

Chapter 3 - Life at the Prep School

"Klimt, you're definitely a son of that Earl Armstrong House, right?"

"What are you asking at this point!?"

"And you're not getting an allowance from your parents?"

"I turned it down!"

"You sure went all-in there. But, I have to say, this room really has nothing in it."

One week after prep school has started, I've finally grown accustomed to the lessons. Today my new friend Bruno has come to visit me. But, he's immediately surprised after seeing how my room looks. The place I'm currently boarding at is the attic of Mrs. Walkt's small home. She's an old lady living by herself near the prep school.

The room only contains a board I'm using instead of a bed, several books about magic which I've put on a beam, my wand, several sets of underwear and robes, and a small wooden box filled with my personal belongings.

For a change, Bruno, who's remained completely calm and collected during the entire week, is astonished by my livelihood, which you wouldn't expect from a noble's child at all!

"You refused an allowance?"

"That's only natural!"

"You call that only natural...?"

There would be no point in me leaving home to experience the outside world if I were to receive a high allowance from my parents! The whole point in me leaving home was to experience the life of commoners. I even went as far as deliberately choosing this lodging for being the cheapest I could get!

I'm frugally using the pocket money I've saved up until leaving home, so I think it's about time for me to earn some money by hunting. Bruno's visit today also has the objective for us to talk about this.

"I think it'd have been fine if you had handled it a bit more flexibly and obediently accepted the allowance. It's also important to live while not feeling bad about receiving help from others."

"That'd be boring then."

"Yeah, I expected you to say that, Klimt. You give people a much better impression than those guys."

There are noble youths who are studying at the prep school like me. However, the higher the status of their families, the more extravagant their lives are, through getting high allowances from their parents and commuting from home, despite having finally come to the outside world. I have problems understanding what's so fun about living like a noble in the outside world!

Of course the children of poor nobles act differently, though.

"Anyway, let's talk about hunting. The capital's prep school has quite a few limitations in regard to that."

"Does it?"

"Well, the capital is a city after all."

If this place were to be out in the provinces, it'd have been no issue for everyone to hunt as they please as long as they didn't enter a monster domain until reaching adulthood. The countryside has lots of nature, and there are many places with plenty of game, while having only few people that hunt.

But, around the capital, places where you can hunt keep decreasing because the city proceeds to expand. Since the city has a big population, many citizens, and not just adventurers, make a living by hunting and gathering. If you add the prep school students, who aim to earn their living expenses by hunting, to this, it'd make the competition quite intense, Bruno explains to me.

"For this reason, it looks like students are only allowed to hunt twice a week."

"That's a harsh condition."

Since I want to refrain from using my savings as much as possible, I'd like to earn my living expenses for this year by myself.

"What are you going to do, Bruno?"

"Seeing how I don't have as much leeway as you do, Klimt, I'll pick up various part-time jobs by relying on my connections. Since some places also told me that they'd like me to refer people to them, I can introduce you as well, if you want."

"Oohh! As expected of my friend! Please, introduce me by all means!"

Now that I've finally left home, I want to experience many things! It had totally escaped me that I would be able to do jobs other than hunting.

"What kind of work is it?"

"Various kinds. Seeing how we can only go hunting twice a week, I think you can view it as covering for the rest with short term or day work all over the place."

"That sounds fun."

"Fun, huh...? Klimt, you sure have a positive outlook on everything."

"That's my only selling point!"

"Okay, let's immediately start working from tomorrow afternoon."

With this decision, I'd challenge earning money by working for the first time in my life.

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"Sir, I've brought him with me."

"Sorry for the trouble, Bruno. Ooohh! This guy looks like he's got some strength. Man, I'm glad that I've asked for your help, Bruno."

In the afternoon of the next day, Bruno and I head to the first workplace. It's a construction site where a building is being erected right now. The tanned, muscular foreman, who's managing the place by himself, seems to be Bruno's acquaintance.

"Bruno, you know him?"

"Well he's a mister living close to my home. He's also friends with my parents."

"I've known Bruno since he's been a little twerp. You need quite a bit of strength and stamina since it's this kind of work, but lad, you sure got a nice body build. Looks like I can expect quite a bit from you."

Physical work definitely plays into my cards, but leaving myself aside, is Bruno going to be alright? I'm worried about him since he isn't all that strong, and his stamina is average at best, too.

"Bruno, you're..."

"Don't worry. I've got this covered with magic..."

"Oo——ii! Bring this block up to the to——oop!"

"Well then, you lads are up."

The work at the construction site starts right away. I've heard that they're going to build a three-story building made out of stone. A scaffolding has been erected, and people pass the building stones, which are going to be used at the top, upwards, but setting me as someone with enough muscles aside, I'm still worried about the feeble Bruno.

"Here you go."

"Oohh! No matter how often I watch it, magic is quite handy."

"Even heavy stones take but an instant with Bruno's magic, yep."

"See, I'm going to be fine."

"Yeah..."

Come to think of it, I've completely forgotten what magic can do. Even weak magicians can freely transport heavy objects as long as they can use 『Telekinesis』.

Bruno lifts up a stone as heavy as himself up to a height of around ten meters with 『Telekinesis』, and skilfully puts it down on top, following the instructions of the guy up there.

"It's not off or anything?"

"No, you placed it down perfectly."

"Bruno, your control is awesome."

He's right. My precision in magic is unable to hold a candle to Bruno's. I guess I've worried over nothing here.

"Lad, you can't use magic like that?"

"I'm bad at this type of magic."

『Telekinesis』 belongs in the category of emission-based spells. Besides, even if I could use it, I'd quickly run out of mana anyway.

"Don't mind it. You've been born with such a nice body. So might as well make best use out of it."

"You're completely right!"

My merit is this trained, muscular body. I just need to work while capitalizing on it.

"Please bring a building stone over here, too."

"Sure thing!"

I quickly pick up a stone placed on a stash of stones at the edge of the construction site, and climb upwards while using the scaffolding. Stones that weigh only this much pose no problem for me, even without using magic!

Since my father and brother have repeatedly told me to not be negligent in training my body, this kind of work is also convenient for me.

"It's not heavy, lad? Usually a stone like this is carried by at least two people..."

"It's not that heavy. Where should I carry the next one?"

"Ah, sure...as long you're alright, it's all cool."

What's required of us young men is to do physical work like carrying heavy stuff around. Bruno used 『Telekinesis』, and I relied on my body. We worked until evening, resulting in me finishing my first job without a hitch.



"Wow, how neat of them to give us a bonus."

"In exchange, we've got to work for another three days over there."

"Isn't that fine? The students of the capital's prep school can't really earn much money through hunting. It means expanding a city too much has its own share of problems, too."

"Once we graduate from the prep school, we can move our base of operations to the outskirts, but..."

"Something like having to spend another year at school because you lack credits as a result of being forced to travel far would be even more pointless."

"That's certainly true. We've got no choice but to earn our expenses with short term jobs on the days where we can't hunt."

"Well, I've got plenty of connections, so no need to worry on that front."

"That's my friend Bruno for you!"

On the evening of the same day we are eating out in celebration of having received a higher wage than expected. Having said that, Bruno and I are poor fledglings of the prep school. We've chosen an old restaurant catering towards prep school students with cheap prices and big portions.

This place is also a restaurant Bruno has told me about. He's well connected and familiar with society to an astounding degree when compared to me. I can't believe that we are the same age at all. Having left home only recently, there's still a lot I must learn.

"Let's first have a toast. Of course, without alcohol."

That's inevitable seeing how we're still underage. In reality, many teenagers secretly drink alcohol, but this restaurant is often frequented by school staff, too. Given that it'd become troublesome if we were spotted drinking alcohol by teachers, we limit our toasting to fruit juice diluted with water for today. No need to get impatient since we're going to become adults in a year anyway.

""Cheers!""

After toasting we start on our large serving of stew, pieces of bread as big as our faces, and heaps of salad. It's not a menu that takes appearance into account like the dishes served back at my family's mansion, but the taste is fairly decent.

Above all, it's great that it's so cheap!

"Klimt, your work really stood out. Boss and everyone were really pleased with you, weren't they?"

"I want to get praised like you, if possible, though..."

Because Bruno could easily move heavy stuff with his 『Telekinesis』, he received raving reviews by the other construction workers. According to what I've heard, the construction seems to have fallen slightly behind schedule, but thanks to Bruno, they'll finish on time. The foreman and the others were very delighted.

"Everyone was grateful since you quickly carried stones around that would usually require several people. I mean, the other workers are quite advanced in age, after all..."

"I'm happy that things finished with me being of use, but still, I'd love to become able to use 『Telekinesis』 as well."

『Telekinesis』 is a emission-based spell that can be used easily even by magicians with a relatively low amount of mana. It's even described as the easiest spell among the emission-based ones. Seeing how I can't even use a spell like that, I'm definitely a dunce as a magician.

"Klimt, your mana is still growing, so you'll become capable of using it soon."

"It'd be great if you're right."

Certainly, my mana pool is still increasing. It's not unusual for some of my classmates to have already reached their growth limit, so I'm lucky when compared to them, I suppose.

But...

"At its current growth speed, it's questionable whether I'll be able to break through the elementary level even if my mana continues to increase until the age of 20."

If possible, I want to reach the intermediate level like Bruno.

"It's not said that it'll always continue at its current rate. You don't really need to worry about it so much, do you?"

"It's also possible that it'll increase slower than it is now, though. The growth might even stop tomorrow altogether."

"I'm sure it's going to be alright. Trust me." Bruno reassures me while tearing off a piece of bread and putting it into his mouth.

He appears to have a far more positive personality than I've thought. And, despite being slender, he

definitely eats well since he's a magician.

"In my eyes, it's you who I'm jealous of, Klimt. I'm putting quite a lot of effort into it, but my body doesn't want to build muscles at all. I wonder, what should I do to become as muscular as you?"

Bruno appears to be worried about his slender body and his height that's smaller than average. He touches my arm while looking envious.

"Is it the food? But then again, I eat plenty since I'm a magician. And yet my body remains thin."

"You've got no choice but to eat more and train your body."

My home, the Armstrong House, has been passing down methods on how to train your body as a family tradition, but in reality, those are used to not suffer an embarrassing defeat on the battlefield by forging the body to move well and react quickly.

It might be smarter of me to not mention that my body has become like this without me doing any particular training.

"I guess I might grow taller and improve my body build if I train for several years."

"I'm sure, you can."

In the end it means that even Bruno, who's talented as a magician, isn't completely worry-free either.

Today I've safely finished my first day of work. After wolfing down the bountiful meal, I went to sleep with a great feeling.

