

Chapter 4 - Sunglasses

"I just thought of it, but..."

"What is it, dear?"

All of a sudden I thought of a certain something during our usual breakfast time. And Elise asked me what it was about.

"I have become a teacher, albeit a temporary one, haven't I?" (Wendelin)

"That's correct. What about it?"

Apparently not understanding what I want to say, Ina also joins the conversation.

"I'm afraid to say, but I'm still young for a teacher."

"Is that so? Isn't it alright as long as you can use magic?"

"Luise, you're right that you can't become a teacher unless you can use magic, but you can't be a teacher just by being able to use magic either, I'm sure."

"What? A complicated topic? Then I'm out." (Luise)

Luise turns her attention back to her breakfast.

Her appetite seems to have steadily grown, and now she's eating a lot more than before her pregnancy.

That's why she focuses on her food rather than listening to my incomprehensible talk.

Considering all that, her figure doesn't really change, no matter how much she eats.

"In other words, you mean that dignity as a teacher is indispensable?"

"Yes, that's exactly it!"

Katharina has apparently understood my thinking.

Teacher is written as living before.^[efn_note]The kanji 先生 (teacher/sensei) consists of 先 (previous/before) and 生 (life). In the past it also meant "previous existence."^[/efn_note]

It's normal for elderly people to teach. I always believe that something similar to dignity, which comes from living for a long time, is more necessary for a teacher than knowledge and experience.

"Wendelin-san, it's going to take time for you to become like Doushi-sama and Teacher. That won't be in time for the period of your current temporary teacher position." (Katharina)

"Wend-sama, you can't actually acquire that unless you grow old." (Wilma)

Certainly, it's just as Katharina and Wilma say. It requires a suitable age for me to emit dignity.

"You're definitely correct there, but there's a method to resolve this issue to an extent." (Wendelin)

"Such a convenient method actually existed? Dignity is needed for a rule as well, isn't it? Consequently, young successors must consider it difficult in various ways. There's the option of having a father, grandfather, and elderly blood relatives act as guardians, but using that method also bears the danger of being considered as a puppet." (Therese)

Therese, who has already reached the point of living in our mansion, says while implicitly asking, 『Is there really such a handy method?』.

"Yes, there is."

"I see. So what kind of method is it?"

"Glasses!"

Right, it's glasses.

Glasses are a strange item.

By just wearing them, the wearer ends up looking as if their intelligence has gone up by a good chunk, and the glasses give one the impression of being diligent.

Doesn't it feel like a school teacher will teach you very skilfully by only wearing glasses?

Me being a young teacher is a fact I can't hide.

However, if I carry out my lecture while wearing glasses, my level of dignity and seriousness will rise.

In my previous life and in my current one, I didn't wear glasses as my eyesight is one of the things I can be proud of.

It's an item I don't need normally, but I believe it will have a tremendous effect if I buy fake glasses and wear them during my lectures.

"With that said, I'm going to search for glasses today." (Wendelin)

"Have a good day."

"..."

I wonder what it is?

Elise's attitude feels slightly colder than usual.

Is she possibly fed up with me?

"Ina, you think so as well, don't you?" (Wendelin)

"Well, you're free to do as you like, Wend."

"..."

Huh?

Even Ina's attitude is somewhat chilly.

"Umm, Luise-san?"

"I don't quite get the evaluation that you'll be diligent by wearing glasses." (Luise)

"Won't I look serious with them?"

"Not at all. I'd think, 『Ah, a rich guy』." (Luise)

"..."

So that's it.

The assessment of glasses is completely different in this world compared to my previous one.

Poor people aren't able to wear glasses even if they have bad eyesight.

That's why glasses are labeled as something bought by rich people, and don't give the impression of being diligent or intelligent.

This was a huge miscalculation.

"Anyway, I'm going to buy glasses." (Wendelin)

"Wend, do you have a bad eyesight?"

"Not, not at all."

My eyes are very good, but there's no law that I mustn't wear glasses if I don't have a bad eyesight, I think.

I have plenty of money to buy a pair, too.

"Well, if you want glasses, it's fine..."

Ina pulls a doubtful face, but if I wear glasses suitable for a teacher, I'm sure that the students will regard me as a dignified, wonderful teacher.

For that reason, we went out to an optician in the capital after I finished my lecture in the afternoon.



"There's the optician's store."

"It sure looks quite sophisticated, hubby." (Katia)

"Well, only rich people can buy the merchandise here. But, you see, isn't it a waste of money seeing as you don't have a bad eyesight?"

Today Erw is accompanying us. Joining the group consisting of me, Katia and Wilma, the usual school team, we stand in front of the capital's optician.

Glasses are so expensive that only rich people can buy them. I hear that this optician runs a well-established store.

Being told so, I must admit that the store's design certainly got a high-class vibe.

But, as the number of people buying glasses seems to be low, just as expected, the store feels compact and cosy.

There's probably no particular need to have an overly large store.

"I suppose, there's only few customers."

It's not like the eyesight of humans as a whole is deteriorating like in my previous world. Since there are no TVs, PCs, cell phones, and smartphones, people here don't need glasses just because of a slightly bad eyesight, and even if they need them, they can't buy a pair unless they got enough money.

The market scale might be rather narrow.

I can only wonder, 『Won't they have troubles to live normally if they can't buy glasses despite having a bad eyesight?』, though.

"Well then, let's go in."

"Welcome."

Once we enter the store, a middle-aged man, who seems to be the shopkeeper, greets us.

"Is it a request for glasses?"

"Yes."

I answer with an arrogant tone, but since there are many situations where the other party will instead become confused if you don't speak like that once you've become an Earl, I can't help it. Since I had been kowtowing to the clients and my superiors in my previous life, it's difficult to get used to this mannerism.

It's a frightening habit in a certain sense, seeing how I had been a salaryman for merely three years.

"Umm...you're Earl Baumeister-sama, aren't you?"

"Indeed."

"I was right after all! Agnes has been indebted to you. Hey, Agnes!"

Oh my god, this optician's store is the home of the class president character, Agnes, whom I'm currently teaching magic.

Given that she's a glass-wearing girl, I thought that it might be possible, but since I believed that there are a lot more opticians in the capital, I definitely hadn't expected to run into her here.

"What's wrong, Dad? Ah! Teacher! Hello." (Agnes)

Appearing from inside the store, Agnes is still wearing the same robe as she has worn at the prep school.

Since she has a serious character, just as her class president look suggests, she likely doesn't miss out on practicing magic at home either.

"Teacher, do you have a bad eyesight as well?"

She seems to think that I have the same issue as she has herself.

"No, ultimately it's just for ensuring dignity." (Wendelin)

"Uhh...what do you mean?" (Agness)

Agnes tilts her head in confusion upon my explanation.

"Wend, don't get a novice lady mixed up in your weird common sense...What he means..." (Erwin)

Erw explains that I'm looking for glasses to obtain the dignity necessary for a teacher.

"I don't get the meaning behind it either, but it's something about looking intelligent and emitting dignity if you wear glasses, or such?" (Erwin)

"Ah, I see...there are many among the professors at the academy, and the appointed noble gentlemen, who always examine documents very carefully, who wear glasses."

Probably because they are only looking at books and documents, they have a tendency for their eyesight to worsen. Moreover, since children often take over their parent's occupation in this world, there are many noble houses and technocratic classes that wear glasses across many generations. That's why bespectacled people might naturally look intellectual, Agnes replied.



Exactly because Agnes is the daughter of an optician, she seems to hold the same values as I do. In Erw's case...well, it's likely because there's few glass-wearers in the countryside. It doesn't look like he can actually grasp the idea behind it.

"You see...that's why I will be more teacher-like by wearing glasses." (Wendelin)

"Or rather, is it going to be alright with such an impromptu measure?"

"Wilma, I don't get it at all, though." (Katia)

"Don't ask me, I don't understand it either." (Wilma)

Erw seems to feel doubtful about dignity appearing all of a sudden by something at the level of putting on glasses.

As Katia and Wilma don't seem to know how to answer either, both are puzzled.

"Teacher!" (Agnes)

"What's up, Agnes?"

"Teacher, I think it's fine for you to be more confident. Even though you're not that much older than us, you have been teaching us magic in a way that is much easier to understand than any other teacher that has come to our class so far."

"Agnes..."

"Teacher, you don't need decorative glasses! You're a wonderful teacher even without wearing glasses." (Agnes)

"Thanks!"

I'm happy.

The day before the lecture, I prepared by repeatedly reading through Master's book, matching his points with my theories as reference, and creating class notes, while cutting around two hours of my sleeping time.

Those efforts have been properly recognized.

A cute schoolgirl did so.

I would be happy about a male student doing the same too, but it being a female student, and a cute one at that, doubles my happiness.

Even if I say so myself, I do think that I have a calculating character, though.

"You're right! Glasses are completely unnecessary to a teacher!"

"Haven't I been saying the same before...?" (Erwin)

Erwin says something, but I can't hear.

Currently I'm going to ignore the opinion of a dude.

"Yes! Even without wearing glasses, you're a superb teacher!" (Agnes)

"Thanks, Agnes!"

"Teacher!"

Agnes and I take each other's hands, and continue to share the joy.

"Hubby..."

But, my robe is pulled immediately, returning me to reality.

The perpetrator is Katia.

"Doesn't the father of that girl look somewhat pitiful?"

"No, I'm grateful for you taking care of Agnes. Even if I can't sell any glasses, I won't mind at all."

Even though he says so, he's obviously disappointed, so I end up feeling sorry towards Agnes'

father.

"...I will buy colored glasses to be used for hunting and fishing then."

"Colored glasses? I hear for the first time of such merchandise."

As expected, not buying anything and just feeling deeply moved inside a store will affect my reputation as Earl Baumeister.

Hence I try to buy sunglasses that can be used during hunts and fishing.

Hunting beneath direct sunlight during the day is fairly tough.

It looks like there are every year adventurers that suffer embarrassing defeats against wild animals and monsters after being blinded by sun rays.

Given that it's technically difficult...to use shaded lenses blocking the sunlight, even sunglasses should be plenty useful here. ...I try to order that, but Agnes' father says that he has never heard of such an item.

"There are no colored lenses...?"

"Yes, it would be difficult to see with them."

"No, there are actually cases where it becomes easier to see by adding a color to glasses."

I devotedly explain the theory behind sunglasses and shaded lenses to Agnes' father.

Because they reduce the radiance of the sun by blocking out excess light, it becomes easier to look at things, I tell him.

"You add a color to the lenses for that reason? I think it's possible to realize, but...I have to ask the workshop first."

Her father leads us to the glasses workshop located in the neighborhood of the store.

It's wrong to look down on them as being just glasses.

Since glasses are a cluster of various high technologies, the optician's store employs a specialized workshop.

Furthermore, the workshop's owner is a relative of Agnes.

"Our family has started to run an optician's store and a glasses workshop after falling out of nobility. Our techniques are a secret. Well, there are various other opticians around as well, though."

The family manages the store and workshop. They appear to prevent the leaking of their techniques by employing employees and craftsmen from the same families for generations.

It's a feat impossible with magic tools, but it often is like that with normal handicraft.

Because of that, Agnes' family can put food on the table, but on the other hand, a newcomer won't be able to get a job in a glasses workshop all of a sudden.

Since it's difficult to aspire to make glasses from scratch without finding employment in that field, it inevitably leads to a few opticians and workshops monopolizing the market.

Glasses are a merchandise with a high profit ratio, but since you can't sell that many of them in proportion to their high price, not monopolizing the market will lead to becoming unable to live from it, too.

"Adding color to the lens?"

"Umm...I mean like this."

I add a color to an already completed lens with magic.
The lens is made out of glass, meaning the lens workshop is also a glass workshop.
Borrowing the dyes that will be applied on glass, I finish a sunglass-like lens with magic.

"Given that it's not like I have a bad eyesight, it's not necessary to add any degrees to the lens, thus a thin layer will do..."

Planing the finished lens with magic, I complete it for the time being by suitably matching the lens with a glasses frame.
Once I put it on as a test, my sight becomes sunglass-like...well, I guess that's only natural.

"I see. That means there will also be demand by people with good eyes. Understood. Since we can't sell it as merchandise in this state, we will adjust it from our side."



Several days later — the adjusted and improved sunglasses are very easy to put on. Although they are fake glasses, the visibility has also improved substantially.
I guess, you can expect nothing less from a glasses workshop possessing the necessary techniques.
My impromptu creation magic seems to have limits, after all.

"Let's go hunting with these at once."

We pay the price for the sunglasses to Agnes' father, and immediately depart to hunt on the plains around the capital.

"Oohh! It's not as dazzling!"

Not being dazzled by the bright sunlight on the plains, I succeed in boosting my hunting results.
It was a suggestion I came up with on the spot, but thanks to the glasses workshop's skilled techniques, the sunglasses' practical use is outstanding.

"I see, it does have its advantage. I wonder whether I should order a pair as well?"

Erw admires the sunglasses that block the excessive, direct sunlight.

"I think I want a pair as well."

"Being able to reduce the brightness sure is nice. If my movements are delayed at the critical moment because of the sunlight, I'll be troubled. However, its use is limited, isn't it?"

As Wilma and Katia seem to be interested as well, we buy several sunglasses to test them out, and

return home. The girls decided to try putting them on as soon as possible, too.



"It doesn't suit you..."

"Luise, isn't that completely unrelated to its practical use?"

Katia expresses her dissatisfaction with Luise's frank comment. But sure, sunglasses don't look good on women unless they are adults. Katia looks like this while being almost 20 years old, but because of her cute appearance, the sunglasses don't suit her at all.

"Shouldn't thou order a frame that fits with thou?"

You might say that it's to be expected, but Therese's sunglasses fit her very nicely. It gives her the feel of a mature woman.



"Therese-san, it suits you." (Elise) (format: blue)

"Elise, I think they will fit thou as well once thou become a bit older." (Therese) (format: red)

That's what Therese says, but is it only me who thinks that sunglasses won't fit Elise even after she becomes older?

"Ina-san, they look good on you." (Katharina)

"The same back to you, Katharina." (Ina)

Ina and Katharina feel like the sunglasses look good on them, and I must say, it's true.

"Lisa-san, for you they might be unsuitable unless you return to your former make-up and outfit. I'm a lost case in that regard, too."

Sunglasses appear to not match well with Amalie-san.
She says that Lisa shouldn't put them on in her current state.

"Haruka-san...scary ~ssu..."

"It looks like I'm not suited for them either."

Haruka, who's at the mansion by chance, ends up scaring Erw with her sunglass look, and thus takes them off while sighing.
Everyone played around with the sunglasses like that, but...

"Wend-sama, everyone, those are for blocking the direct sunlight during hunting and fishing for everyone?"

"Come to think of it, that was the reason for getting them." (Wendelin)

Wilma calmly points out the real purpose of the sunglasses, but it can't be helped since it often happens that newly produced items are used in a way different from what the creator has intended. Well, I mean, it's fine as long as it's fun.

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"Teacher, how were the colored glasses you bought the other day?" (Agnes)

Agnes asks about the sunglasses in the noon several days later after class has ended. She has probably been asked by her father to ask about it.

"I used them during fishing, and it was nice for the sunlight's reflection off the water's surface to not

be so dazzling." (Wendelin)

"Really? I'm glad to hear that." (Agnes)

I have gotten used to using the sunglasses as needed during hunting and fishing. They aren't as cheap as the ones you can buy from Japan's mass marketers, but their feel when wearing them isn't bad, seeing how they are close to an order-made item.

"Any adjustments will be for free, so please come to the store whenever you need." (Agnes)

The adjustment of glasses is for free?
It's almost like Megane Super. [efn_note]Megane Super, a optician chain in Japan[/efn_note]

"It's also great that they don't really slide down over time."

"My home has a good reputation for its frame production techniques."

Once I praised the frame, Agnes looked happy, probably because it's an item produced and sold at her home.

"About that...it looks like Dad actually has a request."

"Request?"

"Yes."

The request is about the sunglasses they made for me. He'd like to mass produce and sell those for adventurers.

"Since they don't need any eyesight strength unlike normal glasses, we can produce them at a lower price as the manufacturing of the lenses doesn't take much effort, he says."

In addition, he apparently wants to sell the sunglasses to hunters, fishers, and wealthy people focused around nobles, who hunt and fish as a hobby.

"I don't really mind."

"Is it really okay?"

I just told them to color the lenses, and left the practical implementation to Agnes' home. I would feel bad about collecting a patent fee for something at that level.

"I don't mind in particular."

"Thank you very much, teacher!"



Once I gave my permission, the rest of the talks went fast.

Agnes' home produced and put up the sunglasses for sale, and many customers bought them for their novelty and utility.

Adventurers, hunters, fishers, and nobles keep buying sunglasses. And the number of people ordering sunglasses with diopter strength among the nobles, who wore normal glasses so far, increased as well.

"We were able to draw an unexpected demand with the sunglasses. Thank you."

Agnes's father thanks me while delivering several sunglasses to me.

"You can also make sunglasses with eyesight strength, huh?"

"Yes, it's possible with our secret lens polishing technique. But, the polishing takes an overwhelming amount of time. ...Oh, I get it, 『sunglasses』 because the colored glasses block the sun's light, eh? It's a good name."

The time it takes to polish the lenses is also the reason for glasses to be so expensive.

Incidentally, I ended up dubbing the colored glasses as sunglasses.

Even though I just unconsciously called them sunglasses as I did in my previous life.

"As long as an adjustment of the strength is unnecessary, we can sell them very cheaply."

"You could sell them as a fashion item as well then, no?"

"It would involve new frame designs, but...it will be possible with our manufacturing techniques. We will try to make a few as a test."

Afterwards, Agnes' home succeeded in drastically increasing their sales thanks to the sunglasses and fashion glasses.

The other glasses workshops, which possessed similar techniques, immediately imitated them, but since the demand for glasses had gone up as a whole, their sales didn't go down.

However, it's not like they were absolutely no problems either.



"Teacher, recently scary people often come to buy sunglasses." (Agnes)

"Scary people?"

"Yes, scary people with large bodies."

According to Agnes, only tall, muscular men with big bodies keep buying large amounts of sunglasses.

"(Don't tell me...something like the mafia?)"

Once I observe the optician's store front after school since I'm slightly curious, I certainly spot muscular, gigantic men there.

They weren't mafia...they are my acquaintances and people with worse characters than the mafia in a certain way.

"Yo, Earl Baumeister. We're going hunting next, but the sunglasses of this place have the reputation to block the sunlight's brightness. Ah, it was your idea, wasn't it Earl Baumeister?"

Minister Edgar has come here to shop while bringing his appointed noble followers of the military faction along.

I have heard rumors that the appointed nobles of the military camp often hunt as a pastime, but they have likely come here to buy sunglasses every day.

Certainly, at a glance, they look scary to anyone.

"You were teaching magic at the adventurer's prep school, weren't you? Seeing as you have a lot of opportunities to come to the capital now, let's go hunting together next time."

Once he buys his sunglasses and says what he wants to say, Minister Edgar leaves us.

"Agnes, it's only natural for you to be frightened since they are people protecting the county from invasions and civil war."

"I see. That was very enlightening, teacher."

Correct, that's why you mustn't mind them even if they look like mafia.

Once you actually talk with them, they aren't such bad people either.

"However, sunglasses are surprisingly popular."

"That's true."

I felt that it was good for the optician's sales to have gone up, but the effect caused surprisingly big waves at places that were out of my hands and knowledge.

* * *

"Say, Agnes."

"What is it, Dad?"

"Are you going to marry Earl Baumeister-sama in the future?"

"Eh!? Why would you ask that? Earl Baumeister-sama is our teacher."

Due to Dad's unexpected question, I felt my face getting hot.

I'm pretty sure that it must look pretty red about now, but I object without minding it.

"I mean, he helped us with our business. And since you're cute, I thought that such an option exists as well..."

"No, not at all! Teacher's wives are all pretty, after all!"

I got worked up against my better judgment and strongly refuted, but in reality I have started to secretly think about the possibility if a chance presents itself. Right now we have a relationship of teacher and student, but someday...I wonder whether it would be better for me to be a bit more assertive? It's inevitable for me to be happy about being able to meet teacher at the prep school tomorrow.

* * *

"Hey, son-in-law-dono."

"Yes, what might it be?"

After today's lesson came to an end, I went to meet with Cardinal Hohenheim with whom I occasionally had lunch, but I heard an unexpected complaint from him.

"The appointed nobles of the military faction around Minister Edgar and Earl Armstrong have been bragging while wearing new glasses in the royal palace, but they were told by His Majesty that it's scary and eerie. As far as I have heard, those are glasses invented by you..."

"Eh? You're saying that's my fault?"

"Now that you mention it, I guess it's weird to complain to you about it..."

"Please ban the wearing of sunglasses in the castle."

"I suppose that would be the quickest solution."

Since then it was strictly forbidden to wear sunglasses in the royal castle. It was a secret that couldn't be disclosed that the biggest reason for that ban was the successive appearance of people that could be mistaken as mafia despite being nobles.