

Chapter 159: Grayfia's new familiar

We arrived at the place surrounded by the familiar ash-colored dungeon walls. I observed the tunnels leading down. Some of them might be blocked.

Grayfia still skeptically looked at Gae Bolg.

I shrugged and headed deeper into the endless tunnel. Let's test the spear first.

A few minutes later, numerous footsteps reached me. I licked my lips. Two glowing red eyes peered out of the dark end of the tunnel. A black hound, whose muscular frame was over twice as big as a normal dog, bared its fangs at us. Sparks flew and fire swirled. It spat out a fireball.

I tried blocking it with a new spear. The moment the fireball touched Gae Bolg, it went *poof*. Simply vanished out of existence.

"I'm the bigger monster here," Rini growled and rushed at the hellhounds. One tackled her, sending her a few meters back. The second tackle failed as Rini's uppercut flung it far away. An all-out brawl broke out. Rini and the hounds' roars echoed in the hallway. Her swift punch easily covered one direction. Her gauntlets perfectly executed one-hit kills.

Rini was the biggest monster, alright. She tanked all the attacks with her custom-made maid outfit possessing physical and magical resistance.

"Asahi-kun, shouldn't we help Rini?!"

"She can handle it... Rini, leave one alive!"

As a guinea pig.

"Okay, Onii-san."

Rini finished the dozen-plus hounds in less than a minute. Stepping on the last one's head, she smiled at me. "Onii-san."

I didn't have to lean down to clean her face now. She *really* grew up. I healed her with my Life Element and patted her head, easing the fierceness in her eyes.

She closed her eyes with a soft smile. "Thanks, Onii-san."

"Grayfia, keep your eyes open," I said and stabbed the empty air above the hound. The spear turned into a crimson ray; its trajectory descended suddenly and vanished into the hound's back. The monster sprawled and stopped moving.

—You earned 266.66 XP from killing [Level 6 Hellhound]

Hellhound huh.

(My love, I finally revamped your status.)

'I'll check it later.'

"What... was that?" Grayfia muttered and crouched to observe the bloody hole on the monster's back. "Its heart is... crushed."

"As I said, this spear targets the heart."

"Even Biblical God will die without his heart... Doesn't that make you unbeatable?"

I shook my head. "There are people who can survive without their heart."

Ophis could easily regenerate the wounds. Great Red... nothing much was shown about that dragon's powers other than his power over dreams. Doesn't that make me his superior...?

(It does! We can kick his ass in his dreams!)

'Calm down. We'll hunt him later.'

Even if the guy is innocent as hell, the staggering amount of XP made murdering him worth it. His death will lead to Issei's death in the future, which... I don't mind. He can die for all I care.

Grayfia's shoulder dropped in dejection. "I lost..."

Rini kindly patted her Maid Senpai's head.

"Tomorrow's nap will be a good one."

Grayfia sighed and nodded. "I accept my loss... and I am not challenging you again."

"Coward."

"More monsters are coming." She skillfully changed the topic. "My Lord, let me take care of them."

I patted her head and brandished my spear. "Not yet."

With my new spear in hand, I dashed into the horde of hellhounds. All shapes of flames attacked me in an instant. A swing of Gae Bolg scattered the half. I ducked to dodge the rest. Still, one exploded in my face.

I swatted the fire and channeled my Life Element. An uncontrollable itch spread and then my face was as good as new.

This was the fastest way to level up the elements. Abuse them to their limits. Feeling a movement in my right, I turned. Two red orbs shone in the tunnel carved in the wall. A white-furred rabbit with a white crystal horn on its head peeked out.

Rabbit Monster?

I swiftly grabbed it by the ear and presented it before Rini.

"Onii-san?"

“Cute...” Nao muttered and shook her head. “It’s a monster?”

“Yep.”

Grayfia’s expression was calm. Too calm as if she was wearing... a mask. Her fingers clasped on her lap trembled. She forced her eyes off the struggling rabbit and began observing our flank.

She liked this rabbit and couldn’t bear to see its death, so she turned her back.

“Grayfia.”

“My Lord?”

“Take it. You can turn it into your familiar.”

“No need. It’s too weak.”

“Fine. Nao, kill it.”

“My Lord, no need to let her kill this creature,” Grayfia snatched the rabbit and flicked its head. “It’s a maid’s duty to follow her Master’s orders. I shall make it my familiar.”

Nao pressed a hand on her mouth to hide her smile. I chuckled and patted Grayfia’s back.

“You are a good maid indeed.”

Though I couldn’t see her face, her crimson ears were enough display of her embarrassment right now. She created a magic circle on the ground and proceeded with the ritual or whatnot. Rini and I traveled deeper, searching for a tunnel going straight into the next floor. I scouted one and as expected it was a dead end. We started randomly choosing the tunnels. Rini climbed out of another tunnel and patted the dust from her dress.

“It’s open, Onii-san.”

“Nice work.”

Rewarding her with some headpats, I waited for two Onee-sans.

Just a minute later, the two arrived. Grayfia sneakily glanced at the rabbit squeezed in Nao’s embrace. She took a liking to the rabbit.

I showed my back to Nao. “Get on, we are going down.”

“You don’t need to. I can go myself.”

“I love to spoil you.”

Nao sighed and climbed on my back. “Get moving.”

I chuckled and hopped inside, gliding my way down with Rini. Grayfia flew down without bothering to dirty her prized dress.

As soon as I landed, the wall crackled and more rabbit monsters came out. We were surrounded by fluffy bunnies in no time.

“Grayfia, close your eyes. You might not like what I do here.”

“For the last time, I am not attached to the bunny,” Grayfia sighed and launched into the air. “I’ll scout ahead.”

“Sure, we’ll finish it quickly.”

“Roger, Onii-san.”

My little rabbit smashed her gauntlets into the monster rabbit’s tiny frame.

“Gale Crusher.”

“Barrett.”

Her wind spell boosted Barrett. The spiraling flame bullet tore through the rabbits.

“Our timing was perfect... like we are a couple,” Nao muttered in disbelief.

“Coz, we are.”

“Hey, Asahi-kun. Have you thought about... marrying us?”

I threw another Barrett while answering with a nod, “I have.”

That was my intention from the start.

“I mean, not your desire to marry us, but how to proceed with the marriage ceremony.”

“I’ll take care of it.”

“You better, or all of them will swallow you.”

“Swallow me? What exactly will they swallow?”

“You—”

Grayfia returned like a gale and landed before me. “My Lord, I found this after I killed a hellhound.”

She held up white, sharp teeth like a dog canine.

“Is that hellhound’s fang?”

(The thing is...) Klyscha answered first. (Any monster killed by my love or linked partners won’t drop any loot. It’ll just turn into mana to boost your XP.)

‘That must be the reason for my faster growth in this world.’

(Yes.)

‘It’s better.’