons are also smart enough to run away once they see the corpses of their brethren, they store the corpses in the magic bags as soon as possible.

"You got used to it, haven't you?"

"Yes."

Erw and Haruka appear to have grown accustomed to using their bows. They reached a level where they hit their targets skilfully.

"I heard that they had increased their activity, but there's really a lot of them."

Ina throws one spear after the other, finishing off the caught dragons.

"It's been a while for me as well."

Because she would easily tear the nets if she were to throw her big ax, Wilma also used her steel bow for the first time in a long while, sniping the dragons.

"You're quite skilled. How does it compare to the magic gun?" (Katharina)

"Both have their merits and demerits." (Wilma)

"That's a fairly ambiguous answer..." (Katharina)

Wilma had been given a magic gun from Mizuho to collect data during the Empire's civil war, but she had returned the prototype and is now using her steel bow.

"I ran out of arrows." (Wilma)

"I have some with me." (Wendelin)

I didn't expect that something like that might happen, but it's great that I made a few arrows in my spare time.

"Wend-sama, you're the best, I love you." (Wilma)

Wilma, who took my spare arrows, continued shooting with her bow. Because all the arrows are made out of steel, they penetrate a lot better than normal arrows if they hit a dragon.

"Wend-sama, over there." (Wilma)

At the place where Wilma, who had stopped shooting arrows for a moment, pointed, Katia, who had returned atop the tree, cut up the neck of a flying dragon that was trying to escape into the deep forest.

At first I didn't realize why Katia, who falls from a quite high place while accelerating with magic, doesn't get injured, but she's casting a spell faintly similar to 『Flight』 just before crashing into the ground.

"So she only prevents the landing impact and a crashing into the ground, huh...?" (Wendelin)

Since Katia said that she can't use anything beside the speed up of 『Body Reinforcement』, she probably can't use 『Flight』 to freely fly around in the sky. That means it's a cushion-like magic that creates a lifting power for just an instant to avoid a crash.

"Because her strategy is basically to ambush, she enhances her speed with magic, attacks the vital spots, and reduces the damage as well as fixes her posture with a 『Flight』 fake, huh?" (Wendelin)

"It's very efficient."

"That's for sure."

Katia has come here to help the 『Dragon Fighters』, or rather glean, but if she feels like it, she can hunt wyverns and flying dragons by herself, too.

She would probably earn a lot more cash than the members of the 『Dragon Fighters』.

This is surely the reason why she's called a remarkable adventurer.

"The adventurer world is sure wide." (Wilma)

It certainly as Wilma says.  
I didn't know that such amazing adventurers exist.

"Earl Baumeister-sama, please!" (Golf)

"Got it. Luise, Katharina." (Wendelin)

"It's finally my turn, eh?" (Luise)

"It's the entry of the main actor." (Katharina)

"That's Wend you're talking about, right?"

"Even though things may appear differently, I'm still a senpai to all of you, just like Katia-san."

(Katharina)

In addition to the blood of the bear, the blood of the wyverns and flying dragons, who were defeated here until now, has spread as well. Being lured by the intensified smell of blood, dragons arrive here in succession from the Greater League Mountain Range.

Normally the 『Dragon Fighters』 wouldn't hold out here any longer since it's dangerous, but today they continued to hunt for an extended period of time since we are here.

However, as expected, they have apparently reached their limits. They left the rest to us.

The injuries can be healed by Elise, but healing magic can't alleviate fatigue.

That means they need to take a break.

"Now then, it would be best to keep the heads intact and as undamaged as possible, right?"

I attacked a flying dragon, which approached me while considering me as fodder, with 『Wind Cutter』.

The dragon dodged the 『Wind Cutter』 fired by me while looking fairly relaxed, but it all went according to calculations.

The 『Wind Cutter』, which it avoided once, returned like a boomerang, and hit the dragon's neck from behind.

Having lost its head, the dragon's torso drops to the ground while blood gushes out of the cut end like a waterfall.

"Well, then me as well." (Katharina)

Katharina also decapitates a wyvern with the same spell in one hit. Given the situation, the rest was a competition over who would hunt the most.

"Wendelin-san, if I win, please take 『me only』 to the coffeehouse that opened in Baulburg next time, okay? Its interior design is stylish and it seems to be fairly popular with women." (Katharina)

"Are there only women inside the shop by chance?" (Wendelin)

I might as well have a little contest with her since the punishment for losing isn't all that bad, but I'm really bad with visiting such female-only stores.

It makes me feel as if I don't belong there.

"Won't that be fine as long as you don't lose?" (Katharina)

"That's true, but..." (Wendelin)

If it comes to magic contests where technique and control is necessary, Katharina still has an advantage as experienced person.

"In that case I will join the contest, too." (Luise)

"Do you have any chance at winning, Luise?"

Given that Luise is close-combat-only, she had to defeat passing dragons from atop a tree like Katia.

The method of erasing one's presence, landing behind the neck of a dragon like a floating feather and breaking the neck surprised everyone of the 『Dragon Fighters』, but this method has a worse efficiency than magic.

After all it loses out in the number of hits in comparison to magic.

"Ah, true! Then I will add to Katharina's score!" (Luise)

"That's really sly..."

"It will be three of us, but...that's still fine with me." (Katharina)

Without even checking back with me, Luise and Katharina decide to join hands and declare that it's my defeat at this point.

They are slightly unreasonable.

"Earl Baumeister-sama, if you make your lovely wives angry by cheating, your neck will be snapped off, you know?"

I ended up being teased by Golf-san who heard our conversation.

Or rather, he has pretty good ears.

"Golf-san, I'm not such a narrow-minded woman. Wend is always approached by women, thus I won't be able to keep up if I get jealous over each and every single one of them." (Luise)

"That's right. It's necessary to deal with it after making a calm judgment." (Katharina)

"Earl Baumeister-sama, you're lucky to have such fine wives. I will correct myself. You can't cheat on them, can you?" (Golf)

"..."

That's not true.

Even I, if I feel like it...I guess it's impossible...

"Today's hunt goes until evening. Since they will crash into the trees once it becomes dark, the wyverns and flying dragons won't approach the blood at night."

I guess, with their size they judge that it's dangerous to fly through the trees once it becomes dark.

"Do your best at defeating them."

"Luise-san, we have to make sure that we won't lose to Wendelin-san." (Katharina)

"It sure will be uncool to lose in a 2 vs. 1 contest." (Luise)

Afterwards we joined Erw's group and the 『Dragon Fighters』, who finished their break, and hunted many wyverns and flying dragons in just one day.

The numbers largely exceeded our initial estimation. We succeeded in hunting the targeted number in four days which was much shorter than planned.



"Nothing less of you, milord. You hunted the planned number much faster than the other teams."  
(Roderich)

Having safely finished the hunt, we are talking with Roderich at the monster dismantling station located next to the newly established adventurer's guild branch in Baulburg.  
The adventurers and parties, who were in charge of the other places, still haven't been able to hunt the designated numbers. We were the very first to bring our game to the dismantling station.

"We also hunted a number exceeding our records so far after reinforcing our strategies and party, but in the end we lose out to high-ranking magicians." (Golf)

"Golf-dono, now that you've actually seen them, they are amazing, aren't they?" (Roderich)

"I really get the reason why a man of your caliber is serving them, Roderich." (Golf)

Golf-san, who returned together with us through 『Teleportation』 joins the conversation and has a serious talk with Roderich, his former subordinate.

"I tried to calculate it roughly, but it looks like the results are slightly better than expected..."  
(Roderich)

"Roderich, you're sure perceptive. It's that girl." (Golf)

Golf-san's look was turned in the direction of Katia who's receiving the reward for the dragons she hunted herself from a guild staff member.  
Being able to hunt dragons by herself, she managed to make great accomplishments in these four days.  
She's happily checking the number of gold coins she received.

"I see. She must be fairly skilled." (Roderich)

Roderich looked at Katia as if evaluating her strength.

"Occasionally we have been hunting together, but she's indeed a powerful adventurer." (Golf)

"It's great that you finished it earlier than planned." (Roderich)

"Well, the expenses increase significantly with each passing day."

It's only natural that the expenses will be lower if you shorten the number of days to hunt the same number of game.

If it's one or two days, there's no big difference, but the 『Dragon Fighters』 are a big group.  
It's reasonable for their calculations to be tight. After all the 『Dragon Fighters』 might go bankrupt if they don't watch the expenses.

"From your appearance you really seem like a vanguard combat specialist." (Luise)

"In the past that was true." (Golf)

Golf-san told Luise that he fought at the front while risking his life in the past.

"Being unable to see on one eye was actually a youthful indiscretion. Though, it's no good if the leader of a dragon-hunting party isn't proficient at organizational management and commanding." (Golf)

"It appears that it's also no good if you don't have any physical strength." (Luise)

"Luise-dono, you do understand." (Golf)

Hunting dragons is dangerous, but fascinated by the big rewards, people gather easily. However, this is the same for other adventurers as well. Many of those joining are sly old men, criminals and wannabes, who try to get a share for themselves while taking it easy. Such lawless folks build factions and make parties their own. Sometimes it was necessary to get rid of such pests with force.

If the leader can't do that, the party will eventually go out of business.

That means you aren't fit to be the leader unless you're powerful.

Golf-san has the qualities of both sides, management and combat. That's the reason why the 『Dragon Fighters』 have become widely-known as famous dragon hunting party in the Helmut Kingdom.

"I'm sure that you will also be successful if you become our retainer." (Roderich)

"My only flaw is that I'm bad with a formal life such as being the retainer of a noble. I earned enough money to lead a comfortable life during my retirement. I will obediently hand my job over to the next generation." (Golf)

"You're going to pass it on to your son?" (Elise)

"No, my son and the husbands of my daughters have completely different jobs." (Golf)

Upon Elise's question, Golf-san replied that he wouldn't allow his child and his son-in-laws to succeed the 『Dragon Fighters』 without any hesitation.

"You won't have your child succeed?"

"That part's different from nobles and merchants. None of my children has the talent for it. Even if I have them succeed it forcibly, it will only cause them unhappiness." (Golf)

There are many dangers for a party of dragon hunting specialists.

Even if he becomes the leader just because he's Golf-san's son, there's the risk of the party being annihilated if he has no talent for it.

"This is a field of work where ability has a great impact. Wanna have a go at it, Katia?" (Golf)

"Me? For me accounting or handling many people is impossible." (Katia)

Katia, who had finished checking her reward, arrived at our location. Katia was asked by Golf-san whether she wants to succeed the leadership of the 『Dragon Fighters』, but she immediately declines that.

"I feel more at ease working by myself." (Katia)

"Well, you can hunt dragons by yourself after all." (Golf)

In Katia's case, there's no need for her to especially join a party. That's probably why she occasionally participates as helper without joining a fixed party. However, she apparently doesn't refuse requests for help overly often. Thanks to that, she seems to be quite well-connected.

"As expected, even for me a dragon with an attribute is impossible." (Katia)

"Fool! Something like that is impossible for everyone except for a small fraction of magicians like Earl Baumeister-sama." (Golf)

"I guess so. I heard of his military achievements, but at first I thought that Earl-sama must have a wonderful social standing to go out of his way to join the hunt himself. But, after actually seeing his skill, I realized that he got admirable abilities. It looks like you won't be able to compete against Earl Baumeister-sama's party even if there are a hundred 『Dragon Fighters』." (Katia)

"Exactly."

It looks like we were very highly evaluated by Katia.

"I haven't fought at all, though." (Elise)

"Being able to hunt with a healer of your level is a true blessing for any adventurer, Elise. Going about it while feeling at ease that you won't die is a rare occurrence." (Katia)

Since Katia is usually adventuring by herself, she stated that she truly understands Elise's value.

"You can ignore any adventurer, who believes that you are not useful because you don't fight, since they will die sooner or later anyway, Elise. I don't think there's any such fool in the 『Dragon Fighters』, though."

Exactly because Katia is working as solo adventurer, she comprehends the value of logistical support such as healing magicians. She's a truly excellent adventurer after all. Though there's a slight gap between her appearance and her way of speaking.

"That's very true. Especially this time it was very welcome. But, Earl Baumeister-sama, you sure got it nice. Even after the hunt, in your mansion, you will be healed by such a beautiful wife. For someone like me only an old wife, whom I have seen for more than 30 years now, is waiting once I

go back home." (Golf)

Once Golf-san acts as if he's jealous of me who has Elise as wife, the other members of the 『Dragon Fighters』 simultaneously nod their heads.

"But, leader, aren't you always telling us how you're looking forward to the cooking prepared by your wife once you get back home?"

"I was treated to it before. Leader's wife is really good at cooking, you know?"

"Nothing can be done about her age, but in the past she was quite the beauty, wasn't she?"

At the same time several members followed-up, saying Golf-san's wife is not to be underestimated either.

"All of the older members have been taken care of by his wife."

"Leader, it's no good if you don't praise her for that."

"Shuddap!" (Golf)

Seemingly embarrassed, Golf-san shouted at the members who praised his wife, but seeing through him, they laughed.

"It seems like she's a very wonderful wife."

"I guess it's an undesirable but inseparable relationship we share? At least she won't complain to me who comes back home so rarely." (Golf)

Once his wife is praised by Elise, Golf-san isn't as annoyed as he makes others believe. Besides, for a person earning as much money as him, it's rare to have only one wife. Since he expressly said 『old wife』 and not 『old wives』, he likely has only her.

"I think I will go back home after buying nice presents for my family since we earned a lot of money this time." (Golf)

"Golf-san, you sure don't match your appearance, do you? Aren't you kind to your family?" (Katia)

Katia teased Golf-san for saying something that doesn't suit him at all.

"Things about me don't really matter. Katia, you should settle down soon." (Golf)

"Me? Or rather, are you saying that to me, a woman?" (Katia)

"You're also turning 20 soon, aren't you? For a female adventurer it's easy to miss the chance to marry. Even more so as you are a skilled adventurer." (Golf)

She doesn't look that old at all, so it's amazing since Katia is 19 years old, one year older than Katharina.

And, excellent female adventurers are often single without any plans for marriage or lovers.

"I'm still young..." (Katia)

"Even if you're saying that, your parents at home have scheduled formal marriage interviews for you, haven't they?" (Golf)

"That can't be true, I will ignore it. Anyways, I'm off with this." (Katia)

Katia bid farewell from us and the 『Dragon Fighters』, disappearing into the hustle and bustle of Baulburg.

I wonder whether she's going to return to the Eulenberg territory where her home is?

"We might meet Katia over there."

"It's possible, but..."

The matter with tunnel has the issue of the Knight Eulenberg territory.

In reality it's also a problem of all residents over there, but since there's no democracy in this world, Lord Eulenberg has no choice but to decide as feudal lord.

It shouldn't be related to Katia as a daughter of a resident, or perhaps I should say that she probably won't have any say in this.

"No matter how excellent as adventurer Katia might be, she's not allowed to talk about the tunnel's matter since that will be disrespectful towards the feudal lord." (Ina)

"Even before that, she has to be told about the detailed circumstances first, right?" (Elise)

Just as Elise and Ina say, matters about the tunnel haven't been conveyed to the fief's population at all.

It has been opened in their territory, but it seems the residents won't get close to it since Thomas' group has been stationed there as guards.

They are submissive to the authorities, or rather they don't want to approach something dangerous, or their farm work is more important to them.

"Wend, let's return to the mansion."

"Sure. We don't know when His Majesty is going to contact us." (Wendelin)

The dragon hunt ended one day earlier than planned, but we might receive some kind of order in regards to the tunnel in due time.

Fatigue has built up as well. Thus I guess it's best to return to the mansion early.

"Well, we are off then." (Wendelin)

"You were a big help this time. As expected of the dragon-slaying hero. I will waste a little bit more time...ah, right. Roderich, it's been a while, so let's go have a drink." (Golf)

"That sounds fine." (Roderich)

"There will be great side dishes, too. I'm curious just how a mere ronin, who worked as helper for the 『Dragon Fighters』, climbed his way up to the rank of household manager in the Earl Baumeister family." (Golf)

Roderich and Golf-san agreed to drink together for the evening. For the constantly busy Roderich to expressly free up some time means that he had been taken care of quite a bit by Golf-san in the past.

"Wendelin-san, let's go home as I think that it would be bad to bother those two?" (Katharina)

"Wend-sama, I'm hungry." (Wilma)

"Wilma-san, I have the image that you're always hungry, though." (Katharina)

"I have the image that you're always on a diet, Katharina." (Wilma)

"That's not true at all!" (Katharina)

Katharina insistently denied Wilma's claim.

"I want to eat a proper dinner today."

"True. I'm sure Dominique and the other will get all motivated and have the cooks show their abilities."

"That sounds nice. Also, we will be able to sleep on a bed tonight, won't we?"

Nowadays we got used to sleeping outdoors, but in the end it's a fact that you can sleep better atop a bed.

"Are you going to sleep together with Amalie-san tonight?" (Ina)

"...As if I would do that. I put priority on my wives." (Wendelin)

Damn Ina, don't ask something that's difficult to answer. However, indeed, Amalie-san will always be in the mansion now.

"Just kidding. Therese is probably bored, so let's invite her for dinner as well?" (Ina)

Bidding farewell from Roderich, we return to the mansion while noisily chatting along the way. Around three days later I received the message that the adventurers in charge of the other places successfully completed the dragon hunt, too. With this the danger that the residents of the Baumeister Earldom will be attacked by dragons has been drastically lowered. That means I properly accomplished my duty as feudal lord, but...



"In the end nothing about the Eulenberg territory has been settled." (Luise)

"I can't do anything about that, though." (Wendelin)

Just in case I explained to Luise that my hands are tied in this matter.