

Chapter 3 - Lisa the Blizzard

"Old man, the usual please." (Lisa)

"Sure. Been quite a while since the last time, hasn't it Lisa?"

"Well, I went to a slightly remote monster domain. I earned some good dough, but it's sure great to drink in a bar after camping outside for two months. At least there's a roof above my head." (Lisa)

"Rather, our place is run-down. Sorry for that."

"Who cares. It hasn't fallen apart so far." (Lisa)

"True that. Wait a moment, okay?"



I, who had returned to the capital after finishing my commissioned long-term job, asked a friend of mine working at the guild's headquarters to report my request completion and assess the loot, and then I burst into the bar I'm using often and ordered the usual menu from the owner. Since he puts out my preferred wine and dishes with me just saying 『the usual』, I favor this bar.

"So, how's life going?"

"Not bad. I had to suffer through two months of camping to get my hands on the missing materials, though." (Lisa)

I have gotten used to it already, but no matter how much my name is known in the trade, I'm still a woman.
Living in a tent for two months is tough.

"Thanks for waiting."

"Thanks, old man. Did anything interesting happen during the two months I was gone?" (Lisa)

The wine and the food is my main objective, but as adventurer, or rather as citizen of the Kingdom I have to at least know the latest news in the capital.

There was no one especially visiting the monster domain, where I did my job, to bring me up to date. And since a newspaper seller didn't come around either, I wasn't out of the loop in regards to the newest happenings in the capital.

Since information accumulates in a bar, it's the best to ask the old owner of this bar at such times.

"Let's see. I guess it's about Earl Baumeister-sama again? He came back to the capital after playing an active role in the Empire's civil war."

"Typical of him." (Lisa)

I also made a name for myself as magician, but I guess I lose out to Earl Baumeister. Well, it's just natural if he dishes out one achievement after other like that.

"There was also a quarrel over some tunnel. Ah! The daughter of the Knight Eulenberg House that caused the troubles was that Katia girl whom you regarded as troublesome."

"Hah? You're saying, Katia was the daughter of a noble?" (Lisa)

For that lass to stay silent about something so important to me, who taught her how to use that meager magic of her for hunting!

"Anyway, 『quarrel over some tunnel』, what's that about?" (Lisa)

"A tunnel connecting the Baumeister Earldom with the territory of that little lady called Katia or whatever was apparently discovered, but they argued about who's going to manage it."

The management of the tunnel would be difficult for Katia's home, the Eulenberg house. Hence their patron, the Margrave Breithilde House wanted to manage it themselves after giving the Eulenberg house an alternative territory.

At that point Katia, who had left the house as adventurer, objected and it was decided that the young noble to manage the tunnel together with her would be determined in a martial arts tournament, or so he said.

"What's that girl thinking?" (Lisa)

"Isn't that what you'd call pride as a noble, no matter how tiny they might be? And then..."

However, there wasn't a single young noble that could win against Katia in the tournament.

"Well, makes sense. She's strong enough to give me a hard time as well." (Lisa)

"So she's at a level where even you struggle, huh? Then I think this outcome was inevitable."

Among the booing by the audience because not one of the challenging nobles could win against Katia, the king suddenly showed up, and designated Earl Baumeister to take on Katia.

In accordance with that order, he easily defeated Katia.

The old man finished his explanation with the fact that the tunnel's management has been monopolized by the Earl Baumeister House as result.

"Hmmm. It's bad luck that I couldn't watch such a fun event. So, what happened to Katia?" (Lisa)

I suppose by now she has returned to her daily life of defeating wyverns after having the tunnel rights snatched away due to the loss against Earl Baumeister.

"That girl is really as reckless as ever. That's the reason why she can't get married." (Lisa)

"Pfft, you're the one saying that?"

"...Any complaints?" (Lisa)

I'm listening to the conversation with the owner, so don't butt in just because you're sitting at the next table!

Once I look closely, he seems to be an adventurer, but he got quite the nerve to mess around with me.

"Even though you're just a young greenhorn. What's it to you?" (Lisa)

I will let you speak your mind if you got something you want to say.
Depending on what you say, you might be no adventurer by tomorrow anymore, though.

"Hey, speak after looking at the other party! Lisa, this bar is already worn down. Please forgive him."

"Pfft, old man, it looks like that woman doesn't know. It looks like she stopped by the guild before coming here, but I wonder, didn't they tell her over there? They must have pitied her quite a bit, I guess."

Haaah?

What's this youngster blurting out there?

The folks at the guild have information they didn't tell me out of sympathy?

"I will tell you."

"Hey!!"

"She will hear about it soon anyway. I shall be kind and bring you up to date, Lisa the Blizzard-sama. Your little, beloved protegee, Katia married Earl Baumeister-sama. It's that, isn't it? Forming bonds between fellow nobles, right?"

"...Marriage? Katia has?" (Lisa)

"I would rather say Earl Baumeister-sama had been lenient since he let it end with only that much after she kicked up such a fuss. Isn't it great that she hasn't missed her chance to get married like a certain someone?"

"..." (Lisa)

Haaah?

That Katia got married?

Certainly, that girl had some rough parts about her, but she won't be troubled with basic womanly manners...I'm capable of that as well, but...her looks were very good, too.

However, she should have been worried seeing as there was no marriage partner in sight despite her becoming 20 years old very soon.

I didn't have such a guy either...that's the same even now, but...isn't that the moral code as fellow, unmarried adventurer colleagues?

"Katia, at least invite me to your wedding ceremony, damn it!" (Lisa)

"You were in a situation where a written invitation wouldn't reach you anyway, right?"

"Hya——hya hya! The guild member couldn't tell you that it's only you being still unmarried as he was scared, putting the bar's owner in the bind to follow up on him. If that ain't not hilarious, then I don't know what is."

"..." (Lisa)

"Oi! Stop it already..."

This newbie...come to think of it, wasn't he close to a veteran adventurer with whom I had a fight before?

I guess that's why he's making fun of me here.

Enough, I got it.

Even I have been long enough in this business to know what's going on.

I'm well aware that it's the end if I'm looked down upon.

Now then, it's time for punishment!

"You, aren't you hot?" (Lisa)

"Hah? Not really."

"I see, I see. So you feel really hot." (Lisa)

"What's it all of a sudden? I don't feel hot at all..."

"You know, there's no need to hold back. I will cool you down to your heart's content! Enjoy the chilling air as much as you like, okay!?" (Lisa)

I unleashed my prided 『Freeze』 spell, only targeting the table where the young male adventurer, who made fun of me, is sitting.

"My name is Lisa. Lisa the Blizzard. I don't know whether your work's going fine, but greenhorn, don't get cocky just because there's someone strong among your acquaintances! As you don't know your place...I'm going to freeze you!" (Lisa)

"Ugh, I can't move..."

"What a awfully ugly object of art. It looks like the base material is foul." (Lisa)

The piping hot stew, the other warm dishes and of course the ale he was drinking alongside the glass, all of them got frozen on top of that guy's table.

He was enclosed by ice together with the chair he's sitting on. He should be unable to move for a few hours until the ice melts.

Not freezing him in person is expression of my mercy.

"You bitch! Remove the ice!"

"Old man, that guy is going to reserve that seat for a while." (Lisa)

Who's going to listen to something someone like you got to say?

Regret talking down on me there just as you are.

After I toss several gold coins to the owner and throw a last glance at that guy, I leave my seat and the bar while ignoring the other guests who are causing an uproar due to the male adventurer suddenly having turned into an ice object.

There's the fact that it had become difficult to stay in the bar after causing such a mess, but I had also plenty of anger with unknown cause welling up from within.

"That Katia got married, you say!?! A junior who got married before me, the elder one? Shit! I have to vent this rage somewhere, huh? Yep, it's really pissing me off!" (Lisa)

When I unconsciously released 『Freeze』 into the sky, an unlucky bird got frozen and fell down. Since it's something that happens occasionally, I just keep walking without any care.

I returned to the inn, where I have booked a room on a long-term contract, after a long while, and sulked in bed.



"Wait, maybe it's a lie. Fake marriages might exist as well. First I will go check the situation!" (Lisa)



Having suddenly woken up in the dead of the night, I decided to go meet Katia, who got married, and her husband Earl Baumeister, and started to write a letter in a hurry.

Of course I'm going to depart to the Baumeister Earldom as soon as I have finished writing this letter!



"Hng...is it already time to get up? Ah right, I got married." (Katia)

Once I woke up in the morning, hubby was sleeping next to me.

Come to think of it, yesterday night we slept with each other.

Both of us are naked, but me immediately considering that as normal for a married couple is probably proof of me getting accustomed to a married life.

I won't say that I didn't have any interest in the nightly activities between men and women, but although I worried at first what I should do since I was new to it, I got used to it before long.

There seems to be a custom in normal noble houses to teach daughters about such things, but I didn't receive any such education since our house is somewhat special. But, once I left the house and hung out with fellow female adventurers, such talks naturally popped up as well.

I think those were somewhat helpful here.

"Ah right. I asked him to let me use his arm as pillow." (Katia)

I had often pointed out to me by other adventurers that my speech and conduct isn't very womanly unlike my looks, but even so, since I'm a woman as well so far as it goes, I had a little dream. I wanted to use the arm of a man as pillow. And when I asked hubby about it last night, he willingly agreed to my request. Even now hubby's arm was situated below my head. As expected, once I moved my head away since the arm had likely become numb, hubby woke up as well.

"Is it already time to get up? I see, this is what it means for an arm to fall asleep." (Wendelin)

"Hubby, sorry." (Katia)

"This much of a numbness will go away right away. As a matter of fact, it was my first time as well, an arm pillow." (Wendelin)

"Really? I thought that it would be something that Elise and the other had demanded already. Also, Ina is often reading such books." (Katia)

It's because Ina loves those kind of romantic novels after all. Accordingly, she's someone with a lot of knowledge about sex...ah, I guess it's the same for my fellow female adventurers, too. Even though all of them are unmarried and have no fiancés either, they are rather well informed about it. Considering it like that, I'd say it was knowledge out of books.

"Maybe they just didn't think of it until now?" (Wendelin)

"That might be it. Hubby, you're going to do some morning exercises, too?" (Katia)

"Yeah." (Wendelin)

My husband, an excellent magician, would likely not mind it at all even if he had to live as adventurer after losing his nobility. Rather, there are times where I think that the adventurer's life would be better for him as it's fairly easygoing. If he has time, he goes hunting while taking Elise and the others along. That's why he never missed his daily training. That part of him matches well with me, who is a through-and-through adventurer at heart.



"Close your eyes and empty your mind by not thinking anything for as long as you can. Don't move your body either." (Wendelin)

"..." (Katia)

We start the early morning practice at once. I'm receiving special magic training from hubby. He makes me focus my mind with a method, which had been thought up by hubby's deceased master and experienced small improvements by hubby. It makes me aware of the mana flow by letting it stream through the mana pathways.

I perform 『Meditation』 in combination with 『Zen Meditation』, but even that person, who told me how to use my mana at the adventurer's prep school, didn't teach me such a method.

"Somehow the mana is flowing smoothly. I don't think it's possible, but I feel like my mana has increased." (Katia)

Since I'm well aware of my own mana, I know that it has reached its limit long ago. That's something that shouldn't be possible, really.

"..." (Wendelin)

"Hubby?" (Katia)

"Even if it's just your imagination; as long as you become skilled at magic, it will be correct." (Wendelin)

"I guess you're right." (Katia)

Somehow hubby seems evasive?

I wonder whether there's something inconvenient about it?



Once we finished the morning practice, we head together to the bathroom to wash off our sweat. Hubby loves bathing. It seems he's often entering together with Elise and the others, too. As it looks like everyone got business outside today, it's only me who enters together with hubby, though.

"It sure is nice for this mansion to have a big bath." (Katia)

As appropriate for the Earl Baumeister House, the bathtub is huge, and the interior is luxurious and extravagant as well.

The soap, the shampoo to wash one's hair, and the conditioner are hubby's prototypes. Those seem to have spread, and now that I think of it, they are even sold in store in the capital.

Since they are very expensive, only nobles and rich people can buy those products, though.

Once we finished bathing, breakfast was next.

I had planned to prepare at least one dish as new wife, but there's no way that I can steal the work of the servants serving in the mansion.

Since Elise and the others are occasionally cooking as hobby, I suppose I will help out at least at that time.

We cook at the times when hubby is working as adventurer, but if it's prepared by me, it's usually a simple dish focusing on efficiency.

I have to gradually fix that part by learning from Elise and the others.
After all hubby is trying to come up with delicious outdoor dishes.

"Good morning, Katia-san." (Elise)

Once we entered the dining room, Elise greeted me as representative of everyone waiting there.

"Morning, Elise." (Katia)

"Katia-san, did you get used to this lifestyle by now?" (Elise)

"It's alright since it's not that different from my normal lifestyle that I would need to get used to it."
(Katia)

"Is that so?" (Elise)

As might be expected of hubby's first wife, Elise often pays attention to my needs, but my daily life isn't that hard.

Since hubby dislikes a gaudy lifestyle, it wasn't all that different from so far.

"Good job in training early on every morning." (Therese)

"Yo, Therese, huh? It's something like a daily habit that's necessary for an adventurer. I'm really sorry for making you wait." (Katia)

"Thou don't consider it being strange for me to be here, do thou?" (Therese)

"Eh? Just do as you like, Therese. Since hubby has given his permission, you can be here, no?"
(Katia)

"Hahaha! Thou are simple in a good way." (Therese)

"I don't really get complicated stuff anyway. Ah, I'm starving." (Katia)

"I will get it ready right away." (Amalie)

"Thanks, Amalie-san." (Katia)

It's not just Elise and the others. Amalie-san is waiting on the table while voluntarily wearing maid clothes. Since a little while ago, Therese has started to come everyday to the mansion to have a meal with us.

It seems like there are quite a lot of wives and essentially-wives, but there's no menacing atmosphere, and it's fun to be with a great number of people.

Ending up thinking something along those lines, I wonder whether I have changed in some way?
My husband is also somewhat unusual. But with how it is, I think we might match well.

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"Amalie-san, another serving."

"Yes." (Amalie)

"You're eating well, aren't you?"

It's been around two weeks since Katia has started to live in the Earl Baumeister residence. It looks like she has quite adopted to her current lifestyle.

"Gotten used to it or not; Katia always gave this impression since coming to this mansion."

"The wedding ceremony might have been the most nerve-wracking time in my life. I don't remember being overly nervous on other occasions." (Katia)

"That's really enviable. Even I have regularly times where I feel nervous." (Luise)

Even though she just got married at long last, I think that she might be nervous towards Elise and the others as new wife, and thus Luise and I believe that it might be fine like this.

"The bath and the food in this place is really awesome." (Katia)

Katia starts every day with a training session early in the morning, then takes a bath and finally eats breakfast.

While chatting happily with everyone during our meals, she eats well and never misses to ask for a second serving of rice.

It appears she started to eat every day rice after coming to this mansion. Apparently she likes the taste very much in combination with miso soup and similar.

"Katia, it's not at the level of Wilma, but you sure eat a lot. Is it because of your work as adventurer?" (Ina)

"For an adventurer their body is the foundation. You have to eat when you can." (Katia)

Upon Ina's question, Katia stopped her hands for a moment, and answered.

She moving around that much while consuming mana.

Since she's burning more calories than an ordinary person, it's only natural for her to eat a lot, I suppose.

Considering all that, she's not only not getting fat, Katia rather keeps a small, slender figure.

"It's alright since we're not going to run out of food all of a sudden."

"That's certainly true, but I'm simply hungry." (Katia)

While saying so, Katia continues eating the rice served by Amalie.

"Because the Eulenberg territory is centered around the production of wheat in addition to maroimo, bread was the staple food when I returned home. Sometimes I ate rice at my destination, but the one here is a lot more delicious." (Katia)

Given that there are plenty of warm water sources in the Baumeister Earldom, it's cut out for rice production.

The rice production is also prospering in the Breithilde Margraviate, but in the former Eulenberg territory a lot of agricultural land was situated on slopes.

If it were a Japanese area, they might have built terraced rice-fields, but since they have maroimo, they didn't grow rice.

"Since there's also plain ground in the new territory, I told pops and brother to begin rice cultivation as well this time." (Katia)

"Agriculture as *raison d'être*?" (Wilma)

"For Pops and brother, yes. However, it didn't suit me. It's not that I couldn't have done it stamina-wise, but the way of an adventurer life agreed with me more." (Katia)

Katia replied to Wilma.

Certainly, those two might be suited more for agriculture than noble customs.

"I have such parts, too." (Wilma)

"Wilma, you're good at hunting and fishing, after all." (Katia)

"That's why it's great that I could become Wend-sama's wife." (Wilma)

"Makes sense. Even though you became the wife of a high-ranking noble, you can hunt in monster domains. That really rocks." (Katia)

"I believe there aren't that many noble ladies considering it like that." (Katharina)

"Saying something like that; don't you like it quite a bit yourself as well, Katharina?" (Katia)

"It's not that I hate it, but in my case I only worked as adventurer for the sake of amassing funds for the revival of my house." (Katharina)

Katia, who can talk with anyone freely, adapted herself to the Earl Baumeister House in the blink of an eye.

Rather, she might be fitting in more than Katharina by now.

"Wendelin-san, anything wrong?" (Katharina)

"No, nothing." (Wendelin)

Katharina apparently suspected me of being about to think of her as someone with a slight communication disorder. In a hurry I denied that.

Around one month after the tunnel opening passed in such way, but today the Baumeister house was busy once again.

Other than Katia, Amalie-san had started living in the mention since a little while ago...somehow the black, slightly mature maid clothes, which I had designed, have become her favorite. She's

-serving at the table when I'm eating and making tea and hand-made sweets in her free time while wearing these often.

Since she's being officially treated as Head Maid for the time being, it's not like she's doing anything strange.

Elise and the others also left the work to Amalie-san during meal time inside the mansion.

As for the reason: Recently the number of maids hired in the mansion has grown. Apparently there are some among them who try to please me one way or another while burning with the ambition to become my lovers or concubines. The ones allowed to look after me are only those approved of by Amalie-san, the Head Maid, - namely only Dominique and Lea - or herself.

The maids have their own closed-off society. It appears to be a fairly complicated society with women of various ages who all have their own circumstances and dreams.

"Erwin-sama, how about a refill of tea?" (Lea)

"Please, Lea." (Erwin)

"As you wish." (Lea)

It was one of the maids, who can directly talk with me, Lea, but since she's Erw's concubine candidate, she only took care of Erw for now.

Come to think of it, she needs permission to go on a date instead of a formal marriage interview with Erw alone soon.

But, I'm in charge of such things, right?

Roderich...seems busy, so I have to do it after all?

However, it's strange for me to directly ask Lea 『How about going on a date with Erw?』, isn't it? This is a part where I'd like Haruka to do her best.

"It looks like Katia has safely adapted to the Earl Baumeister House..." (Therese)

"Umm...do you need something from me, Therese-san?" (Katharina)

"No, I feel like she is fitting in better than thou." (Therese)

"Ugh!" (Katharina)

Therese, who enjoyed an after-meal tea, told Katharina the cruel truth I couldn't voice out myself.

"Well, Katharina is like that...even I was on the slightly slower side in getting used to a group at first, thus I can't really talk about others overly much, or rather..." (Wendelin)

"Really?" (Therese)

"Yes, it's the truth." (Wendelin)

If pushed to say, I also incline towards having a communication disorder. I just hadn't the opportunity to mention it until now.

That's why I understand well how Katharina feels.

"That's right. Wendelin-san and I are a well-matching, married couple." (Katharina)

"Like man, like wife, huh?"

Occasionally her presence is rather weak...but I guess it's better to not mention this.

"Therese-san, was there something you want to tell Katia-san?"

"Yes. It's just the words of me who retired after losing in a political strife, but thou married into the Earl Baumeister House as someone from the Eulenberg House. Make sure to properly keep your own home in sight." (Therese)

Although the tunnel has been opened, the construction works around the entrances are still not finished. Nevertheless, the passage fee has been continuing to increase slowly.

There were many merchants who said that they will start business in the Baumeister Earldom in the middle of the opening. It's because it has become possible to transport goods through the tunnel at a cheap price.

At the same time, the development around the tunnel's entrances also advances. Rest areas, waiting spots, warehouses to store goods, and lodgings, restaurants, bars and amusement facilities catered towards the tunnel users started to pop up.

The tunnel entrance of the Baumeister Earldom's side has started the construction of inns and such since it's close to Paul's territory.

"The human traffic will increase. A part of them will ask about visiting that territory in order to procure maroimo that's having its production quantity increased in the Eulenberg territory. I received it from Wendelin, but that maroimo will become a fine special product." (Therese)

Maroimo itself isn't that rare anymore, but currently it's just that Eulenberg House that can cultivate such sweet maroimo.

It's a brand item that's being traded for high prices. In a little while it will bring large amounts of money to the Eulenberg territory.

"Having said that, it might be necessary to continue expanding the fields from now on and gather laborers. Considering the situation of thee home, yo will need to ask Wendelin for assistance at times. That's one of thee important tasks, Katia." (Therese)

"...Please explain it once more." (Katia)

"....." "Oh god..." "....."

It's not like Katia can be called an idiot.

An idiot won't be able to subjugate wyverns and flying dragons after all.

However, she's completely unsuited for such noble-like matters.

I'm sure it was the right choice for Katia to leave her home and aim to become an adventurer.

On the other hand it means that her looking for a husband to manage the tunnel would have ultimately ended up in failure.

"I said that it's necessary to pay attention to thee home and request Wendelin's assistance as necessary." (Therese)

"I see. But, what would you think of a wife who immediately demands various things from her husband? If it's funds, I just have to provide them myself." (Katia)

Katia's trait of being self-reliant was quite strong.

That's probably the reason why she became an adventurer, but as it's a good thing to be favored by her husband, a high-ranking noble, that trait might contradict with being a wife that relies on her husband in one way or another.

"Support doesn't include only money. Thou would want the roads connecting cities and neighboring villages to be maintained more, and since thou want temporary laborers to extend the maroimo fields while paying them daily wages, thou would want him to introduce people to thee. Even if thou were to immigrate new residents into the territory, it would be safer to have them introduced by the Earl Baumeister House. I heard that the Knight Baumeister House will support thee home as well, but they must also be busy with expanding the production of honey and honey liquor. It's important for thou to occasionally go to your family and ask what they need." (Therese)

"Oooh! That's an advice befitting a noble!"

"Certainly."

Those are very suitable suggestions.
I also ended up admiring Therese.

"What's the point of thou admiring it here, Wendelin?" (Therese)

"Isn't that the usual for Wend?" (Luise)

As expected of Luise.
She understands me well.

"Luise, you're the same as usual as well. In short, it's not particularly bad for a wife to demand something from her husband. Otherwise the situation won't improve. If you just say that thou would like him to buy thou an expensive, jewel-laden dress, thou will be just called foolish woman, though." (Therese)

Is that a dis against Anita who's staying at the Margrave Breithilde House?
Once I casually look at Ina and Luise, they seem to think the same thing as I.
They looked as if they felt like running away.

"It's fine to ask for an opportune birthday present. There are many good noble wives who are skilled at pleading." (Therese)

I see.

Husband and wife are man and woman, so it's sometimes necessary for the wife to casually ask for things to make the man think that he should give her some present.

"No matter whether as wife or woman, it's the end once the man thinks 『I don't want to give this woman even a single handkerchief!』." (Therese)

Certainly, even if it might be a political marriage; if the relationship of the married couple gets so bad, the political marriage would seem pointless.

"It was very educational."