

# Chapter One

A lot of men would have questioned my manliness if they knew that I was paying attention to anything other than the amazing view I had stumbled upon in the library, two very sexy women, their state of undress matching their great beauty, their limbs tangled in a beautiful tango. But in my defense, two glowing, floating sentences, invisible everyone except me, was an excellent reason for my distraction.

*[Successful Voyeur Activity: +100 Experience]*

*[Achievement: Patience. Wait two decades before gaining first experience point. +500 Experience, +10 Wisdom]*

Of course, it was difficult to understand its total magnitude without knowing my particular background. Not when more than ninety percent of the population had the ability to gain discrete experience points which then turned into sudden boosts of power, greatly increasing their capabilities, while the remaining few had to do it the hard way, studying tirelessly to enhance their abilities. Melius, these people had been called, increasing their skills and abilities through the points they have collected through killing monsters.

Nobody knew why something like that was possible. Some claimed it was a gift from gods, others theorized it was somehow linked to endless hordes of monsters that turned otherwise beautiful planes into blackened seas of death, interrupted only by occasional town or city. Some fringe religions even claimed that it was somehow linked to Demon Kings, and every single Melius was cursed by the demons -not a popular theory considering the only reason that people were still alive against the monsters was the Melia, especially the elite warriors that had been lucky enough to have a high enough level cap. Everyone had a different level cap, with no way of learning it before hitting to a point, causing a Melius unable to register an experience point gain.

That level cap neatly tied into my status as a disabled Melius. Or my supposed status, invalidated by the floating letters in front of me.

As the firstborn of a noble family, I was tested when I was five, revealing that, unsurprisingly, I was a Melius. It wasn't entirely impossible for a noble family to have an Invalid child, but it was not expected by default. But things had taken an unexpected turn when I killed a small monster that had been captured by our family hunters, only to receive no experience. It caused a huge commotion. Repeated tries, or experiments with different monsters, changed nothing. No matter the creature, no matter the circumstances, I never gained a single experience point.

Experts, after making my father spend endless riches, deduced that I was the most unlucky Melius ever, born with a level cap of 1, meaning I would never learn a Skill, or earn a Stat Point. I was supposed to live my life as nothing. No skill points, no stats above one, no skills, and certainly no hope...

My father used his influence to record me as an Invalid, meaning I was supposed to belong to that particular unlucky minority that was supposed to improve themselves through endless practice. Still better than being a cursed Melius that never leveled up. Less damaging to family reputation, at least.

But those two glowing sentences changed everything.

Everything.

\*\*\*\*\*    \*\*\*\*\*    \*\*\*\*\*    \*\*\*\*\*    \*\*\*\*\*

Considering that my whole life had been turned sideways just a moment ago, even with my suddenly increased mental prowess, the shocked gasp that escaped my mouth was excusable. Unfortunately, it alerted the two beautiful ladies that had been sharing an intimate kiss to my presence. Their heads raised, and I managed to recognize them, far faster than any other time I was able to recognize anyone. Cornelia, of the House Antony, and Marianne, of the House Louis, two of the most popular women that currently graced the halls of the Silver Tower, the premier learning institute of the Empire. Two strong, deadly women with strong lineages, which made their panic completely understandable.

“Who is there,” called Cornelia, her voice sharp in anger, the uncrowned queen of the school, a famed fire mage with a temper to match. I couldn’t help but record every single detail as she hurriedly wrapped her arms around her breasts, though they were not sufficient to hide them from the view, a decent portion spilling out of her arms. Marianne was different, her face colored with panic, and her arms were enough -if barely- to cover her more modest assets. And just like that, another sentence appeared in my field of view.

*[Achievement: Double Trouble. See two pairs of chest at the same time. +100 Experience, + 1 Perception]*

At that point, the most logical thing would be to escape silently, trusting to the endless shelves of books to hide my figure. But I didn’t do that, because I had been already noticed before I could take action, courtesy of my abominably low intelligence stat, which governed the flexibility of thought. By the time I realized I was supposed to be moving, I was already pinned

down by Cornelia's gaze, her green eyes flickering darkly, suggesting that she was already preparing a spell.

Again, I was slow to react while they fixed their clothes before cornering me. But for the first time in my life, I was annoyed by it. Because only now, I really understood the difference between the others and me, which I lacked the wisdom to appreciate. The stained glass that prevented my perception was suddenly broken, giving me the first taste of clarity.

It was too bad that it was the clarity of death.

"I'm going to kill you, you twerp," Cornelia whispered in a tone that made me shiver, the flame that flickering in her hands making her even more intimidating. "When I'm done with you, no one would even find your bones-" she added before her words had been interrupted by a desperate shout.

It was my shout, I absentmindedly realized it was me that was shouting, even as the pain threatened to bury the momentary clarity I had. From the corner of my eye, I could see my health-bar diving dangerously close to zero. It was already blinking red.

Luckily, her companion grabbed Cornelia's hand before my health dipped below zero. "Stop, it's the Mule!" she called, reminding me my nickname, which, for the first time in my life, caused anger to spark in my heart, because for the first time, I understood what it meant. "Don't kill him. It's not like he'll remember anything."

"Damnation!" Cornelia called as she took a step back in shock. Without her hand, I collapsed on the ground, and I could see my health bar draining even further. "Do something!" she called.

I saw Marianne's hand glowing blue before a coolness spread through my body, breaking my concentration. It didn't prevent from the darkness covering my view though. The last thing I had seen was three glowing sentences, promising that everything was going to be different.

*[Achievement: Survive the Fury. Narrowly escape death as a direct consequence of being caught while peeking. +500 Experience, +1 Endurance]*

*[!Level up]*

*[Achievement: Patient Leveler. Wait for two decades before leveling up. +5 to all stats]*

\*\*\*\*\*    \*\*\*\*\*    \*\*\*\*\*    \*\*\*\*\*    \*\*\*\*\*

Waking up was a weird experience. Despite the persistent pain on my cheek, I felt like I was reborn, that I was walking unencumbered for the first time after wading through the mud for the first time. I would have thought that I was in a dream, but even in my dreams, my thoughts flowed with a clarity that I had never experienced before.

I was in uncharted territory. The closest I had been to this when my mother had pitied me, and cast status enhancement spells on me, which raised all of my stats by five for a glorious minute before disappearing forever, leaving me a fleeting memory of heaven that never left me.

Still, I couldn't help but tremble with fear as I brought my status window, afraid that the clarity will dispel like a puff of cloud the moment I bring my status window, that damnable screen that was filled with ones, reminding me that I was cursed. But this time, the view was different.

**[Level: 2 Experience: 1200 / 3000**

**Strength: 6 Charisma: 6**

**Precision: 6 Perception: 7**

**Agility: 6 Manipulation: 6**

**Speed: 6 Intelligence: 6**

**Endurance: 7 Wisdom: 16**

**HP: 59 / 62 Mana: 82 / 82 ]**

I couldn't help but feel excited as I examined the scores in front of me. In less than a minute, the curse that ruined my life was dispelled, I was free. Free to life. Free to grow.

At that moment, I was thankful to my Wisdom stat, because I had no doubt that, without a significant score on it, I would be shooting my lungs about my curse being broken, that I could be something more than that damnable Invalid Mule, capable of something else than collecting discarded books while lacking the intelligence to even sort them correctly.

But my newly enhanced Wisdom stopped me, my mind sorting a lifetime of barely-remembered knowledge in a revolutionary manner. I barely remembered the details years after, but parts of a discussion between two experts, considering the probability that I could gain experience with anything other than monster kills had been considered, but ultimately dismissed. Not much, but enough to convince me that keeping my shut might be the better idea.

Only then, I remembered to glance around, checking where I was. I was afraid that I had been in the medical ward, which would mean I would be examined before leaving. It would have been impossible to hide all the changes that my body had gone through. With my stats upgraded, a night's sleep was enough to put some muscles to my twig arms, and add some color to my pasty skin.

Luckily, I was in my room, which was a small room in the depths of the castle, in an abandoned wing, barely bigger than a wardrobe, a dirty, ruined cot only furniture in there. Only after my revolutionary mental shift, I could truly process how insulting it was to live in there, but I still welcomed it. After, it kept me out of view.

I couldn't help but wonder just how much of my life had been spent as being kept out of view. My childhood had passed locked in a room, various experts my only companions, then my father arranged me a 'job' as a librarian assistant. Not a bad job for a supposedly Abnormal child. Of course, now, I was realizing that it wasn't my father's mercy that drove him to arrange it. Any job in Silver Tower was prestigious enough to prevent too many questions. and more importantly, with four hundred miles between the Silver Tower Complex and my family estate, too far away for any news reach back to my family's social circle.

But to me, it had been a cruel exile, forever stuck in Level 1 between the best and the brightest students of the Empire and the Free Cities, my life filled with meaningless menial work, broken only by one of the students decided to prank me due to boredom. Though, the latter didn't happen much, because there was no great pride found in tricking the 'Mule', a nickname referring my endless menial tasks and my slowness of mind.

"No more," I murmured, unable to prevent excitement from slipping to my tone. I was finally awake, and ready to take what the world owed me for twenty years of humiliation!

\*\*\*\*\*    \*\*\*\*\*    \*\*\*\*\*    \*\*\*\*\*    \*\*\*\*\*

Of course, before making the world pay for my humiliation, I needed to validate the reason for my experience gain. With my improved deduction capabilities, it wasn't hard to theorize that the sexuality of the situation had been a major part of it, but I needed to test the exact conditions to

But before that, I needed to select my skills. Excitement burst in my heart as I realized, for the first time in my life, selecting a skill was an option. I called for skills tab, and met with an empty list, three lines of writing below it breaking the pattern.

*[Select one of the following skills: Basic Subterfuge, Basic Resistance, Basic Concealment]*

Again, quite different than what was supposed to be normal, combat filled option list, but I welcomed the change. While it was tempting to have the ability to beat up the assholes that humiliated me for years, I needed to keep my changes as hidden as possible, meaning my selection was between concealment and subterfuge.

*[Basic Subterfuge (0/25)]*

It wasn't an easy choice, but I went with basic subterfuge, because I needed to hide the changes I was going through, and the ability to trick others would prove invaluable. Acting was critical for my survival.

I have never heard a skill that didn't focus on combat and similar activities, but since none of the experts were able to identify my problem during my youth, it wasn't too wild to believe my condition was unique. And needed to keep that hidden since I had no intention of spending another ten years of my life under the examination of so-called experts.

I donned by librarian assistant robe, which conveniently covered my whole body loosely. It even had a hood to cover my face. Then, I took a deep breath, trying to suppress a sudden excitement that thumped into my heart. For the first time in my life, I felt alive, doing something other than obediently following other people's direct orders, like I was nothing more than a wound-up toy.

The moment I stepped in the corridor was different. I smelled the mold and the dust that covered the corridor, my increased stats allowing me to process just how disgusting those smells were, but even then, it made me only happier, like a recently-recovered blind person enjoying the sight of a dumpster.

A desire to let out a laugh filled my chest, different than all the times that I had been trying to copy the others when they laughed, usually me as the butt of the joke. I suppressed that particular desire, not wanting to alert anyone to the sudden change of my status, though I had a feeling that if it wasn't for my ridiculous increase in the wisdom stat, I would have missed that particular detail under the rush of excitement.

I started to come across other people closer I got to the library. I had passed just a few people when another line of fiery letters appeared on my sight.

*[Subterfuge +1]*

Excellent, I thought, surprised, but definitely not dissatisfied, with the increase speed of the skill. I remembered hearing that real-life situations were much better to enable skill progress, a swing against a deadly monster was more valuable than a thousand swings in the courtyard. And apparently, the likely consequences of getting noticed was enough to qualify my situation as dangerous.

Missing such an amazing opportunity would be definitely wasteful, so I decided to get 'lost' during my walk towards the library. For anyone else, getting lost while walking towards the location of employment of last two years would be incredulous, but for my past self with all one stats and no skills, it was something that happened in a startling frequency.

I spent almost an hour wandering in the corridors, which helped my subterfuge skill to reach the rank of ten, but unfortunately, that number stayed the same for the last five minutes, suggesting that I needed more dangerous situations to test it. Or maybe, I added a moment later, it required more interactive situations.

The sensation of a hand, wrapping tightly around my biceps, pulled me from my thoughts. I turned towards my assailant, only to meet with the face of a servant that I occasionally saw in the halls. "Lost again," he murmured, but didn't wait for an answer before starting to drag me towards the library. "Fucking nobles," he murmured. "Every single one is a parasite, even the Invalid ones, wasting food while they should be given to monsters."

I quirked my eyebrow as I listened to the rumblings of the servant, curious to see that my supposed shared status as an Invalid not quelling his anger. Maybe because my past self's capabilities were abysmal even in Invalid standards. He was careful to hide his mumbling whenever another student or servant closed in, but apparently, I didn't count. I might have ignored it, but maintaining my silence added another five points to my subterfuge skill. Tempted, I pressed the skills button as the servant deposited me at the entrance, checking my full status.

Things were finally looking up for me...

-----

**[Level: 2    Experience: 1200 / 3000**

**Strength: 6    Charisma: 6**

**Precision: 6    Perception: 7**

**Agility: 6    Manipulation: 6**

**Speed: 6    Intelligence: 6**

**Endurance: 7    Wisdom: 16**

**HP: 59 / 62    Mana: 82 / 82    ]**

**SKILLS**

**[Basic Subterfuge (15/25)    ]**



## Chapter Two

Stepping inside the library once again was an interesting experience. For the last three years, I have spent almost all of my awake time in here, the the library of the Silver Tower. But for the first time, I had the ability to soak in its impressive sight, to understand the significance of the mass that was here. Endless lines of shelves, each filled with thick, leather-bound tomes, representing the biggest repository of information known to mankind.

And it wasn't just magical knowledge that it contained. It supposedly kept at least a copy of each book in existence, representing humanity's collective wisdom. Ironically, only my own spark of wisdom allowed me to fully comprehend the treasures that I had been carrying for the last three years. With my abysmal stats, previously stuck to one, I failed to realize the importance of it, though even if I did, not like I would have been able to benefit. With an intelligence score of 1, learning how to tie my shoes was a miracle. Recognizing the individual letters, I was able to learn only after years of private lessons.

But, having a better understanding of everything wasn't always positive. For example, I also realized the true importance of the Silver Library. The state of our world had made it a necessity. When losing towns and villages to the monster hordes wasn't worthy of anything other than marketplace gossip, ensuring the safety of information was good thinking.

Luckily, protected by the walls of the biggest magical school in the world, I didn't have a reason to worry about the dangers of the wild, at least not in the short term.

I took a deep breath before walking forward towards the main desk, while trying to copy my unbalanced shambling, thanking the deities that I had the chance to select subterfuge as my first skill. It was the only edge I had to keep my new status under wraps until I could understand the limits and the impacts. The first years of my life were filled with experiments, and I had no intention to restart them. The experience had been harrowing enough for my idiot past, and I had no intention to risk it once again.

When I arrived at my destination, I was happy to note that the head librarian was away. The head librarian was a sharp woman in her forties, a battlefield veteran to the boot, and I wasn't sure that my new acting skills would be enough to avoid her sharp attention. Even with my spotty recollection, I could remember her as a dangerous woman, and it was impossible to guess how she would react if she noticed my expanded capabilities.

One of her senior assistants manning the main desk instead. A shortish, brown-haired guy that I failed to remember. Luckily it was just expected of me. I stood in front of him silently until I

caught his attention.

“What are you waiting for, you log, go collect the discarded books,” he murmured in annoyance, not bothering to give me anything other than a glance, which suited me just fine. Until I could maximize my subterfuge skills, the fewer interactions I had with people, the better. Well, fewer interactions, discounting the one unique context that gave me my first experience points. I still wasn’t completely sure that was the only way I could gain experience, but that was one experiment I had no complications to run.

I grabbed the nearest empty cart and drove it towards the back of the library, to a section where the discarded copies of the less valuable books held, well-away from the majority of students and other employees. And while I hoped that I would come across a scene similar to one that gave me the first taste of power, I also knew that it wasn’t very likely, especially in the middle of the day, when the library was in its most crowded.

I was searching for a small alcove where I could read undisturbed, discovering more about my new status. Luckily, working for years in the library, netted me a few spots where I could hide to read a book or two. And I knew that no one would be looking for me thanks to my reputation.

Reading a book with my enhanced stats was an unbelievable experience. Previously, each letter was a puzzle that I struggle to decipher, and any sentence longer than eight words might as well be a mountain in terms of the challenge it represented. Now, words jumped from the page, sentences forming easily digestible sections that I could decipher with a glance. Truly a magical experience.

I had used my obscure location and newly enhanced reading skills, trying to discover more about my new condition and my power levels. Apparently, I managed to luck myself into a set of respectable stats. From what I have read, it seemed that the stat increase could be only driven by Achievements, and everyone had their own unique set of achievements, meaning stat increase was inherently driven by luck.

Moreover, my stats, with a minimum of six for each, was below average compared to the general population, but still workable in terms of usual standards, while my wisdom score was quite a bit above average. It seemed that a score of five was what an Abnormal had on average, and ten was what they could reach ultimately. And while there was no limit for the Melius, most didn’t surpass the twenties, meaning sixteen for Wisdom was quite respectable.

“Finally something going right in my fucking life,” I murmured when I realized that. After twenty years of torture, I was long due for some good news. That didn’t mean that I wouldn’t

focus on enhancing my stats, but the real priority was my Level, which would unlock more skills. Yes, it was possible to learn things without skill, but only through extended practice that would take weeks and months, something skills that not only shortened significantly, but also allowed to break limits that would otherwise limit those.

With my newfound attraction towards reading, I barely realized the passage of time until the library became too dark to read. Only then I realized that it was pushing close to the sunset, and the section I was currently in wasn't important enough to have a lot of lamps, and using one of those risked to give my position. With a sigh, I grabbed my cart, pulled several books from the shelves to give the impression that I had been working, and slowly drove back towards the main desk. It was for the best if I didn't disappear completely from the view of my coworker. The less attention I got, the better.

I had been planning to drop the books on the usual desk, letting the others sort the stuff, but a sharp hiss derailed me from my plans. I barely kept myself from turning towards the source, recognizing her from the last night. Marianne of the Blue, the most accomplished student of healing arts in the Silver Tower. Her focus on the gentler side of the magic was the only reason I was still alive. If it wasn't for her last-minute intervention, I would have ended up dead due to my pitiful amount of HP at that point in time. And most importantly, she was part of the reason I unlocked the first lock on the road to true power.

Still, just because she saved my life and unlocked true potential didn't mean that she would get away without a consequence for her involvement in my near-death experience. After everything that happened to me, I wasn't feeling particularly generous. But my current position wasn't conducive for that particular payback, so I continued my trek. Common sense told me to take a turn towards the more crowded parts of the library.

Instead, I took a left turn, taking a path leading to another rarely-visited part of the library. If it had been Cornelia who was behind me, I wouldn't dare to take such a risk, but considering Marianne was the one who saved my life, risks were more manageable.

Her footsteps following me after my turn made me certain that our encounter was not accidental. Still, dashing away was not an option. I needed to make sure about my status, and she was an excellent target for it. So, I continued walking, acting like I wasn't hearing her footsteps. My old self definitely wouldn't have noticed, after all.

Only when Marianne was directly behind me when I decided to stop. But she failed to notice my sudden movement in time, and collided with my back before she could react. It wasn't exactly what I had in mind, but the line of writing in front of me went a long way to mollify that

mistake.

[+10 Experience]

I was rather certain that the experience wasn't about the accident itself, as they weren't exactly rare in my history. No, I had a feeling that the sudden gain was about the pair of firm globes, pressing against my back rather distinctively. She really had an amazing chest.

The best thing to do would be pulling back, and act stupid until Marianne could walk away. But I needed to validate my assumptions about experience gain. Luckily, there was no one around, leaving me free to act creatively. I have turned back rapidly, so that before she could react, I was face to face with my stalker. She opened her mouth in shock, trying to pull back, but I was quicker. I faked yelping in panic as I waved my arms, and my hands accidentally ended up on her chest! Such misfortune!

[+50 Experience]

I had been expecting her to pull back rather rapidly, but I hadn't been expecting her feet to tangle into her robe, destroying her balance. She started falling back, and panic rose in my heart. Even in my idiot state -mostly due to sheer experience- I had known about the dangers of head-first falling. I tried to grab her as quick as I could, not wanting to injure one of the most important students of the school.

Since my hands were already there, grabbing her robe was purely reflex.

Her robe was probably made from magically-enhanced silk or similar material, strong enough to resist the sudden pull. But the same couldn't be said for the fancy lace ties on the front. I watched with a detached fascination as the front of her robe ripped, giving me a glimpse of what was underneath. A lacy corset that gently wrapped her curves, ending low enough to create a rather impressive cleavage.

[+50 Experience]

The smart thing to do was to gently help her stand up while marking the experiment as a success. After all, the experience I had gained was nothing to scoff at, considering the others had to risk their lives in the wilderness against the monsters to make the similar gains, where the smallest mistake might result in death. And, in a school filled with female students and servants, I would no doubt have other opportunities.

But riding in the exaltation of another experience burst, I was more willing to take risks. So,

when her arms reached towards the front of her robe in a blind panic, trying to cover her body, I decided to push for more. "Sorry," I murmured in panic as I let go of her robe, leaning to my recently-maximized subterfuge skill to make it seem like I was an idiot, panicking against what had just happened.

Thanks to the angle of her body, she started falling once more. And, her hands were too far away to reach back to soften her fall. "Help, you idiot," she yelled in panic. Who I was to disregard the heartfelt cry of a beautiful maiden -guessing- asking for my help. So, my right hand darted towards her chest, and grabbed the edge of her corset.

She let out a gasp as the corset cut into her back due to sudden spot, but I really welcomed the next noise. A certain ripping sound, proving that her corset was weaker than her robe. This time, I reacted before she could react, leaning forward to wrap my hand around her waist. I was quick enough to prevent her from falling, but wasn't quick enough to save her corset. As a result, the ripped remains of her corset was in my right hand while I lowered her on the ground with my left.

[+100 Experience]

[Achievement: Manufactured Mishap. Proactively create an accident that ends up in a visual feast. +200 Experience, +1 Manipulation]

I didn't exactly know why a smile popped into my face. My guess was it was a close call between another stat increase, and the amazing sight in front of my eyes. The outrage grew in her face as she opened her mouth to cry, but a sudden comprehension stopped her. She must have realized that a cry would pull the others to our location, increasing the number of people who had captured the amazing sight of her voluptuous breasts.

I spent a second to commit the amazing view of her curvy body on my memory while trying to guess just what portion I could cover by my hand. At most half, I was guessing.

Another inspiration struck at that moment. Did I have to keep that question on a theoretical level?

For a moment, I was shocked by my own decision. I was tangled in a very interesting situation with Marianne, with her clothes destroyed by the earlier situation I had engineered. With my left arm trapped under her, I was the perfect excuse, so I pushed a silly expression to my face, and started falling forward with an exaggerated movement. Her panic was positively delicious.

I let my knee to hit first, receiving a sudden spike of pain thanks to the stone floor. Then, when I

tried to put my right hand on the ground, it accidentally ended up on her chest, my fingers sinking deep into her chest. It was a miracle I managed to keep myself from laughing against her shocked expression.

[+200 Experience]

I didn't blame her when she pushed my right arm away with a strength that was boosted by her panic, but that move left me without support once again, and I started falling towards her once more, her panic growing stronger as our faces got closer. She tried to reach to my chest before the contact, but she was too slow, which made me guess that Agility wasn't one of her best stats. But her stat distribution wasn't as important as my lips pressing against hers.

[+400 Experience]

The experience boost was almost as welcome as the sensation I got from her beautiful lips, though I didn't have much to savor the sensation, as I felt two hands on my chest, followed by a rather painful push on my chest, too strong to be just physical.

[HP 52/62]

It wasn't too deadly thanks to my recent power boost, but just a day ago, it would have pushed me near death. So, once again I relied on my subterfuge skill, gasping pathetically like I was on the edge of the underworld. "Oh for god's sake," she exclaimed, her panic tinged with exasperation as she stood up. A second later, she was leaning towards me, her hands glowing blue as a healing spell spread through my body. Meanwhile, I was enjoying the spectacular view of her breasts, hanging freely.

[HP 62/62]

[+100 Experience]

[Achievement: False Flag. Garner the sympathy of a woman you recently angered. +500 Experience, +2 Charisma]

"Pain, gone," I murmured, trying to sound surprised.

"Idiot," she murmured in exasperation as she stood up. She glanced to her corset for a moment before giving it up as a lost cause, and focused on closing her robe despite its ripped state. I continued lying on the ground in fake pain, enjoying the accidental flashes as she tried to fix her robe. A minute later, she sighed in desperation and murmured a small chant, and her robe

repaired itself. Not enough to pass a detailed examination, cluing me that it wasn't one of the areas she was strong in. She sent one last glare towards me, she stuffed the remains of her corset into her robe and dashed away, leaving me alone.

I just lay on the ground, amused by the fact that she didn't have the time to mention why she was following me in the first place. I wondered whether I would be able to set up a similar accident the next time.

\*\*\*\*\*

I spent the next hour after my encounter with Marianne to cart books around, trying to be visible while acting like my usual bumbling self. I was very aware of the fragility of my position, and the less attention I had on my actions, the better. After the earlier risk I had taken, it was only prudent.

But there was one important detail that was tickling my mind.

[Experience 2810/3000]

Just a dash more experience points, and I would have another level. And while patience was a virtue, after spending twenty years of my life in a static condition, stuck in a rut, waiting for another day sounded like torture. Which was why I kept my eyes open, looking for another opportunity to gain some experience points.

Of course, that wasn't all I had done. Seeing Marianne's spell raised another ambition in me, casting magic. So, as I walked around the library, I had been also doing my best to pull my mana to the surface. I wasn't expecting to start coughing fireballs and spitting tornados without a corresponding skill, but simpler things should be a possibility. So whenever there was no one around, I reached for my mana, trying to do something.

Probably thanks to my extremely high wisdom stat, and an overall respectable level of my other mental aspects, after a couple of hours of dedicated practice, I was able to create a weak telekinesis effect. From what I had read, such an achievement would have taken weeks for the others, but also it was usually done by children who were yet to reach their puberty, so, whether it was a success was arguable.

The effect was stronger than I was expecting, enough to throw away a book violently, but on the negative side, I had learned that fact because of my limited control, actually slamming a book

to a wall, hard enough to destroy it. Luckily, there was no one around to see it.

Still, however weak and unwieldy, I had access to magic, and it would doubtlessly come useful. That spell devoured a significant portion of my remaining mana, but I didn't let it bother me. The benefits were too important to ignore.

That opportunity came soon after, in the form of a student with a distinctive pale blond hair, cut in shoulder-length student, sitting alone in a concealed desk, her attention firmly on the book in front of her. Helga, I recognized her. Disjointed memories of other students insulting and bullying her came soon after, because she was not only a foreigner, but also she belonged to a merchant family, and not a particularly rich one either. The only reason she was able to gain admission to Silver Tower was because of her prodigious talent, passing many of the noble students.

Of course, that fact hadn't been noted with good humor by the other students, who weren't very happy about being shown-off by a foreign commoner. And, to her unluckiness, her strength lied more on the research and other academic topics than combat, preventing her from responding effectively to her bullies. The other thing I remembered was she never treated me badly, though she had been dismissive enough.

If I was a nice man, I would have let her, a fellow bullying victim who had been suffering like I had been, to study in peace. Unfortunately for her, I was not a nice person.

I stood far away, making sure to put two large bookshelves between us, enough to catch a glimpse of her while making sure I wouldn't be observed. It wasn't ideal, considering my telekinesis ability was highly sensitive to distance, but keeping hidden was more important than accurate spellcasting in my situation.

My heartbeat picked up speed, only partially about the danger I was in. The rest was the anticipation about what I would find. Helga was a beautiful girl, but her body was a total mystery due to her habit of wearing loose clothing. Most students had thought that it was because she was quite fat, expressed by their regular insults. But there was a voice inside suggesting me that it might not be as accurate. And I couldn't wait to see if it was true...

A deep breath later, I used my nascent arcane abilities to reach towards her, trying to focus on the top button that was holding her robe in place. With that, I hit my first snag, namely her aura, interfering with my spell. The books had warned me about that, but I had been hoping that her lack of alertness would blunt its effects enough to give me a movement area. Unfortunately, that didn't work as much as I had hoped, or maybe my magical power was worse



than I had been hoping for, or maybe, due to constant bullying, she had a stronger resistance active subconsciously.

Regardless of the reason, it was a barrier that I needed to overcome, so I focused on my spell, putting extra power behind it. And it worked... In a fashion...

My aim was to unlatch a few of her buttons, which I succeed. What I wasn't planning for was the violent speed of my success, only parting her robe violently, making her buttons fly around, but also managed to achieve a similar effect on the blouse she was wearing underneath, though this time, only up to halfway.

Still, it was enough to reveal the corset she was wearing underneath, confirming my suspicions. The body she was hiding underneath was truly beautiful, enough to send my heart overdrive. Though my elation wasn't only about that.

[+50 Experience]

[Achievement: Malfunctioning Magic. Use an uncontrolled magic spell for your personal benefit. +200 Experience, +1 Precision]

[Level Up!]

I wasn't expecting her to react as quickly as she did, though. Her first reflex was to crouch behind the table while her eyes roamed the room rapidly. Trying to use the situation to my advantage before I retreated, I tried to push her once more, but this time, my spell fizzled long before it even neared her body. Either she was even stronger than I had been expecting, or I vastly overestimated my fledging strength.

Regardless of the situation, it was the time to pull back. The last thing before I pulled back from my vantage point was her buttons, attaching them back to her robe with a bare wave of her hand, showing just how much I still needed to improve.

I was driving my cart in my usual idiot disguise when I heard rapid footsteps closing to my direction, making me panic slightly. I knew that she hadn't seen me, meaning she probably felt the direction the spell was coming from. Yet another complication to take care in my future actions.

I couldn't help but feel intimidated when she suddenly appeared in front of me, her expression bleak. "Have you seen anyone here," she barked, and I raised a trembling finger towards distance while using my recently maximized basic acting skills to a maximum degree. Luckily,

she didn't have a reason to suspect me, and followed my direction with anger sharp on her face.

I let out a relaxed sigh before smiling. I had just gained another level! And from the skill selection, the decision was almost trivial to pick Basic Arcana Magic. For most, it was a tool that was underused due to its limited combat applications, but in my situation, it was too useful to miss...

-----

[Level: 3    Experience: 3010 / 6000

Strength: 6    Charisma: 8

Precision: 7    Perception: 7

Agility: 6    Manipulation: 7

Speed: 6    Intelligence: 6

Endurance: 7    Wisdom: 16

HP: 96 / 96    Mana: 20 / 135    ]

#### SKILLS

[Basic Subterfuge (25/25)    ]

Basic Arcana [1/25]

#### SPELLS AND ABILITIES

[

Minor Telekinesis

]

## Chapter Three

After my encounter with Helga, I decided to sneak out of the library and go directly to my room. The close-call I had with Helga spooked me, so I decided walking away was a more prudent choice for the moment. Though, I made sure to sneak one of the beginner books on the arcane magic with me. My near discovery with Helga showed me that wisdom stat wasn't an all-around cure for all kind of information, and I actually needed more information to prevent another half-assed plan exploding on me.

While my existence as I grew up had been a horrible, lonely existence, it also came with certain advantages, such as the absolute absence of any kind of friendship, meaning no one bothered to look for my presence when I decided to skip the dining hall. Going to the library was a risk, but I only took it because people were too used to my presence to really pay attention. I wasn't willing to risk my acting skills against the sharp eyes of all kind of soldiers, especially if someone decided to bully me in the dining hall, which happened far more than I would have liked to admit.

Walking around carelessly was one thing, but trying to trick everyone in a crowded hall was a different thing while they watched my reaction.

The danger was compounded by the fact that the room was not filled with the students with the magical focus like it was in the library. According to what I had read, the students with a magic specialty rarely bothered to pick sensory skills, relying on spells to enhance them under the combat situations. I wasn't willing to take the same risk for the students on leadership or ranger track, not before I could enhance my Subterfuge skill to a reliable degree.

The next few hours were split between reading on magic and trying to enhance my arcana skill, only to increase it by a measly one point. The culprit was easy to discover, the lack of risk. Unfortunately, without some arcana ability, improving my spells was a slow-yielding chore, destroying my plans. I sighed, and decided to focus on the theoretical side while leaving the skill enhancement for tomorrow.

At least, that was my initial decision. But when I found myself twisting and turning in my uncomfortable bed, unable to catch a wink of sleep, I decided to revise that plan. I wasn't able to sleep, because I couldn't prevent myself from mentally calling my status screen, a part of it burning in an annoying light.

Basic Arcana [2/25]

It shouldn't be a real problem, as after spending years without gaining a level, or even thinking it was possible, I had gained two levels in rapid succession, a speed that was unheard of, even for the first few levels. That should have been satisfactory enough to let me sleep.

But it wasn't, not when a part of my heart shouted me to leverage the situation before it got lost just as quick, ignoring the pleadings of my brain. I yearned to maximize my arcana skill with the same speed I had improved my subterfuge skill.

In the end, I failed to resist the temptation, like a man lost in a desert, gorging himself with water despite knowing the dangers of his greedy approach. Sometimes, the temptation was impossible to resist.

A sigh escaped my mouth as I stood up, my mind already on how to explain if I get caught during the process. The library was open at night, but it rarely had any students, therefore only a couple assistants worked each night, in rotation. Mine was last night, so I needed an excuse.

A brief search around the clutter gave me the perfect excuse, a parchment, written by the Head Librarian, ordering me to sort out the history section. It must be from the first few weeks, when they were still hopeful that I would be able to learn about being a librarian. For anyone else, it wouldn't have worked, but for once, my reputation worked to my benefit. It would be very believable for old me to find an expired order, only to follow it without realizing it.

With my problem solved, I quickly donned my librarian robe, and stepped on the corridor with purpose.

The first observer I had was a servant, carrying a tray filled with food. The smell tickled my nose, and my stomach chose me to remind that I had yet to eat anything with a loud gurgle. "Perfect, the mule is starving," the servant murmured sarcastically as he tried to pass me.

After my stat boosts, giving me a new perspective about everything that had been happening in my life, I found myself with a short temper against my bullies. And finally, I had a chance to push back. Not explicitly, which admittedly removed some fun of the situation, but a telekinetic push, delivered with a negligent wave of my hand, was sufficient revenge for now.

It wasn't a particularly strong push, nor it was well-controlled, but the second part worked for my benefit, unbalancing his tray, making it tumble off his hands. A string of angry curses left his mouth, quite a few targeting my supposed curse spreading around, but he was too busy trying to salvage to late-night dinner he had been carrying to stop me, and I continued my journey; a smile on my face because suddenly, I had another skill point in my skill.

[+1 Arcana]

When I arrived at the library, he wasn't the only servant that was cursing the supposed bad luck I had brought. Some of them tripped, while the others lost the hold on the items they were carrying. Any student would have been reported to Headmaster, who had little patience for the pranks on the staff, but one benefit of my reputation was I was suspicion-proof. It was an asshole move, I would admit, but the resulting increase in my arcane skill was well-worth it. And after all the mocking and humiliation that came from the staff during my tenure, I wasn't feeling particularly merciful.

For me, the next hour I spent in the library turned out to be very useful. I have started testing my abilities on two boys from rival houses, working tables that was not exactly close to each other. I started it with a subtle telekinetic prob while making sure I was standing just in front of the other boy, so when my target turned towards me, he was quick to dismiss me in favor of blaming his rival.

It was even easier when he retaliated, his magical signature conveniently hiding my own small prod. It didn't take long for the boys to start a prank war, unaware that both of their assaults had some additions from a third party, and in the end, they broke into a fistfight in the middle of the library, each loudly blaming the other for starting it. I retreated, a smirk on my lips, and seven more points on my arcana skills. Targeting people with actual magical capabilities was making my magical skill increase even faster, I realized.

At that point, I was planning to call it an early night. I walked towards the depths of the library, searching for some interesting books that I could borrow that wouldn't raise any alarm. To do that, I moved much deeper into the library, until an unfamiliar sensation stopped me.

I stopped, trying to expand my magical senses until I could grasp the reason for that sudden sensation. A minute of focus later, a shimmering barrier appeared in front of me as I attuned my senses, giving me an impression of a tripwire. A simple alarm ward, I reasoned, combining my readings with the impressions generated by my skill, all filtered through my wisdom and intelligence. The question was, who was responsible.

Destroying the ward was not an option without alerting its owner, and I didn't even know where to start to for partial dismantling. The smart thing would be to turn back, not risk angering whomever that had put the barrier.

And I would have done that, if it wasn't for a moan that was strangely familiar, one that made remember a very special moment in my life, one I managed to place it rather easily. Cornelia.

“That naughty minx,” I murmured in surprise, though this time, I had enough presence of mind to keep my voice low. The last thing I needed was to be burned once again. But the lure of gaining more experience, as well as feasting on her beauty, was too tempting to miss, and I wouldn’t say no to seeing Marianne’s amazing body as well, hopefully accompanying Cornelia once again.

First, I moved back and forth, looking for an easy vantage point, but it turned out to be fruitless. Then, I turned my attention to the translucent ward that barred my way, taking note of its spherical shape, and comparing it with the size and the shape of the library. Thanks to the endless days I had traversed the library, doing backbreaking physical work, I had managed to memorize the library with great accuracy, and my wisdom allowed me to recall that map without an error.

Combining those two facts, I realized that I could bypass the ward from this side as long as I kept close to the wall on the other side. I walked, keeping my attention on the ward to avoid an accidental trigger. And as a happy note, it increased my arcana skill by two, probably factoring in the fact that I would be risking death if I got noticed by Cornelia.

[Basic Arcana 10/25]

After a short search, I managed to find a nice and snug vantage point that gave me a direct view of Cornelia and Marianne, proving that they hadn’t paid the same attention to the rear of their position. After a brief search, I managed to find a gap between the books that gave me an almost unrestricted view of her bodies.

And what a view it was. Trusting the effectiveness of their ward, the girls didn’t see a problem partially undressing, their robes bunched around their waist, their breasts only concealed by each other’s hands, and occasionally, their lips. It wasn’t a surprise that I quickly built up a raging erection, and this time, I had enough time and opportunity to address it.

[+100 Experience]

I pulled my shaft from my pants rather urgently, the desire burning inside me as it did never before. Maybe it was an effect of my level-up system, or maybe it was because of my increased stats, allowing me to feel my emotions in an intensity that I never felt before, or maybe even it was my physical stats, finally enhancing my body to a point that I would feel such needs. Whatever it was, it was less important than the amazing view as Cornelia’s face disappeared in the embrace of Marianne’s bountiful bosom, triggering her silent cries.

Too silent, I absentmindedly noted as my fingers started dancing on my shaft. Apparently, they remembered to put a silencing charm after Cornelia's errant moan. More power me, as safer they felt in their position, less attention they would pay to their environment. I pumped my shaft mercilessly, the unfamiliar sensation filling my body with a rapid speed...

Beset with an unfamiliar sensation, it took less than a minute for me to reach a climax, a sensation of pleasure filling my body. I managed to keep myself from moaning in pleasure, if only because of the memory of Cornelia's burning hand, digging into my skin.

[+200 Experience]

[Achievement: Obscured Ogler. Stay hidden and unnoticed while triggering a situation of self-inflicted ecstasy. +300 Experience, +1 Perception]

[Achievement: Speedy Shooter. Take less than a minute to reach a climax under self-care. +100 Experience, +1 Endurance]

I took a few deep breaths, enjoying not only the pleasure of the aftermath, but also the power spreading through my body, sharpening my perception and toughening my body. If that was the way everyone felt when they increased in power, I could easily see why they thought the Abnormals were cursed, or why they pitied the people with low-level cap.

But sociological impacts of the leveling was easy to ignore when I watched as Cornelia pushed Marianne against a desk, hiking up her robe with a great hurry. A pull later, Marianne's panties fell down, giving me a glimpse of the treasure between her legs before Cornelia dived down there.

[+200 Experience]

I was happy with receiving another experience burst, clearly linked to their change of position. So, the safest strategy would be to wait until they finished, and maybe polish another one if my manhood managed to recover before they finished. But once again, the temptation for more skills and the increased experience was impossible to resist.

I took a deep breath, bringing my whole focus to create a small telekinetic point, and I extended it as far as I could. The power I put on it was the smallest I could manage, and I was betting everything on the fact that both girls were too distracted to notice what I was doing. That was what had happened with Helga, after all, failing to notice my manipulations until I lost control of the spell and ripped off her clothes.

And my favorite gals were lost in pleasure, which was what I was banking on. With that in mind, I pushed my small probe on Marianne's naked breasts, gently squeezing her nipple, which made her to open her mouth to let out another silent cry, but her eyes stayed closed, meaning she wasn't suspicious. Maybe she didn't realize it wasn't Cornelia's hand but a spell, or maybe she just assumed Cornelia was responsible for it. They definitely seemed kinky enough to use magic for things like that.

[+100 Experience]

[+1 Arcana]

The approval of my internal system was definitely appreciated, as well as the sudden burst of magical knowledge, slightly increasing the finesse I could wield my magic. I squeezed once more, but this time, without a corresponding experience burst. Maybe variety was needed, I thought as I slowly transformed the shape of my mental construct to something similar to a hand, cupping her breast in a way that was more attention-grabbing than a simple, fleeting squeeze.

[+100 Experience]

I saw Marianne's mouth opening, and while I couldn't hear what she said, the way her mouth moved was suspiciously close to the word more. Happy that my little addition was appreciated, I let my magical probe to explore her body more freely, the expression of ecstasy on Marianne's face intensifying with each passing moment.

Meanwhile, my body had managed to recover, my shaft back to full mast. My hand was back to pumping, though without the utter novelty of the sensation, it took longer for me to reach the climax. Not that it was a bit problematic, as not only there was an amazing view that I enjoyed in front of me, but also I was gaining quite a bit of experience and skill points from the experience. Seeing Marianne shuddering with a climax triggered me for a second time, but also I managed to earn more than five hundred experience and several points of arcana skill.

[Achievement: Hidden Helper. Be a gentleman and help a lady reach ecstasy without taking the credit! +500 Experience, +1 Manipulation]

It seemed that the system had a sense of humor. Still, that was unimportant compared to the fact that I was near another level up. I prayed all the gods that Cornelia wasn't selfless enough to leave after bringing her partner to climax.

My prayers were answered when Cornelia stood up and dropped her robe on the ground,



revealing that she hadn't been wearing anything underneath. Apparently, she came prepared for her midnight tryst. Once again, I prepared my telekinetic hand, ready to subject Cornelia the same treatment Marianne had been subject to, but something changed my mind.

In particular, the position Marianne had taken.

Instead of crouching like Cornelia did, Marianne chose to bend from her waist as she brought her lips to Cornelia's nether lips. But the thing that took my attention was the way her robe stayed bunched around her waist, leaving her bottom bare, and facing towards me.

I wasn't sure I would dare to take the opportunity if it was Cornelia in the position, but Marianne had shown that she was both slower to react, and more merciful. Still, I was really careful as I brought my probe to her glistening slit, and gently twisting her clit.

[+200 Experience]

The result was spectacular. Marianne's body rocked with pleasure, and Cornelia's body followed it a moment later. Apparently, the joy of the moment made Marianne more active, something Cornelia was clearly enjoyed.

I kept the pressure the same until I watched Cornelia's hands to grab Marianne's hair, pulling her tighter into her embrace. At that point, I was reasonably sure that Marianne had other problems than the exact shape of her pleasure, and added a small buzzing to my probe, still teasing her clit.

The result was spectacular, as Marianne raised her head for a moment, her silent cries creating a unique erotic view. Luckily, before Cornelia started to get suspicious, Marianne lowered her head and resumed her task, leaving me free to magically explore her most magical spot.

I was tempted to transform my probe into a cylindrical shape before exploring her insides, but one thing held me back. As a noble lady, she was probably virgin, meaning that would create a huge web to untangle, and I didn't want to give her a reason to rip my head off if I get caught.

But it was a restriction that allowed me a lot of range. Once again I brought my probe on Marianne's breasts, this time in a more spread-out tingling sensation, leveraging the expanded capabilities of my skill boost. I thought I saw Marianne trembling a bit, but it was a subtle thing, and it might also be about Cornelia's hands meeting with her hair in a sharp tug.

[+100 Experience]

With the system's approval of my achievement, I continued my activities, letting the probe to spread over her body while wishing that it was my hands that danced freely on her soft skin. But at least, I had remote access to her body, which was a good substitute until I could have access to the real one.

A few minutes later, without a warning, Marianne collapsed onto her knees, trembling with obvious pleasure.

[+500 Experience]

I would have liked to hang around more, to push even more, but when I saw a questioning expression on Cornelia's face, I decided that retreat was a part of the valor. I didn't know whether her questions would allow her to discover my outside assistance, but I wasn't willing to stay around to discover that. Cornelia's first reaction had left a memorable impression.

I called my status window as I walked back to the more crowded areas of the library. I had earned more than enough from my endeavor. Not only I had completely developed my arcana abilities, but also gained enough experience for an almost full level.

All was well...

---

[Level: 3    Experience: 5810 / 6000

Strength: 6    Charisma: 8

Precision: 7    Perception: 8

Agility: 6    Manipulation: 8

Speed: 6    Intelligence: 6

Endurance: 8    Wisdom: 16

HP: 99 / 99    Mana: 110 / 141    ]

SKILLS

[Basic Subterfuge (25/25)

Basic Arcana [22/25] ]

## Chapter Four

I woke up with the first rays of sunrise, feeling a ravenous hunger, which constituted a big problem. Not only there was still a couple hour until the dining hall started to serve, but also I would still run the risk of being noticed by one of the students with a well-developed observation if I waited for the dinner.

The simplest way to counter that was to visit the kitchen, hoping that one of the servants would take pity and feed me, but that carried its own complications. It wasn't just the students just bullied me. Servants were happy to join when they realized there would be no consequence as long as they kept it non-physical, giving them a metaphorical way to hit back to the aristocracy that oppressed them for all their life. So, going to the kitchen meant that there would be a lot of leers and insults, and I didn't want to suffer them more than necessary. I had suffered a fair share of them until now, and didn't want more when I was finally strong enough to not to take their shit anymore.

Then a sudden realization hit me. Why not put my subterfuge skills into the job? It shouldn't be too hard to act like a different student, especially since it had been rare for someone to look at my face beforehand. With my expanded capabilities, tricking a bunch of servants them shouldn't be too hard. I turned to my wardrobe -a pitiful collection of damaged and dirty clothing, as servants long stopped helping me with my chores unless forced otherwise. Luckily, there was a group of students that dressed like that due to their daily activities, combined with their relatively lower status.

I wasn't limited to the clothes in my wardrobe, of course. Arcane spells allowed a wide range of tricks, some of which I managed to decipher already. Which meant that not only could magically-repair my clothes to create a decent approximation of a ranger uniform, but also I could have a different hair and eye color, with a distinctive illusion of a wound on my chin.

Thirty minutes later, I was walking towards the kitchen in a completely new identity, dressed as a poor approximation of ranger, with a forged note in my hand with a copied signature from one of the other documents. It wasn't a perfect disguise, and I wouldn't dare to use it under the sunshine even against the servants, but I was hoping that relative darkness of the corridors would assist me in my plot.

I arrived at the kitchen, only to find it bustling with a great cacophony of activity as the servants prepared for the breakfast. I glanced around, trying to identify the best target to reach. And then I noticed a man that was barking orders to the others around him, but dressed in the same

way. I was betting for a small-time servant trying to prove himself to be management quality.

I walked towards him with determined steps, once in my life, not hunched forward like I was trying to disappear. "Master Ranger asks for some additional supplies for today's expedition," I said as I pushed the list towards him. He looked at it, his expression panicking slightly.

After a moment's silence, he stood straighter, and started spitting orders to the people around him. "You, bring me two packs of dried meat, and someone brings me three packs of dried fruits." Then, he pointed at another man, who looked less than enthusiastic about being ordered. "You bring me four dozen travel bread..."

He must have been more successful in his ambitions than I had first thought, because it took just two minutes for them to prepare me a burlap filled with everything I asked for. "Excellent," I said, trying to copy gruff but to the point voice of a ranger.

"No problem, milord, is there anything else I could do for you," he asked, his voice smarmy enough to raise my hackles. I shrugged, then started walking towards the door with rapid steps. The reason, I could see the head chef walking towards us with a stormy expression, clearly unhappy with the intrusion to his domain, compounded by the fact that I talked one of his subordinates rather than him. I made no motion of noticing him, but quickened my steps enough that when he arrived my previous position, I was about to leave the kitchens. From the corner of my eyes, I could see he started talking with the man, clearly admonishing him for giving supplies without asking him, then I turned, leaving the kitchen behind.

After a hurried dash, I was back in my room, letting out a relaxed sigh as the door closed behind me. That was close, and the fact that the head chef noticed me was a good sign that my Subterfuge skills were not high enough to avoid detection. I needed to improve it further in the earliest chance. Luckily, I was about to gain another level, and hopefully, it would allow me to do so.

And on the plus side, I had enough food to last me for at least a week. Even two, if I eat conservatively. Dried meat and hard bread wasn't exactly a feast, but it sustained me while allowing me to stay away from the view. I nibbled some food while dispelling the spells over me, my hair color turning back to its natural brown.

I focused on reading a book on basic arcana spells that I had swiped from the library for the next hour, but soon, it was time to work once more. I was quick to prepare and leave my room, wanting to go there as early as possible. I didn't know whether the Head Librarian was back, but if she was, I want to be in the library earlier than her. The less reason she had to watch me, the

better...

I was one of the earliest workers in the library. I just grabbed a cart without talking with anyone and drove it towards the less-visited part of the library. After a few minutes, then the assistant of the Head Librarian took the main desk, cluing me on the fact that the Head Librarian was still away.

My morning passed in a predictable routine, occasionally walk around like I was working while spending most of my time hidden between two shelves, reading as much as I could. I had a lot to learn...

Of course, I kept my eyes open for any opportunities that would net me some experience. I needed barely less than two hundred experience points, and then I would unlock a new level. Unfortunately, the night arrived without an opportunity. There was no Marianne following me, giving me easy opportunities to sneak a grope, nor I could see Helga with her busty beauty, hidden in the depths of the library, allowing me to use magic without being noticed by the others.

I was preparing to leave when my luck had turned. I saw Cornelia stepping through the entrance, her efforts to make herself look inconspicuous making her even more noticeable, at least to me. Thanks to my earlier observations, I knew exactly how to read her signs of arousal. She looked around for a while, carefully watching her surroundings, making me afraid that I would be noticed if I continued to examine her. Another late-night encounter, I thought with a smirk, excited with the prospect of another level-up.

Luckily, I didn't have to watch her, not when I knew where she would be in a few minutes. I disappeared behind the shelves before alerting her to my position. And since I was there early, I had enough time to move the stuff around, creating a superior observation point where I could actually sit while enjoying the show.

Several minutes later, Cornelia had walked into the exact same spot she had been the last night, murmuring a careful spell while she drew several quick symbols on the table with her finger, and leaving a shiny aftermath. I was impressed. It wasn't exactly trivial to create a ward, even a simple one like hers, without a specially-prepared anchor.

But it seemed that the preparations for the night were just the beginning. Cornelia reached to her bag, and pulled out a ribbon from her bag. I looked at it curiously, as it looked like silk, not the cheapest material to find after most of the production areas had been destroyed by monster attacks, especially one that painted bright red. Then she pulled a small riding crop,

curiously, in bright red as well. Fitting to her flame queen theme, but I was starting to get a suspicion for their purpose, which got stronger and stronger as she pulled more items from her bag. I couldn't help but feel curious, however, as Marianne didn't give me the impression that she would be enjoying stuff like that.

Though it didn't take long for my curiosity to turn into total shock. The reason, who had just walked into the opening. Like yesterday, a familiar blonde figure stepped to my field of vision. But it wasn't the same blonde that I had seen with Cornelia.

It was Helga.

It was a miracle that I managed to keep myself from gasping. Not seeing Marianne here had been quite a shock, as from what I had been gathering from their talks, I was willing to bet that those two loved each other enough to risk total disgrace. But despite that, Cornelia had been clearly waiting for Helga, if her lack of surprise was any indicator.

Cornelia didn't say anything, just reached for her robe, and pulled it off with a smooth motion, revealing a leather corset underneath, stylized like leather armor with, but with a lot of strategic absences to highlight her sexiness. Of course, again in bright red. She was really playing to her moniker as the Crimson Queen.

[+50 Experience]

[Achievement: Prepared Peeper. Observe a tantalizing view from a prepared position. +200 Experience, +1 Wisdom]

Level UP!

[Select one of the following skills: Advanced Subterfuge, Basic Speech, Basic Concealment]

I was tempted to choose speech or concealment, as both of them had the potential to be really useful for my needs, but in the end, I had to go with the subterfuge. I didn't trust myself to avoid the Head Librarian's attention otherwise. And as the morning showed, subterfuge unlocked some interesting options, by acting like the others. I chose the subterfuge, and then turned my attention back to the action, curious about the exact details of the surprising situation in front of me.

"Good evening," Helga said, which just increased my curiosity about the situation. Not because of her words, but the tone she used, sharp and cold, suggesting that she wasn't really happy about her situation. The situation was getting more and more curious. Though hearing what she

had said had been a welcome surprise. Apparently, I was close enough to stay inside the silencing field Cornelia had set up.

“Take care of your tone,” Cornelia countered sharply, followed by a dark smirk. “Unless you want a session to remember.” A moment later, she raised her hand, and a tendril of electricity flickered between her fingers.

Helga looked like she wanted to answer, but chose to do the smart thing, and ducked her head, avoiding Cornelia’s gaze. I approved, as I knew from firsthand that how quick was Cornelia to escalate into uncontrolled violence. At least, in the current condition, it seemed to be limited to controlled violence.

“We’re going to go with the usual rules tonight,” Cornelia said with a smirk. She took a step towards Helga, and caressed her cheek with the riding crop with a contrasting gentleness. “Last for ten minutes, and you earn a whole gold piece,” she said. A gold piece was nothing for a noble, but for a peasant, it represented more money than they could imagine. For a merchant family like Helga's, it wasn’t an amount to ignore, but certainly, it wasn’t enough to justify her indignity, unless her family business was in truly dire straits.

Helga just nodded, and reached for the buttons of her robe, her fingers moving in a familiar rapidness. A moment later, she pushed her robe on the ground, revealing that, underneath, she was garbed in her birthday suit.

[+100 Experience]

I licked my lips as I drank the sight of her body, even more spectacular than what I could glimpse after my magical malfunction. Her breasts were large enough that my palms would fail to cover them, but firm despite their weight. Her stomach was smooth, but I could glimpse muscles underneath that suggested a fitness surprising for a mage. There was an unkempt bush between her legs that hid quite a bit of the detail, but her legs, toned and firm, was enough reward to ignore that fact for now.

“Where were we,” Cornelia said as she gently dragged her crop on her breasts after a small break where she enjoyed the sight in front of her. “Yes, we were talking about the rules. Last twenty minutes, and you earn another scroll,” she added. From the way Helga’s eyes shined, I could understand that it was an important one, probably a hidden source from Cornelia’s family library. “And if you can last for a full thirty minutes without admitting defeat, I’ll teach you a spell. Clear?”



Helga nodded, trying and failing to hide her fear. Cornelia giggled amusedly. "It's amusing to think that you will be able to last that long. Good luck. Today, you just need to say, Mistress, this pathetic slave is at her limit, please have mercy, to make me stop." Helga's chin stiffened in a way that suggested she was squeezing her teeth painfully, but she still nodded. "Repeat it, just to make sure you can remember it," she added.

"Mistress," Helga managed to spat out from her thinned lips, her hands squeezed enough to become completely white. "This pathetic slave is at her limit, please have mercy."

"Good work," Cornelia said, patting her head in a completely patronizing manner. "Now, stand here, eagle pose."

Helga just followed her directions, seemingly understanding her fate. When she was in her position, Cornelia waved her hands, and a few whispers later, the ribbons she had prepared wrapped themselves around Helga's arms and legs, immobilizing her like a particularly delicious doe fallen into a huntress' trap. Meanwhile, Cornelia reached for her bag and pulled an hourglass, and placed it on the table to measure the time.

"Let's start with something easy," Cornelia said, and her naked hand landed on Helga's hip, the sharp voice echoing in the opening, showing the confidence Cornelia had on her silencing spell. Helga just stayed silent, looking at Cornelia. From the angle I had, I wasn't able to see her expression, but from the way Helga blanched, it didn't seem to be particularly friendly.

[+50 Experience]

With that done, Cornelia took a step forward, her ass danced beautifully, covered only by a thong, once again, crimson. I pulled my shaft free, slowly playing with myself as I watched. For the next few minutes, I have done nothing but watch while Cornelia's hands landed on Helga's body, again and again, marking her pale body with several pink patches, though it only made her sexier. Occasional insults also accompanied her slaps, mainly insulting Helga's lowborn status, mixed in with occasional financial insult. Helga's expression was just as delicious, a mixture of defiance and fear. Though it was a pity that I wasn't the source of that expression.

"Ten minutes," Cornelia said with an amused stretch, marking the end of the first section, of which I have earned another five hundred experience points. Not bad, but watching without contribution didn't seem to net that much. "You have earned one huge gold coin for your success."

While Helga took a series to deep breaths to control herself, Cornelia walked back to the table,

and restarted the flow of sand by turning the hourglass. But when Cornelia grabbed her riding crop instead of raising her naked hand. When that landed on her skin harshly, a pained gasp escaped Helga's mouth for the first time. I suddenly had a suspicion whether she would be able to last another ten minutes. It would be a pity if I earned just a thousand from such an amazing opportunity. But that meant I needed to take action. But how to do it without being noticed.

Then, it clicked to me. It didn't have to stay unnoticed. Helga was already suffering under Cornelia's assault, and from what I had understood from their interaction, Helga didn't have right to ask about what Cornelia was doing, nor she seemed to have any intention of doing so.

So, I conjured another magical appendage, this time formed similar to Cornelia's crop, and waited until Cornelia's whip started to soar through the air. I timed it perfectly, and it landed on Helga's skin the moment after Cornelia's did, triggering a loud cry off her.

[+100 Experience]

Despite the approval of the system, I had neglected to repeat the action the next time, checking them to see whether it created any alarm. Cornelia slammed the whip on her skin once more with her usual joy, though this time, Helga managed to keep her mouth closed. And since I managed to avoid the detection of both parties, there was nothing to prevent from repeating the same action.

[+ 10 Experience]

While the lackluster gain was a bit annoying, it seemed to fit the pattern. Repeating the same action had a much lower impact, which probably linked to risk factor. But small wasn't the same with unimportant, as since I gained it with each repeat, it amounted to quite a bit of experience, especially when combined with the bonuses I received whenever Cornelia decided to do something different, such as biting Helga's breast without a warning, enough to leave a mark that would last for a few days, which netted me another nifty hundred experience points.

Helga's proud expression as she tried to hide the effect of pain to a limited effect had a unique sexiness to it. I could easily see why Cornelia was enjoying the treatment, which could be easily read on her face as she stepped back, enjoying her achievement, unaware that she owed some of her success to my intervention.

I decided to spice things up a bit, so when her crop landed on Helga's breast, I created a mirror image of it, landing on the other one, for the first time, extracting a loud cry from Helga. I should have tried to pace myself, but the moment caught me in its grip as well, and I started to

escalate my involvement.

With my new approach, I had another seven hundred experience halfway the second part, and the achievement was enough to make Cornelia start dripping. However, there was one rather big problem. Helga's expression was getting more and more worn out. I needed to find a way to enhance her resistance if I wanted to get the full benefit of this amazing opportunity.

It would be a pity to cut short such an amazing moment...

---

[Level: 4    Experience: 7520 / 10000

Strength: 6    Charisma: 8

Precision: 7    Perception: 8

Agility: 6    Manipulation: 8

Speed: 6    Intelligence: 6

Endurance: 8    Wisdom: 17

HP: 132 / 132    Mana: 150 / 188    ]

#### SKILLS

[Advanced Subterfuge (25/50)

Basic Arcana [22/25]    ]

## Chapter Five

It was a pity that I didn't know any healing spell, as it would be the simplest way to enhance Helga's resistance. Unfortunately, that wasn't an option, and considering the disastrous results when I first attempted telekinesis, using her as a target for my first spell didn't make much sense. I needed an alternative.

While I was busy trying to come up with a better way, Cornelia's crop landed on Helga's skin once more, this time directly on her nipple, and Helga let out a cry, even louder and needier than the previous times. I even saw her lips opening like she was about to say something, and considering the situation didn't exactly lean for casual discussion, I feared that it was a sign of her crumbling resistance.

Cornelia must have reached the same conclusion, because the next time her crop touched Helga's body, it was a soft caress rather than another blow. "Pity," she murmured in excitement as she drew a small circle around Helga's breast. "Today, you seem to be even weaker than the usual. Even your failing family would be ashamed of you, a pathetic mage, an outcast, and now, even failing at whoring."

A hiss escaped Helga's mouth against the insult, her dazed glare sharpening. For a moment, I steeled myself, expecting Helga to use a spell to blast Cornelia back. And I wasn't the only one that thought it, as Cornelia took a hurried step backward, and a shimmering disk appeared in front of her.

"Scared much, princess," Helga whispered with abject amusement, stretching each word like they were covered with honey and berries.

For a moment, Cornelia said nothing, the way her fingers tightened around the whip to turn them white the only indicator of her anger. She stood motionless as the shield slowly dissolved.

Helga's pride and satisfaction dissolved with the shield, realizing the enormity of the mistake she had just committed, but the determination was back on her face soon after. I was impressed. Her lips stayed shut, preventing herself from muttering not only the safety phrase, but even a word of mercy that would blunt Cornelia's anger. It was a mistake in my view, as Cornelia didn't look like she was in complete control, and it had taken much less provocation for her to try burning me to a crisp. And for Helga, there was no Marianne to blunt her anger.

My sudden pity towards Helga mixed into my desire to extend the situation as much as possible. So much that I instinctively reached for my nascent arcana abilities while Cornelia's whip

sheared the air, the loudest to date. A shimmering barrier appeared over Helga's skin, both less intense and smaller than the one Cornelia conjured. But its feebleness only worked for my benefit, as it was quietly destroyed the moment Cornelia's whip connected with it, allowing it to contact with Helga's skin.

[+3 Arcana]

[+100 Experience]

Both the increase of my arcana skill and figuring out a new spell was welcome changes, but the benefits of my reflexive action weren't limited to enhancing my magical capabilities. Destroying the shield bled a significant part of Cornelia's hit, and added to the fact that I hadn't been enhancing her blows anymore, Helga just let out a pained gasp rather than an unrestrained cry. Helga looked surprised, but only for a moment, quietly shifting back to determination once more as Cornelia raised her whip for a repeat.

Ten times Cornelia's whip sheared through the air unrestrained, tinged with anger, sometimes on her back, sometimes on her chest, and ten times I managed to conjure a barrier to reduce the damage. But despite that, Helga's lips parted like she was about to say something. Cornelia stopped, and Helga whispered. "Time's up," she said, followed by the last piece of sand in Cornelia's hourglass.

[Achievement: Cloaked Conjurer. Help a lady to resist enmity via magic without revealing yourself. +400 Experience, +2 Intelligence]

[+500 Experience]

Cornelia stopped, but her nakedness allowed me to see her arm trembling badly, like she was conflicted whether to just continue, ignoring her loss of control. Anger scoured her mind. She took a deep breath. I could see that it intensified her anger, but it wasn't the only impact it had. It also transformed her anger from a boiling hot rage to a simmering desire. "That's enough for tonight," she tersely spat, and turned her back, her glee and enjoyment suddenly absent. "I'm not in the mood anymore."

With a flash of wisdom, I understood that she did that, not because she enjoyed delivering pain - at least, not only that- but the sense of control it gave her. And her out of control reaction to Helga's little taunt destroyed the impression she had just built up. To make things worse, Helga successfully resisted Cornelia's out-of-control response, removing the only factor of enjoyment she might have taken from the situation.

Helga slackened in the grasp of the ribbons that kept her upright, relaxing as she realized that she had managed to survive the consequences of arrogance. Cornelia said nothing as she pulled her robe on, then silently put everything in her bag other than the ribbons that kept Helga immobile. She looked at Helga, then her robe, obviously considering whether it would be too petty to take it, tasking Helga to find a way to return to her room naked.

In the end, Cornelia placed a parchment on the table, and put a piece of gold over it to pin it in place. A wave of her hand, and the ribbons flew towards her bag, depriving Helga of her support, who just collapsed on the floor. Another wave dispelled the wards, and Cornelia started to walk away.

“Same time next week?” Helga asked, but the glee on her face was too obvious for it to be just a question. She was clearly gloating her victory, however small. I approved the sentiment, even though it was a shortsighted move in terms of the long view.

Cornelia gave no indication that she heard of it, and disappeared amongst the shelves. Helga just lay on the floor, ignoring the possibility of a surprise guest.

I was struck with a sudden inclination. Would I let Helga go, or somehow push the situation for my benefit? What would be the risk of the situation?

But as she continued to lay on the ground, breathing, her marred but beautiful body in a complete display, her curves covered with an attractive sheen, there was only one decision I could take.

I needed a strategy to approach. There was a lot of things I could do. The simplest thing to do was to stumble at her while she was still naked, but there was little benefit for that. I would see her naked, which didn't add anything to the situation, and while watching her trying to fix her clothes in panic would have been amusing, she might also react violently to my presence, and despite my level and high skills, I had no illusion where my combat capabilities lie. It would take only a moment for her to eviscerate me.

I tried to come up with an alternative approach as I sneaked towards the other side of the library. Regardless of the context, I couldn't have let her think that I had a chance to peek on her in her vulnerable state. But it still left the context of approach. Stumbling at her location after she finished dressing, and using her distress to help her would be the most logical choice. Unfortunately, my idiot persona worked against me on this context. A week ago, I wouldn't have noticed it no matter how obvious, doing otherwise would cause her to pay attention to me, which was a recipe to disaster.

Then again, being myself wasn't the only option, right?

I smirked at my sudden flash of insight. After all, I was still wearing the same pants and shirt I had in the morning, while I convinced the kitchen staff that I was a student at the ranger section. And while it was rare to see the students that didn't focus on magical disciplines in the library, it wasn't impossible. In a hidden corner, I quickly removed my robe, and a couple spells later, I had reddish hair, green eyes, and a distinctive scar on my chin.

But the real change came from the way I positioned my body. Gone was the slouched shoulders, replaced by the subtle grace of a ranger driven by unnatural grace of their unique balance. My physical stats weren't high enough for that, but luckily, subterfuge was enough to cover the rest.

When I walked back towards Helga's location, I made sure to create enough commotion by slamming the books close. Not only it alerted her, but also it gave me an excuse for why I was in this section. I hoped that the sudden fire she had against Cornelia wasn't a temporary reaction, because my whole approach relied on her engaging my presence with a similar fire.

Even with the forewarning, when I saw Helga, she was barely closing the last button of her robe. She looked at me with fearful eyes, understandable considering her vulnerable state, and her lack of friendly acquaintance. "Hello," I said, doing my best to put a moment's tremble in my voice to betray nervousness, while a nervous smile flickered on my lips, both completely artificial. By showing vulnerability, I hoped to reduce her fear. I didn't want her to retreat instantly.

"Can I help you?" she said, but her tone wasn't the same terse one that she used against other magic students.

"Actually, yes," I said, trying to sound genuine. "I was looking for a book on the basics of the arcana magic, but I'm a bit lost."

"Magic?" she said, surprised. "You're a student of magical arts?"

"Ranger, actually" I answered. "But I was trying to find some stuff on arcana magic. I'm considering relative merits of having a more diverse skill set, if I get lucky enough to unlock a magical skill," I followed, giving her a reason for my presence.

"I see," she murmured.

"You could just call me an idiot," I said as I took a step towards her, small enough to not to be threatening. "You don't have to mince your words."

“No,” she said with a blush. “I didn’t mean it like that. It’s an unconventional idea, though. Most people prefer to focus on one side of the skill tree to maximize the impact.”

“Really?” I said, trying to sound earnest. “I would have thought the advantages from the extended utility will be beneficial enough that at least some people are willing to focus on a more balanced approach.” While I listened to her, I pulled a chair while keeping my eyes on her.

She threw a hesitant glance towards the chair, clearly wanting to dash away, but also caught flatfooted by the fact that someone was interacting with her without clear antagonism and insults. But then, her exhaustion won, and she pulled a chair for herself as well. “Partially,” she said, starting her explanation. “But it has more drawbacks. Not only it would prevent you from mastering the critical skills for your main job, therefore reducing effectiveness, but you would also have to focus on the stats that don’t benefit your usual tasks.”

“But stats are acquired more or less randomly.”

“That’s true, unless you’re one of the noble houses with hundreds of years of recorded achievements list to speed up your growth,” she said, a trace of bitterness slipping through her voice. A deserved one, considering she had been humiliating herself to get just a glimpse of that information. “But more time you spent on your activities, more chance you would have gaining another stat point. You really don’t want to have invested in magic unless you have at least seven in intelligence or wisdom, for example.”

“So, I wasn’t wrong, you’re calling me an idiot,” I snapped.

“No-” she said, shocked, but I cut her off.

“Relax,” I said, with a sudden snicker while erasing any hint of anger from my face. “I’m just joking around. You mages should be even more repressed than the gossip suggests if you missed that.” I said.

“Something like that,” she said dismissively, which was understandable. The constant bullying campaign stemming from institutionalized classist behavior wasn’t the best conversation grease. “I’m sorry, but I need to run. But it was nice meeting you,” she said, standing up.

“Did we meet? I don’t even know your name,” I said, and she blushed.

“Helga,” she said curtly.

“Orlin,” I answered, and her face alighted in shock.



“You’re not from the Empire as well,” she said, surprised.

“Technically, I’m, but not in any practical purpose,” I said, quickly creating a background for myself. “I’m from one of the migrating tribes that are tasked to destroy the monster buildups in the northern plains to prevent another incursion like Seven Month Carnage.”

“Then, why are you here?” she asked.

“I was a part of the envoy that had been sent, and since the old geezers would take a few weeks to finish, I managed to get permission to join a few classes in the meanwhile, as a gesture of goodwill.”

“You’re not a student,” she asked, trying to hide her obvious disappointment. I barely held back a smirk. It was clear that she managed to develop a small crush in a matter of minutes, which wasn’t a surprise. Not only I had a decently muscular body thanks to my high and well-rounded physical stats, but my charisma and manipulation was nothing to scoff at either, and their impact was further impacted by my advanced subterfuge skill. My positive approach, something she lacked due to her outcast status, managed to put the final nail in her coffin.

“Unfortunately,” I explained. “My family could never afford the cost of the Silver Halls, and it’s practically impossible to get the scholarship as a ranger, especially if you’re not one of the cronies of these so-called noble houses.” She looked downcast, and I chose that moment to sink the dagger. “I know it’s a bit forward, but would you mind hanging together in the library while I’m here,” I said. After a pause, I added with an exaggerated panic. “To have more discussions about the magic, of course,” I quickly added, like I was trying to cover for a slip of tongue.

“That would be nice,” she said, a genuine smile appearing on her face for the first time. I felt like an asshole, kicking a wounded kitten, but in the end, I didn’t have the option to hold back. And considering the sacrifices she was willing to make for more power, I had a feeling that she would have understood even if I spoke her openly. “I need to go,” she murmured as she stood up.

“Are you okay,” I said. “You seem to be having pain while trying to stand up.”

“It’s nothing,” she spat out in a way that would have alerted me that she had a secret if I hadn’t already known. “Just a little accident while trying to reach for a book.”

“That’s what happens when you ignore your physical stats,” I countered, which put a smile on her face once more. “Do you need any assistance. I could help you to walk back to your room,” I offered.

“You better not,” she said. “It’s better if we avoid attention. The students here have a group mentality, and wouldn’t appreciate me talking with a ranger, especially in the library.”

“I understand,” I said with a wink. “That would be our little secret.” I stood up as well, and before she could start moving, grabbed her hand and placed a soft kiss on her knuckles. “It was a pleasure to meet you, milady. I can’t wait for our next meeting.”

She said nothing as she dashed away, but the sudden blush on her face suggested that she enjoyed the attention. I smiled, not only I had managed to make a hot girl develop a crush, but I had also earned a nifty reward in the process.

[+5 Subterfuge]

[+ 300 Experience]

[Achievement: Charmed Cutie. Impress a girl with your charming words until she develops a crush. +200 Experience, +2 Charisma]

[Achievement: False Flag. Seduce a girl under a fake identity. +400 Experience, +1 Charisma, +2 Manipulation]

I continued to sit on my seat after Helga’s departure, enjoying the sudden burst of warmth on my body as my stats earned a significant jump. I couldn’t help but smile at the state of my stats, half of them already ten or above, and the rest not far behind. From all I had read, it seemed to be a spectacular achievement. Gods were really rewarding me for all my suffering.

I let myself let out a relaxed sigh. Even if the worst happened and I got capped at level five, I would have enough power to go back to my family and earn my post. Five levels were not much, pretty much disgrace level for a noble, but with those stats, I would be able to perform well above my level would suggest. I wouldn’t be a powerhouse by any stretch, and I certainly wouldn’t be able to take my post as the head of the family, but I would be able to live a decent life.

But for some reason, that thought filled me with disgust. No, after everything I had suffered behind the closed doors, I didn’t want to return there for a mediocre life. I either returned to take everything under my control, or I didn’t return at all. Finally tasting the power and freedom, I had no intention of restricting myself. And leaving the Silver Tower behind would mean sacrificing the only chance I had to discover the reason for my situation secretly.

With a renewed enthusiasm, I changed back to my robe, once again disguising myself as the

useless assistant. After tasting the ease I could interact with someone without the weight of my history, the robe felt heavier. With a sigh, I pulled my cart from its hidden location, and returned to the main area, spending the next half hour working, trying to be seen around, while looking for another opportunity. This time, I tried to interact with the people as much as possible without being too obvious, trying to raise my subterfuge skill further, unfortunately, that didn't work. Apparently, it was already high enough that passive observation was no longer an effective tool.

I was halfway to my room when I saw my next inspiration. Two maids, carrying a bunch of stuff towards the ladies' room. "Could I dare to do that," I murmured, shocked by the insanity of my own plan. It was supposed to be a difficult thing, but with my basic magic skill maxed, combined with my high manipulation and subterfuge skill, it might be just possible, especially since the maid uniforms were loose enough to hide the features of my body.

The first task was to acquire a uniform. In my room, I donned my worst clothes, and with a few illusion spells later, I was indistinguishable from one of the manual helpers. In effect, I was invisible as I walked towards the laundry room with a basket in hand, filled with scraps. From there, I carefully swiped a maid uniform without being seen, and ten minutes later, I was back in my room, trying to illusion long hair that still looked realistic when I shook my head.

[+1 Subterfuge]

It took me another hour to fix my clothing enough to look convincing as a woman, a task that I would have failed miserably without the constant insights provided by my skill, on how to stand, how to move, how to avoid the glares of men, and another hundred small topics.

And with my disguise in place, there was only one destination to maximize the benefits...

The luck still seemed to follow me, as I saw an older woman, either in her fifties or sixties, struggling to carry a bucket of steaming hot water. More importantly, she had a specially-colored collar on her neck, denoting that she was a private servant belonging to a house. I counted myself lucky, because those colors belonged to House Louis, the house of my dear savior Marianne.

"Do you need any help," I asked, but only after walking closer to her, using the tone as another tool to conceal my tone.

"Yes," she said, as she placed the bucket of water on the floor. She looked at me in appreciation as she breathed hard. "One of the other maids was supposed to help me, but I have no idea

where that airhead is. Probably frolicking with that servant that was sending her looks all day long. Youngsters, no respects or sense these days..." she said. I just nodded, ignoring her burst, and lifted the bucket.

She started walking, and I followed, until I was in front of a door that was marked with a huge Coat of Arms, a shield with a huge kraken, marking the House Louis' seafaring past. "Why are you carrying water, I thought that the student rooms had hot water from the taps."

"Yes, but this is boiled with special herbs and oils to create a relaxing effect, and it is supposed to increase the speed of healing. Perfect after a difficult day. But it smells horrible while boiling, so it needs to be done in a storage room."

"Sounds a bit wasteful," I said as I poured the water on the bath, which was still only half-filled.

[+1 Subterfuge]

"Nobles," the maid whispered resolutely before returning to normal volume. When she started walking back, I just followed her. I was disappointed to see that Marianne wasn't already in the bath, but still, the interaction while I faked being a woman was enough to increase my subterfuge, which was better than nothing. So, I listened to her chatter, occasionally nodding, allowing me to learn more about the various noble houses and their relationship. She was under the impression that she was sharing idle gossip, I was able to make some interesting conclusions.

"Thank you, youngster. You deserved a copper for your help," she said as she patted my shoulder as I dumped the last bucket into the bath, filling the room with a thick cloud of steam. "I can handle the rest, though the moisture is going to kill my knees."

"I can help if you want," I said before I could fully consider the risks, tempted with the possibilities.

"Really," she gasped in appreciation. "And here I was thinking that all youngsters cared was avoiding work and flirting with lowlife boys. It's amazing to see that there are still some that respect the older people like they supposed to." She smiled happily. "What's your name?"

"Selina," I answered, giving the first name that came into my mind.

"Mine is Griselda," she answered. "Have you served a noble lady in the bath before?"

"I did, but if you quickly explain your lady's preferences, just to make sure I follow them."

“Will you be able to remember them all?” she asked, suspicious.

“I have a good memory,” I said. She looked disbelieving, but went through a long list of things to do and things to avoid, which took a better part of ten minutes, which I recounted back without error, courtesy of my enhanced mental stats.

“Impressive,” she said with a nod. “You can find a towel to change behind that screen. Change quickly. I will bring Lady Marianne in a few minutes, and you can help her undress.” She took a step forward before suddenly turning back. “And, don’t forget. Only one glass of wine for Lady Marianne. She doesn’t handle her alcohol well.” With that, she left, leaving me behind with a mixture of fear and anticipation...

[Subterfuge +3]

[Level: 4    Experience: 8620 / 10000

Strength: 6    Charisma: 11

Precision: 7    Perception: 8

Agility: 6    Manipulation: 10

Speed: 6    Intelligence: 8

Endurance: 8    Wisdom: 17

HP: 132 / 132    Mana: 180 / 216    ]

## SKILLS

[Advanced Subterfuge (34/50)

Basic Arcana [25/25]    ]

## Chapter Six

The extent of the situation I had committed myself in occurred to me as the servant left the room. Walking around in disguise was one thing, and even working in tandem with other servants was not a huge challenge, but helping a girl in the bath was an incomparable risk, especially since I couldn't just beat a hasty retreat if I got discovered. Marianne was predominantly a healer, but still, she was strong enough to defeat me easily.

"Concentrate," I murmured to myself, slapping myself on the cheek for the good measure. I could have escaped by dashing out while muttering some kind of excuse, but that would mean missing out on the experience, which had the potential to be even more than watching Cornelia and Helga together. I needed power, and I needed it as quick as possible.

The decision made, I dashed towards the corner that held the towels. I needed to change into an appropriate attire before Marianne's arrival, it would be a disaster if she caught me naked. I dressed faster than I ever did in my life, and soon I was wrapped with two layers of towels, with some scraps strategically pushed to my chest, and another towel even tighter around my waist to prevent an accident. Then, just for a good measure, I applied another layer of magical disguise on my face.

But a look at the mirror told me that my disguise wasn't convincing enough without a long, flowing skirt to hide my features. I needed something to obscure the view.

A glance around the room gave me the answer. A set of heated stones, with a bucket of water next to it. I quickly dashed there, and poured a cup of water on the stones, turning them into a hot cloud of steam. But I hit another snag when I poured the second cup, barely wisps coming out of the stones. They weren't hot enough!

I didn't have enough time to heat them through the traditional manner, so I reached for my magical abilities. I drew as much as mana I could handle, and tried to shove it into the stone while trying to keep the concept of hotness in mind. Another flicker of steam left the stone, but that was it. The second and the third repeats ended up the same, leaving me gasping in a sudden sense of exhaustion, with more than a third of my mana spent, the curse of lacking the appropriate skill.

[-70 Mana]

Luckily, slowly heating up a stone was the simplest task that could be done through fire magic, and I had already read to have a conceptual understanding of it. After spending another third of

my mana, the room was filled with a thick layer of steam.

And not a moment too early, as I just finished dumping the last cup of water and moved to the location I was supposed to wait for Marianne, the door opened, and a figure that was starting to get more and more familiar with each passing day stepped in the room. She said nothing, didn't even look at me other than a passing glance, and walked towards the seat. She was wearing a simple dress that left her arms naked, again blue.

I smiled at another lucky turn. In the traditional noble approach, Marianne paid no attention to a servant, just moved in her usual manner, and expected to be served. And as long as I continue to serve her, there would be no issue.

She stood next to the wardrobe that held her stuff, and waited. Following my instructions, I walked behind her, and started untying the strings behind her clothes. The strings were tied in a complicated knot, but following the earlier directions, I managed to untie them without an issue. She raised her arms, and I pulled the dress off.

Only for my eyes to meet with her naked back, supported by a glimpse of her beautiful breasts due to my superior position. She turned enough to send a glance at me, and I turned immediately to properly fold and hang her dress, therefore avoiding her taking an extended glare to my face.

[+2 Subterfuge]

My mistake didn't merit more than a second of interest. When I turned back, she was already walking towards the bath, her naked ass swaying attractively with each step, the thick layer of mist making the situation even more attractive. I moved forward to fulfill the next set of instructions, so that I was already next to the bath when she arrived. I presented my hand, and she grabbed it as she slowly lowered herself in the bath, bubbly water hiding her spectacular body from the view.

[+100 Experience]

I was doing my best to act natural while following the instructions, trying to avoid her attention as much as possible. I pulled the wine bottle from the icy bucket that was resting, and filled her glass with it, then filled a second glass with the cold water from the pitcher.

Then, I chose to deviate from the instruction. The old maid had expressly underlined that the water glass should be placed closer to her lady than the wine glass, as she had a tendency to reach the nearest glass while distracted by the warmth of the bath, which was why I placed the

wine glass in the spot instead. Drunker she got, less attentive she would become.

Still, I kept my breath in as she reached for it. Luckily, she neither commented nor tried to look at me as she sipped the glass. When she placed the glass back in its place, she rose in the tub, enough to give another glimpse of her breasts. She sank back into the water after putting it in place, but as a side effect, my towel was starting to get really uncomfortable.

Next few minutes passed in silence, where she rested under the embrace of the water, her eyes shut, occasionally reaching for the glass for another sip. And since she was keeping her eyes wide shut, I saw no risk in tweaking the situation a bit, topping up her glass whenever she placed it back on, making her think that she was still in the first glass.

[Achievement: Intentional Impairment. Engineer a situation sneakily with alcohol to reduce the risk of a situation. +400 Experience, +1 Intelligence. +1 Agility]

“Wash me,” she after several minutes of silence, a moment after the achievement appeared in my field of vision, the slight slurring on her voice aligned with the conclusion of the system.

I was ready, a soft bath glove on my right hand when she raised her right arm, and gently started to caress her skin. My attention was fully on her body, but for a change, for business purposes rather than trying to enjoy her nakedness. My enhanced capabilities were helpful in reading her micro-expressions, ensuring that, when I finished rubbing her arm, I had a solid idea about the optimal pressure and strength I need to put behind my touches.

And it worked even better than I had been hoping for, when I finished her second arm and moved to her shoulders, her moans had a suspiciously lively quality that reminded me the unique moment I had the pleasure of watching in the library. The fact that I had been constantly refilling her glass wasn't a surprise as well, though with my both hands occupied, I started using my telekinesis to do that. It was difficult to do without using my hands to guide the spell, but I managed to do it successfully.

[+200 Experience]

“Are you feeling alright, milady,” I whispered, intentionally breaking another direction the old maid had given me. Never address her without being addressed first. She just hummed in satisfaction, and I smirked, happy with the level of mellowness she achieved. I could move onto the next stage of my plan.

My hand started to follow a wider route as it went back and forth on her shoulder, first covering her collarbone with the soft texture of the bubbles from high-quality soap. With each repeat,



the range widened, until I was caressing the edges of her breasts, but that caused her to stiffen slightly. It was an unconscious reaction, as her eyes were still closed, and she was still moaning calmly, but I chose to take it as a warning.

“Do you want me to rub your feet, milady,” I asked as my hands returned to the safer territories. “I am educated in various techniques to increase your relaxation.” No words left her mouth, but her murmur was a clear indication of her approval.

“Do you want me to place a hot towel on your face, milady,” I added. “It’s treated with the herbs, and it will increase the effectiveness of the massage.”

I realized that I started to tread in dangerous waters when she opened one eye and looked at me. I brought the full extent of the capabilities of my subterfuge skill to give the impression of a young and demure maid, trying to make her mistress happy. It must have been successful, because she nodded instead of blasting me with a combat spell, which would be the inevitable end if she had suspected of my disguise. She might be the calmer and merciful one of the pair, but I would be the first to admit that the situation had warranted it.

I grabbed a towel, and gently pushed a sliver of energy to make it warmer, being extremely careful, both not to alert her, and not to burn the towel with my amateurish fire magic. Once I made sure that it was warm enough, I sprinkled it with some of the perfumed water that was placed next to the bath, and placed it over her eyes.

I moved on the other end of the bath and pushed my hands into the water, and gently pulled her foot out of the water. I sat on the floor with my feet gathered under me, preventing any possibility of an accidental reveal, and pulled her foot on my lap before pressing both thumbs on her soles, and started...

But the moan that escaped her mouth surprised me, though, from her expression, I wasn’t the only one that was surprised. Her hand twitched towards the towel as she blushed, but she chose to reach for the wine instead of pulling off the towel, obscuring her expression.

It was interesting that she tried to hide her reaction from a ‘maid’, though it was likely because there was no hiding the source of her moan. But if she wanted to act like it never happened, I was happy to comply. I restarted the massage, and she just lay on her back, enjoying the massage, but this time, she kept her grip around the glass of wine.

That provided an interesting challenge, continuously delivering the massage while using my telekinetic ability smooth enough to slowly refill the glass without making her notice the

unbalance. I actually had to create a magical platform, allowing the wine to slide silently without causing a splash, and she continued drinking.

The pleasure combined with the alcohol-induced haze had some more interesting effects on her. A moan escaped her mouth as I continued to rub her foot, barely loud enough to be heard. Her hand rose once more, but this time with a more purposeful manner. I felt alarmed when I felt the sudden rush of magic, but relaxed when it took the now-familiar form of silencing field. Though, without an anchor, the ward displayed limited effectiveness, something I had noticed when I heard her next moan, only partially muffled.

Moreover, it was amusing that she thought it would be effective, because even if her voice had been masked completely, there was no hiding her facial expression, shouting her enjoyment as effectively as her moans. I turned my attention from her body, my hands continuing their jobs in autopilot.

It didn't take long for her body to add another dimension to her displays of arousal. Her back arched nicely, which made her breasts peek through the bubbles, the view spectacular. Her enjoyment was a reward in itself, though I couldn't say that I didn't appreciate the bonus that came as a result.

[+300 Experience]

I chose that moment to finally switch from one foot to another. The moment I noticed Marianne reaching for her towel, I lowered my eyes, but continued to watch her from the corner of my eye, noticing that she was examining my face before sighing. She clearly thought that I hadn't noticed her rather enthusiastic enjoyment of my massage. I was willing to bet that the only reason she thought that was my supposed identity as a servant, which, in her mind, was stupid enough to miss the implications. Or at least, she was willing to believe that in her confused state.

I restarted the massage, and she put the towel over her eyes once again, and her back arching immediately after, once again treating me with the amazing view of her breasts. Her moans came soon after, each louder than the previous one. But the fact that she started trembling with a manner that cannot be mistaken for anything else, I was truly surprised. I certainly wasn't expecting her to be that sensitive in her feet.

From her total loss of control as the orgasm danced on her body, I was willing to believe that she wasn't aware of that particular nugget as well. Which made sense if her experience came from Cornelia. She was too meek to instigate such a thing in her own, and Cornelia distinctly

lacked the personality to do something as subservient as paying attention to her feet.

It was convenient that Marianne was busy trying to catch her breath, because I had another thing that deserved my attention.

[+300 Experience]

[Achievement: Magnificent Massage. Trigger a rather unique rush of pleasure through a safe-spot massage. +500 Experience, +1 Precision. +1 Perception]

Level UP!

[Select one of the following skills: Basic Fire Magic, Basic Speech, Basic Concealment]

Earning yet another level was an amazing feeling. It was a pity that I couldn't talk to anyone about it, as I probably broke the school record by gaining four levels in less than four days.

While patting my own back was enjoyable, I had more important concerns to address, such as which skill to choose. Common sense recommended Fire Magic, the most destructive school of magic, always in favor in combat applications -which was a lot considering the monster-filled state of the world- but direct assault didn't have any value in my current situation. No, I needed something to reinforce my approach, which was already paying amazing dividends, like Speech.

And luckily, I was in a perfect position to test my newly acquired skill, with a target most receptive, her mind addled with pleasure. "Milady, could you raise your leg a bit more, so I can move onto your calves," I said.

She didn't even pause before raising her leg. Unfortunately, it didn't give me a sudden burst of improvement. Probably because she was far too gone to actually consider the implications of something like that. Still, while the loss of opportunity to enhance my skills was a letdown, her explicit permission to her body was more than enough as compensation.

[+200 Experience]

[+1 Subterfuge]

I slowly started to massage her calves, stretching the moment to enjoy the sight of her breasts, but that proved to be a mistake. Her sensitivity there turned out to be much less than her feet, and even worse, drunk with my own achievement, I was late to notice that detail. "That's enough," she called as she pulled off the towel from her face.

“But, mistress-” I started, another mistake as she instantly cut me off.

“Don’t talk back to me, peasant,” she said sharply, her anger flaring in an instant, excessive even for a noble. She was trying to compensate for her earlier loss of control, though even discounting her situation, her anger was as threatening as a mouse. She stood up, uncaring of her nakedness, her whole body glistening with droplets, begging me to push her down and teach her about the subtleties of disrespect. Soon...

She stepped out of the bath, stopping only lean down and pick the water glass, and since her back was turned at me while she did that, giving me an amazing view of her most intimate spots. I crossed my legs, because, at that moment, even the emergency towel I had used started to fail.

[+100 Experience]

Then she walked towards the small pit with a drain to remove excess water, with several buckets already filled with warm water waiting for her. I dashed faster than her, and when she arrived, I was already there, doing my best to give the impression of a meek servant, scared due to her display of anger.

[+1 Subterfuge]

It seemed to have worked, as her expression turned her usual dismissive one, though she wasn’t good enough to hide the expression of relief from my eyes, clearly happy that her enjoyment from a servant’s hands went unremarked.

With her crisis of anger resolved, the rest of the activities flowed without another notable event. She opened her arms, and I wrapped a fluffy towel around her body, which, unfortunately, cut the amazing view I had been enjoying, then I accompanied her to her bedroom, where the old maid was waiting for us, jumping up her feet the moment she heard the door opening. I let her take from there, not wanting to get away from the concealing presence of the steam, afraid to reveal a certain very important detail about my anatomy.

The moment the door was closed, I dashed towards the dressing area, and put the disguise around as quick as I could manage. Which proved to be a good decision, as before I could disappear, the door opened once more, and the old maid entered the room, walking towards me with purposeful steps.

“Didn’t I tell you that she was to have only a glass of wine,” she said sharply, though I could see that her anger lacked passion, almost monotone.

"I'm sorry," I said, putting a slight hitch to my voice, indicating distress. "But the mistress asked me to, and I couldn't..." I said, letting my words to trail out.

[+1 Speech]

"It's okay," she said exasperatedly after examining me for a while, mercy clear on her eyes. "But be more careful the next time," she added.

"The next time?" I said, this time, my surprise completely honest.

"Yes, the next time," the old maid said with a slight nod. "My mistress indicated that your service was adequate, and she wants you as her bath attendant," she said.

I froze. Luckily, it was a natural reaction for my current personality as well, which gave me a couple of seconds to examine the opportunity. The safest thing to do was to inform her that it was my last day at the university, and I was being transferred back to the family estates of the family I had been serving.

But what was safety against the continuous access to Marianne's sweet nakedness...

"That would do," I said, quickly come up with a lie. "I'm usually free in the evenings, so as long as I got an early warning, I should be arranged. Though that's the only thing I can do, as I have my charge to attend."

"You already have a mistress," she said, suspicious. "But you are not wearing house colors."

"There's a reason for that," I quickly explained. "I'm a servant of house Gaius."

"Gaius?" she repeated in confusion. "There is no current student from House Gaius," she murmured in confusion before her face lighted with realization. "Unless you're serving the Mule," she said, her pity towards me mixing with a clear dismissal.

That dismissal towards my real identity might have made me angry if she wasn't the enabler for the amazing time I had just spent. "Yes, though mostly I work undercover to do the things he supposed to."

"Why?" she asked.

"It's the only way the school would allow him to keep employ," I said. "The house is far enough to be isolated from the casual rumors, and the fact that their heir is working in the Silver Tower despite his Abnormal status allowing them a modicum of pride."

[+2 Speech]

“It’s a pity,” she said, but not caring about the intricacies of my situation. “But it’s your lucky turn, because if you keep the mistress happy, I’m sure that she would eventually make you a part of her household. You certainly kept her satisfied tonight.”

I barely kept myself from cackling against her eerily accurate statement about what happened behind the closed doors. “Whatever the mistress pleases,” I said, playing the part of the dutiful servant.

“Good, then where I could find you,” she asked.

“I usually bustle all around the place during the day, and I have a small room outside of the walls,” I quickly explained, trying to find a reason for my indiscoverable state during the day. “But you can pass a note to young master when he was in the library, and he would pass it to me. He is a sweetheart on things like that.”

[+2 Speech]

“Okay,” she murmured after a moment of confusion, making me glad that I had picked the speech as my new area of expertise. I doubted that the web of bullshit I weaved would have stuck otherwise. “But always make sure to check with him at sunset. The mistress prefers to have her baths in the evening, you can’t miss any of them.”

[Achievement. Unintended Uniform. Find a job that brings unique side benefits under a fake identity without aiming to. +2 Charisma. +300 Experience]

“Thank you for the opportunity,” I said as I bowed, though it was to hide my thirsty smile.

“Good, now, drain the bath and scrub the floors before leaving,” she said, before turning back and leaving. I didn’t complain, because it gave me an excuse to train the flexibility of my telekinesis, not to mention

I was going to have so much fun at my new job...

[Level: 5      Experience: 10920 / 15000

Strength: 6      Charisma: 12

Precision: 8 Perception: 9

Agility: 7 Manipulation: 10

Speed: 6 Intelligence: 8

Endurance: 8 Wisdom: 17

HP: 175 / 175 Mana: 130 / 280 ]

### SKILLS

[Advanced Subterfuge (40/50)

Basic Arcana [25/25]

Basic Speech 5/25 ]

# Chapter Seven

I was back in the library, doing my mind-numbingly boring menial tasks. I couldn't say I disliked the opportunity though, as it gave me the excuse to think about more important things, such as the close calls I had experienced the previous day. During those events, I had stretched my abilities to the limit, both magical and mundane, risking everything, though the reward I received was above my expectations as well, giving me a job with an amazing perk, continuous access to Marianne's naked curves...

For that reason, I had picked a few books on anatomy and medicine, trying to get some hints on how to improve my massage technique. While it was tempting to get a few skills on the topic. My performance was satisfactory, but there was no harm in enhancing it further.

But the situation with Marianne wasn't my only noteworthy achievement, I thought as I glanced towards the table where Helga was sitting, her eyes turning towards the corridor with an unexpected frequency. Apparently, I had managed to impress her quite a bit, or more accurately, our mysterious ranger did. She was even sitting on a table close to the corridor rather than skulking in a hidden one to avoid any student that might be struck with the idea of bullying her.

It was interesting just how much a crush affected her usual behavior. I would have expected her to act more jaded, but it seemed that the continuous isolation left her hungry for positive interactions, however fleeting. It would be a pity if she missed meeting with the one that she had been waiting for didn't appear, I decided. And I had walked around enough that I could disappear for a couple of hours without raising suspicion.

So, the Mule disappeared behind the shelves, and after careful layering of several soft illusions, Ranger Orlin stepped in his place, with his reddish hair, strikingly-wounded face, and easygoing charm.

I started walking around the shelves, looking like I was looking for a book, while drove closer and closer to Helga's position. I wanted her to think that she noticed me first. It was a small leverage, but that kind of small things had a tendency to compound if managed carefully.

I had been expecting her to notice me after a couple of minutes, after I had came closer to her, but I saw her standing up in seconds after my appearance, showing that she was paying even more attention to her surroundings than I had been expecting, or maybe she had a better observation skill. "Orlin," she called, barely able to hide the enthusiasm in her tone.



“Helga,” I said in response, letting a smile bloom, which widened hers even further. I closed in, and then, bent my knees slightly, and opened my hands in expectation, though I was careful to angle my body correctly, so it followed the traditions of Northern Lands which she belonged rather than the Empire.

Her blush was positively cute as she put her hand on my palm, which only intensified when I brought it to my face and pressed my lips on her second knuckle, rather than fourth, a subtle indication of interest according to tradition. My research on Northern traditions turned out to be quite useful.

“So, what are you doing in the library this early,” I said. “Weren’t you supposed to be in a class?”

“I don’t have any today,” she said, with a slight bitterness. She either had one, but dropped because of the constant bullying, or failed to take a class she wanted to because of the professor not giving her a seat if her tone was any indicator.

Regardless of the reason, I needed to pull her away from the negativity. “It’s my fortune, then,” I said, accompanied by the most attractive smirk I could manage, bringing all my charisma to the forefront. “Because it gave me the opportunity to spend some more time with a radiant beauty like you, and a genius too.”

I had a feeling that without my charisma to boost my stats, the only thing that cheesy line would earn was a hasty escape, or a slap if she was in a particularly bad mood. Instead, she sputtered a struck answer as her breathing quickened. “Thanks,” she barely managed to bring out.

“Excellent,” I said. “You wouldn’t mind helping me look some books on Arcane Magic, do you?” I said, and before she could say anything, held her hand and started walking, dragging her with me. Funny enough, she was about to resist it until she realized I was moving deeper into the library, towards the areas that lacked any student. Usually, a girl would resist being pulled into such an area, but her desire to avoid her bullies were stronger than her common sense.

For the next few minutes, we have walked between the shelves, or more accurately, I dragged her with me while she tried to process casual yet intimate contact we were sharing. As we walked, I started to ask her questions about the various books, which slowly evolved into a discussion about the fundamentals of magical theory.

With the discussion back on the areas where she shows a stronger aptitude, she was quick to shed her crippling shyness. Her blush still remained, so did occasional stammer, but she was

actively contributing to the discussion, explaining the fundamentals of magic. She kept the discussion at the absolute basics, not knowing I had Arcana skill, but even then, there were occasional comments and interpretations that was novel for me.

As we talked, I realized the ruse that could benefit me in more ways than one. After picking a few books, I led her towards a desk, and deliberately sit on the corner of the desk, leading her to do same to create a more casual and intimate environment than the distant chairs would create.

Then, slowly, I started to make seemingly unintentional slips in the discussion, not enough to reveal the full extent of my wisdom, but enough to suggest that I had already taken Arcana skill and achieved quite a bit progress without maximizing the basic version.

But even then, I had to push the envelope quite a bit for her to notice that fact. "You're not trying to decide whether to take the Arcana skill," she said with a shocked manner. "You already have it."

"Guilty as charged," I said with a smirk. "You're even smarter than I had assumed, catching me this quickly," I added, as flattery never hurt, especially when backed with a healthy dose of manipulation and some speech.

"I guess so," she murmured before her gaze sharpening. "But why did you lie?"

"It was supposed to be a secret, as my people have rather strict ideas on daring to learn magical skills when you're not from one of the noble bloodlines, claiming to be cursed otherwise. It will cost me a lot if they realize that I had dared to take one."

[+1 Speech]

Her expression softened as she was caught by the similarity between her struggle and my fake one. "I understand," she said. "But you owe me one for that omission," she added in a way that was supposed to be whimsical excitement but came across choppy and shaky. She was really bad at flirting.

Luckily for her, I wasn't. "Of course," I said before leaning forward, and continuing with a whisper as the distance between my lips and her ear dwindled dangerously. "Whatever you wish for, milady." When I pulled back, her face was bright red. "Are you okay?" I asked cluelessly, putting my hand gently on her cheek. "You look like you have a fever."

"Just a little cold," she answered, jumping at the provided opening with both feet. "Anyway,

since you already have some background, I can help you study magic.”

“Really?” I said with enthusiasm I didn’t need to fake. “You would do that for me? Smart, beautiful, and kind! You’re godsend!” I said as I hugged her.

“It’s nothing,” she tried to stammer, overwhelmed by my response.

“Believe me, it’s not,” I said, squeezing her harder, which had the added benefit of familiarizing her with my muscles while I enjoyed the pressure of her breasts on my chest. She really had a spectacular body.

[+1 Speech]

[+20 Experience]

But after letting her go, I pushed a serious expression on my face. “But we need to keep it secret. It would hurt me a lot if got away that I had been studying magic. I managed to disappear today only by claiming I was going for a hunt.”

“That’s okay,” she said. “We can meet here and I will help you.”

“Thank you,” I said, caressing her cheek gently. Another rather forward action, even by the relatively lax standards of the Northern lands, but she only smiled at the closeness.

“So, what can you do,” she asked.

“Only this two,” I said, and quickly showed my telekinesis and my shield, but I made sure to cast them in a lower capability, much noisier than I could manage, though I didn’t skimp on the general finesse and strength.

“Not bad,” she said. “But you need to be more careful while balancing the energy matrix of the spell...” she added, launching a lengthy explanation, impressively detailed, and actually effective enough to bring my understanding of the subject to a higher level.

“Really, tell me more,” I said after she finished, and meanwhile, put my hand on her knee in an absentminded manner. She blushed, but didn’t ask me to pull it away, instead started another lesson on fundamentals of magic.

The next hour passed in a serious academic mood, broken occasionally by my casual touches, exploring the safer spots of her body, her knees, shoulders, back, and very rarely, lower parts of her thighs. She started to react with less panic after each touch, but her quickening breath was

enough to assuage my fears about the effectiveness of my strategy. And while I had some close-calls, my newly enhanced speech capabilities managed to bridge the gap.

[+2 Subterfuge]

[+3 Speech]

But like everything beautiful, it also had some limits. While it was fun to spend time with her, some distance would only intensify her feelings. “Thank you very much,” I said as once again I placed my hand on her thigh. “But I need to return. I still need to visit the forest and hunt something. It would be suspicious if I return from the hunt empty-handed.”

“You’re right,” she answered, though reluctant.

“Don’t worry,” I said with a chuckle. “We can meet tomorrow in here as well. The same place, and at the same time?”

“That would be wonderful,” she murmured.

“See you then,” I said and leaned to kiss her cheek, though, at the last second, I felt a bit more mischievous. I feinted like I was going left while reaching her right, and she turned to her left panickedly, presenting her lips to my reach for the perfect accidental kiss while trying to avoid the same.

[+100 Experience]

[Achievement: Plotted Peck. Carefully engineer an accidental romantic kiss, fit for ballads. +300 Experience, +1 Precision. +1 Manipulation]

I kept the kiss lingering for a moment, then pulled back, leaving Helga in dazed confusion, though a smile was pushing on her face. “I’m so sorry,” I said with an exaggerated panic. “I would have never done something like that with you if it wasn’t a complete accident,” I added, stressing the word never.

“Why?” she said with a sudden sharpness. “Is there something wrong with me?” she added, her good mood instantly evaporating at my sudden vehemence, so much that she didn’t pay any attention to the fact that she had just let a near-stranger kiss her.

“Of course not,” I said, suddenly abandoning my exaggerated denial in favor of a husky tone while I took a step forward, closing the distance once more. “You are a beautiful woman, and

you deserve a kiss better than the ridiculous touch that we just shared...” I leaned forward while she failed to keep in line with the sudden reversal. “Like this,” I whispered before my hand slid into her hair, and our lips touched.

This time, it wasn't a passive, fleeting kiss. No, I brought my full range of the capabilities out while my hands landed on her back, trying to read her reaction. Luckily, she was too shocked to hide her reaction, allowing me to quickly correct the various aspects of my reaction.

And my lips weren't the only source of pleasure for her. My hands on her back, dancing in the patterns, using the pressure points and sensitive spots taught by my research on massage points. I could feel her body trembling as she struggled not to melt, a losing battle she nevertheless tried to fight.

Soon, her lips joined the dance, but in a small, fleeting manner. They opened and closed, trying to follow my rhythm, but always at least one step behind, failing to bring the appropriate result. I was tempted to push her down, sprawled on the desk, to test how much it would take to overwhelm her crush.

Unfortunately, that had a big risk of exploding to my face, so I pulled back, a smirk on my face. “It was much better, right?” I said as I gently caressed her chin while leaning forward like I was about to kiss her for the third time.

“Yes,” she murmured, her lips parting slightly in preparation for our kiss, but this time, I changed direction at the last second, and in a twisted reflection of the kiss, placed a soft, lingering one on her cheek. “See you tomorrow,” I said before I left, leaving a confused girl in my wake.

[+400 Experience]

PAGE

PAGE

Orion's job was over after I left Helga behind, so I shelved him in a trip to the depths of the library, the Mule coming out once more.

I picked my cart, piled with books, and started walking around. During my passage, I realized that Helga was absent, probably too overwhelmed with what had happened, choosing to disappear back to her room instead of trying to study.

With my favorite target absent, I started walking around the library, occasionally using telekinesis or another spell to mess with the students or the other workers, enthusiastic about experimenting with my newfound talents. It was incredible just how much I improved in during an hour of training.

Nothing short of a small miracle considering my arcana skill was currently maxed out. It made me understand how Helga managed to get a spot in the magical section of the school despite her foreigner and commoner status. Another sign that just how wasteful that kind of approaches could be.

More importantly, it made me change my intentions towards her. Initially, she was just a convenient target to enhance my power, but the fact that she could help me that much in less than an hour meant that she was an untapped treasure. I needed to find a way to acquire her long term, and not just as Orion the Ranger, but with my real identity.

It was a long term objective, as I had no intention to reveal anything to someone else before I was strong enough to defend myself, or sleek enough to avoid any adverse attention. I needed to keep a low profile as long as I could manage.

Unfortunately, as much as I wished it to be, I hadn't had the option of concealing myself passively while scavenging for opportunities. While the future opportunities of Marianne and Helga were more than enough for my prospects, there was something I needed to address to maintain my tenuous hold on them. Or more accurately, someone.

Cornelia.

She had a strong hold over both Marianne and Helga, which meant that no matter how elaborate my plan, how strong my hold, I couldn't predict when she would interject and break my plans. I had no information on her, not even why she was risking to have her dalliances in the library rather than in her room. Was it just a fetishistic preference, or did it have a more important reason?

But luckily, I had recently come up with a way to learn it.

When I saw Cornelia entering the library, I took it as a sign to get away. Following her to see whether she would bring me another opportunity to earn some experience, but the lack of information was too dangerous in my case. I needed to learn what makes Cornelia tick.

I sneaked out of the library an hour before the supposed end of my shift, and after a brief stop at my room, I was once again wearing my maid costume, and started walking in the wing

where it held the rooms for the female students. Though, this time, I made sure to apply a different face. With a few extra lines on the face, graying hair, and a slouched walk, I was replicating the sight of a forty years old maid perfectly.

This time, I had more confidence in my walk, not only I had a better command of the layout, but also my skills in speech and subterfuge were sufficiently high, enough to dismiss the suspicion of any maid. Most of them were Abnormals, and the rest, I doubted that any of them had enough in their stats to penetrate my improved disguise.

I started looking around to find someone to help me. A minute later, I succeed, in the form of a young maid skulking in the shadows, trying to avoid work. I had a feeling that she wasn't very bright, trying to hide in such an obvious location, though it worked well for my intentions. "Greetings, youngster," I called her, who flinched when she realized that her scheme had failed. "Do you have a minute or two to answer my questions?"

"Of course," she said with relaxation when she realized I wasn't planning to order her to do some kind of menial work. "How can I help you, honored elder," she said.

"My lady is about to join the halls of this esteemed institution, and they asked me to come early to pick her room and everything. So, I wanted to learn about how everything operates. Would it be a bother for a smart young girl to guide her elder."

[+1 Subterfuge]

Excited to find flattery rather than admonishment she had been expecting, she was quick to launch a detailed explanation about how everything worked. Funny enough, half of the information she provided was inaccurate, conflicting with itself, forcing me to keep a mental tally of everything and crosscheck the results. Still, after fifteen minutes, I had managed to learn quite a bit about how they operated, including a lot of casual secrets about the maids.

"And how about the students," I gently prodded. "After all, I need to pick a nice room for my ward, and neighbors are important."

"I don't know, we're not supposed to talk about the nobles..." she murmured, but when I twirled my fingers and a silver coin appeared between them, her tune changed. "But on the other hand, your mission is also important. It's hard to decide." The amount of silver in my hand doubled. Her hand moved in an eerie quickness, her greed overcoming her limits.

[+2 Speech]

“Now, the first thing to know...” she started, and I listened...

[Level: 5    Experience: 11740 / 15000

Strength: 6    Charisma: 12

Precision: 9    Perception: 9

Agility: 7    Manipulation: 11

Speed: 6    Intelligence: 8

Endurance: 8    Wisdom: 17

HP: 180 / 180    Mana: 240 / 285    ]

#### SKILLS

[Advanced Subterfuge (43/50)

Basic Arcana [25/25]

Basic Speech 12/25    ]



# Chapter Eight

My undercover interrogation session with the young maid had worked even better than I had expected to. Not only I had managed to learn a lot about the way the servants operated, which would make my disguises even more convincing, but also I had managed to gather quite a few interesting nuggets of information about the students. Some casual, like the fact that Cornelia having two maids serving her, one younger one that handled the menial tasks, and an old matron that mostly sat around, raining orders to other servants.

Some were more interesting. Like the fact that she had, during a midnight walk -which she had been dallying with another servant or a guard if her sudden blush was any indicator- had seen Cornelia and the old maid fighting, or more accurately Cornelia shouting aggressively while the old matron ignoring her in an obvious dismissive attitude. A weird balance of power, but the implications I wasn't able to guess without more information.

Luckily, my undercover interrogation also gave me the tools to investigate the reasons for it. The maid was more than happy to inform me that the younger maid was having some friendly walks with one of the guards, and she even saw her disappear with him a few minutes ago.

So, after leaving my unwitting informant behind, I searched for a corner, and after a few more illusions, I was dressed in the colors of House Antony, with my general looks and hair colors the same with the younger maid. Unfortunately, I hadn't seen her, neither I had enough finesse to copy a face without fault even if I did, but I kept my head down as I walked towards Cornelia's rooms, willing to bet that no one would pay too much attention to me.

A minute later, I was at the door. A magical probe revealed that it was warded, but it wasn't a particularly strong one, relying on the fact that no one would dare to enter the room of such an important house without an invitation. Even better, it had an intentionally weak part, to allow someone carrying a keystone to enter without triggering the alarm.

A bad assumption, as I quietly expanded my magical reach, and copied the necessary pattern, which staggered the ward just enough for me to open the door and sneak inside. When I pulled my energy back, the protective veil was back on, a touch weaker than it was supposed to be, but I was willing to bet that Cornelia wouldn't take notice of such a small change.

I threw a glance around the room. Cornelia's room was better than Marianne's in both size and furnishing, which only highlighted the relative difference of power between them. House Louis was just a minor one, while House Antony was a major one, and seemingly with a corresponding enjoyment of unnecessary opulence. And it was just the first room, with a few

seats, just to greet visitors.

While I would have liked to enjoy the comforts it provided, I didn't know when someone, either Cornelia or one of the maids, would return, so I initiated my search. Predictably, the first room, open for all visitors, didn't have anything interesting, so I moved onto the next room, which was another sitting room, but in a more private setting. I didn't spend too much time there either. I was tempted to swipe one of the candlesticks, made from pure silver, expensive enough to address a lot of my monetary needs, but that would be too suspicious. They were all stamped with the house crest.

But the real treasure was the bedroom, which laid behind another ward, this time stronger, more intricate. And unlike the previous one, it didn't have an intentional weak point to allow the keystone-bearers to pass without raising an alarm. As a result, it was much more difficult to bypass without triggering. Conveniently, there was no one around, which gave me enough time to slip through it before raising an alarm, only because it was a simple design, not constructed to resist against another magic user, lacking any kind of trap that might create a backlash in case of a careless touch.

After a deep breath, I mentally reached for the strings of magic that held the ward together, carefully unfolding them, occasionally building temporary arcane holds to maintain its structural integrity, my palms sweaty with stress. It took twenty minutes, and more than two-thirds of my mana pool, to create a safe passage that would allow me to pass.

Another difficult choice awaited me. I either turned back and left, wasting the effort I had put in there, or slip inside, hoping that I would be able to unravel the same thing easier while leaving. And I had just a few seconds to decide it.

In the end, I took the step forward. I needed to have a better grasp of Cornelia, lest she upended everything I worked for without even knowing. I dismissed my temporary magical scaffolding bit by bit, letting the ward fall back its previous state, providing full coverage for the room.

"Finally," I murmured as I looked around Cornelia's bedroom. I would have liked to be surprised by the richness of the furnishings -rare wood, gold platings, and paintings I didn't recognize but looked very expensive-, but after seeing the rest of her rooms, I couldn't say that I was impressed.

I tried to apply one of the tricks I had learned from Helga, gathered my magic and then let it spread like a bubble, trying to find something worthwhile. Unfortunately, it failed spectacularly,

not because it wasn't able to find anything, but because there were too many magical items in the room. And I was afraid to put anything more than the absolute minimum behind it in fear of triggering the ward, making things even more difficult.

In the end, I decided to write it off as a loss, and observed the room, relying on the more primitive approach of using my own eyes. The first thing I noticed was her desk, with several books, and expensive-looking parchments furled open, all covered with several active runes, denoting their high value. It wasn't exactly cheap to produce parchments strong enough to hold active runes, and they were used for valuable things.

Moreover, I recognized some of the books, as they belonged to the private wing of the library, where it held the ones with actual precious knowledge, but the access to it was highly regulated. I was surprised that she had been allowed to remove them from the library. Apparently, being a part of an important family had even bigger benefits than I first assumed.

The other books, I failed to recognize, but since their spines were marked with the crest of House Antony, it wasn't a huge deductive leap to accurately guess their sources. I wondered whether this information was what Helga was looking for, remembering the scroll exchange that went between them. I was tempted to steal one of them, but that would alert Cornelia about the uninvited guest in her room, and I didn't want to jeopardize my access. And while copying would be a nice compromise, there were too many targets, especially since I didn't know what Helga was looking for.

With that path shelved, I started going around the room, carefully opening her drawers, hoping to find a secret that would give me some kind of advantage on her. Maybe a letter, or if I'm incredibly lucky, a personal diary. Unfortunately, with each drawer I pulled open, my hopes dwindled. Maybe sneaking into her room wasn't as well thought out as I had first envisioned. It certainly didn't bring the treasures I had been hoping for.

The next drawer I had opened turned out to be holding her underwear, some of them in a particularly spicy variety. I snorted as I pocketed one of the particularly interesting ones, black, more lace than fabric, and see-through. Not that I had any plans of actively using them, but having them was enough. At least, I could console myself by claiming it wasn't completely worthless!

[Achievement: Thief of Treasures. Risk your life to acquire a treasure worthy of everything. +500 Experience. +2 Agility]

I couldn't help but let out a snort. Who would have guessed that the system had a sense of

humor, which threw a lot of questions about its source, especially curious since none of the books that I had read had mentioned something like that. So, it was either a secret, or something unique to my case. Still, the resulting boost was no means unwelcome, as I could feel my body starting to move with an unfamiliar lightness, my balance significantly better.

And funny enough, I couldn't even say the reward was excessive, as a mistake would bring the wrath of Cornelia to my head, a woman that almost killed me because I stumbled on her in a compromising position while she was in public. There was no telling what she would do if she caught me in her room, sneaking around, looking for her secrets...

I tested the system by trying to steal a few more things, but it turned out to be a one-off thing. I would still try it in a different room, but that was for a different time.

I was reaching for another drawer, indistinguishable from the rest, when I felt a flicker of magic. I instantly pulled back, and probed it with magical senses instead. "Pits of hell," I murmured as I examined the results. I had finally found the drawer I had been looking for, which would have been good news if it wasn't for the wards around it. At least three interlocking ones, managing to erase almost all magical presence while conveniently making the trick I had pulled on the door impossible. The wards had keyholes, for the lack of a better term, but different from the main entrance, the locks were designed with magic in mind. It wasn't enough to have the correct keystone, they also required the correct pattern to be known. Even if it was possible to unravel them without the stones, which I wasn't sure, it would require a much higher skill than I currently had.

But I didn't have enough time to lament that fact, because the ward around the room suddenly started fluctuating. Simultaneously, I felt the door opening. I did the only thing I could, opened the door of the nearest wardrobe, and sneaked inside, closing the door the moment the other one started to open.

The sheer magnitude of my luckiness hit me with the full weight of a rabid dragon. It was a close call, and without the burst of agility I had experienced, I doubted that I would have been successfully sneaking my way into the wardrobe and close it behind me without making a discernible sound.

The safe thing was to close the door and ensure my concealment. Still, there was the question of the identity of the intruder, so I kept the door ajar, once again ignoring the requirements of common sense.

The intruder turned out to be an old woman, dressed in as the other servants, stepped into the

room, marked with the colors of House Antony. A curious development, a maid breaking into the privacy of her mistress. Combined with the gossips about their fights, it created an even more interesting picture.

But I was more interested in the way she was moving. For once, she had a straight, confident gait as she walked, something that would fit better to a minor noble rather than a servant, especially one that was currently invading the privacy of her mistress. Even if she didn't know about Cornelia's impending arrival, the way she systemically went through the same drawers I had gone through, but she went through its contents with impudence, uncaring of the mess she left in her wake.

I felt excited as she neared the warded drawer that had stymied me quite a bit. She wouldn't have been able to open it, of course, but the reaction to her attempt might have given me some clues.

Before that could happen, the sound of door slamming reached my ear, followed by a set of hurried steps. When the bedroom opened in the same aggressive manner, I wasn't surprised when it revealed Cornelia, her face contorted with anger.

I couldn't help but admire the maid when she turned towards Cornelia, in a shocking display of calmness. I doubted that I would be able to stay as calm, especially when facing Cornelia, even angrier than the night that almost ended with my death. "Can I help you, mistress Cornelia," she said calmly, but even more interestingly, I managed to catch a hint of amusement on her tone, which made me even more curious.

"What are you doing in my room," Cornelia said, the words leaving her mouth in a slow, methodical rhythm, one might trick a passerby to think that she was calmer, but I could sense the oppressive waves of magic that was rolling off her with each word. It also had the added benefit of showing me the gulf of power between us.

"I'm going through the periodical cleaning of your room as I'm ordered, milady," she said, still calm.

"Fuck your orders," Cornelia said, slamming her hand on the door. When she pulled back, there was a scorch mark on the door. "Didn't I tell you that you will stay away from my room, you old shrew."

"Be careful, milady. Such displays are not befitting the presumptive heiress of your esteemed house," she told haughtily.

“Don’t patronize me, you old crone, I ordered you to get out of my room,” Cornelia said, but still unmoved.

“And should I remind you that the orders from the Lord of the House always take the precedence, and he ordered me to keep your rooms in good order.”

“Not the lord, but the regent,” Cornelia said as she took a step forward, her hand covered in flames. “Don’t dare to call that bastard the lord of the house in front of me again, you pathetic bat!”

The last thing I expected was for the maid to look even smugger, tinged with satisfaction. She said nothing as Cornelia closed in, and stood in front of her. I didn’t know exactly why the maid was goading Cornelia, but it was clear that it was somehow linked to inheritance, otherwise, there wouldn’t be that much needling on the correct form of the titles.

Cornelia managed to suppress her anger before physically harming the maid, which weirdly enough, made her look disappointed. “I would leave if you desire so, milady,” the maid said as she walked out. “But you need to be more careful to keep your room in order if you are determined to reject my help. We wouldn’t want to be known that the heiress of our glorious House is a slob, would we?” With that, she left the room, leaving the door open.

Cornelia closed with a wave of her hand, magically slamming it shut. The silencing ward came up just a moment later, and then a shimmering shield appeared in the middle of the room, absorbing the bolts of fire she started to throw, each accompanied by a furious cry.

I would have liked to say that I watched her display of anger calmly, but that would be a lie. All it would take for her to check her wardrobe, and I would be dead... A fear that stayed close to the surface during the several long minutes that Cornelia rained flames on the surface, proving that her nickname, Queen of Flames, was not just an empty boast.

Luckily, neither anger nor mana was boundless, even for Cornelia. After a while, she dispelled the shield, and sat on her bed, breathing heavily, occasionally muttering, too quiet for me to hear, but from her expression, I guessed that they were curses. But even that didn’t last long. She moved to open the warded drawer, the one that I wasn’t even able to start trying.

She pressed her ring on the center, then flared her magic in a weird, unbalanced way, which was likely a pattern to complete the physical part of the key. It seemed that she took the security of that particular drawer very seriously. After the drawer was open, she carefully pulled a stack of paper, either letters or legal documents, and quickly counted them. All must

be there, as she was considerably calmer as she put them back on and reengaged the defensive wards.

She returned to her bed, and her back was turned as she reached for the strings that held her robe together. I lamented the fact that I was missing an amazing view. When she finished unfastening it, she pushed it off her shoulders, and it fell on the ground, and my annoyance evaporated with it as I examined her beautiful figure, drabbed in a sexy corset and equally sexy panties.

[+100 Experience]

Still, the burst of experience I received wasn't the only interesting about it. Even from my restricted angle, it was obvious that her corset wasn't correctly placed, with half of its strings untied. Apparently, Cornelia's annoyance wasn't just at the presumption of her maid, but also for her timing, cutting her fun-time prematurely. With Marianne, I guessed, based on the fact that she was wearing something softly sexy rather than danger-and-domination themed one she had been wearing while her extended encounter with Helga.

I had been expecting her to fix her underwear before wearing her robe once more, which was why I was pleasantly surprised when, after a brief struggle with its thin straps, her corset followed the same path with her robe, and ended up on the floor, giving me the full view of her naked back.

[+100 Experience]

It was the first time I had the pleasure of examining her body without distraction. Tall, lithe, yet curvy where it counted, under the shimmering light of her room, she looked like a masterpiece, like a sword wrapped with a scabbard inlaid with rubies, sharp, beautiful, but with a potential to turn deadly in any moment. Though, the threat only made my boner harder as I watched her to remove her panties.

[+100 Experience]

I had been cautiously hoping that the next thing she had in mind was to have a nice shower, though a part of me treating that cautious part like a traitor. While missing out on the show would leave me with blue balls, it would also make things significantly easier.

But it turned out that my twisted yet beautiful luck was working overtime, as she chose to throw herself on her bed, with a perfect angle to give me an excellent view of the treasure between her legs, a rather tantalizing view even before her fingers joined the battle, and started

caressing her folds in a surprising urgency, like she was using the rush of pleasure to counter her stress. A good strategy, and it was certainly working out for me.

[+200 Experience]

And what kind of man I would be if I didn't use such a beautiful opportunity to its full extent. I pulled my shaft out while trying to make no sound, and started caressing it. Gently, as I was afraid of the possibility of alerting her if I used a more frantic pace, but luckily, the beautiful sight in front of me left no need for such assistance. The adrenaline from the fear of getting caught was just the sprinkles on top.

Under these factors, it wasn't a surprise when I arrived at the finish line before Cornelia despite her head-start, leaving my mark on the interior of her wardrobe. Soon, Cornelia shuddered for a moment, marking the completion of her objective, but it was a short one, consisting just a shudder or two before she stood up, and walked out of her room after picking a towel, probably for a relaxing bath.

[+300 Experience]

And she didn't bother reestablishing the complicated ward on the door, putting an extremely simple one in place instead, just enough to prevent her maid from going around. After listening for a minute, making sure that there was no one in the living room to notice my retreat, I escaped from the room, letting out a relaxed breath only after I managed to find a corner, and transform into a generic servant with no house colors.

Still, all included, I couldn't say that I was dissatisfied with the results. Even with the exhaustion from my almost depleted mana and the stress from several close calls, my expedition resulted in a generous bundle of information, with a few secrets included.

Now, I just needed to find a way to use them...

[Level: 5      Experience: 13040 / 15000

Strength: 6    Charisma: 12

Precision: 9    Perception: 9

Agility: 9    Manipulation: 11



Speed: 6 Intelligence: 8

Endurance: 8 Wisdom: 17

HP: 190 / 190 Mana: 45 / 285 ]

#### SKILLS

[Advanced Subterfuge (43/50)

Basic Arcana [25/25]

Basic Speech 12/25 ]

## Chapter Nine

After leaving Cornelia's room, I used the first opportunity I had to change into my other, more permanent, maid identity. I would have preferred to change back into my own identity, as walking around in a dress wasn't something I particularly enjoyed, but it would be hard to explain why the 'Mule' was walking around in the section for the elite portion of the female students.

It turned out to be a prudent choice, as I was distracted by a familiar voice. "Selina," she called, though I would be able to recognize her even if I hadn't been able to recognize her voice. Only one person knew the name of this fake identity.

"Madame Griselda," I said as I turned, curtsying respectfully, a motion which she waved off.

"So lucky," she murmured. "I was just trying to find you, but neither you nor your employer was around."

"He's probably lost," I answered. With the contempt she had in her voice while mentioning my real identity, I didn't think she would have any trouble believing that particular lie. I wasn't really angry at her though, how could I be, when she gave me such an amazing gift the last time. "So, why were you looking for me?"

"Mistress has arrived from the library early, and asking for a bath, and sent me to find you" she explained. "I know that it's a bit sudden, but if you don't have any other task-" she continued until I cut her off.

"I will be delighted," I answered, giving the first true answer of the night to her. I didn't think that I would have been able to contain my excitement if it wasn't for my well-developed subterfuge skill. I had a feeling that Marianne's sudden arrival had been linked to Cornelia's disappearance, cutting their private time short. "I have already completed all my other tasks."

"Excellent. Let's go and prepare the bath."

I didn't exactly welcome her presence in that phase, not with the additional preparations I needed to complete. "I already know everything other than how to prepare that herbal water. Let's go prepare that, and I can handle everything else."

"Such a reliable youngster," she said happily. "The bath water is already boiling in the same room."

“Then there is nothing preventing you from getting a couple of hours of rest, is there? Actually, why don’t you just take the night off? I can attend her for the rest of the night.”

[+1 Speech]

“You would do that for me?” she said happily. “Still...”

The fight between her desire for an early night and her sense of responsibility was obvious. I had a feeling that, without any external involvement, the latter would come out victorious. Luckily, nothing was preventing me from being that external force. “Don’t you trust me?” I added, doing my best to sound fragile, even managing to push a tear from the side of my eyes. Her suddenly growing eyes implied success before she managed to speak.

[+1 Speech]

“Of course I trust you,” she answered in hurry. I softened my expression. “Mistress is very satisfied with your service as well,” she continued in a more leisure pace, unaware of the type of satisfaction her mistress had experienced.

“Excellent,” I answered. “Why don’t you go and rest, so that you’ll be able to attend her, fresh as a daisy.”

She had left, but only after giving me a detailed breakdown of Marianne’s nightly ritual, which I memorized in just one repeat, making her relax even more about relying on me about her charge. When she left, I went to the preparation room, where a huge cauldron was filled with hot, simmering water. I filled two buckets, carrying them with a near-dashing pace, wanting to finish the preparations before Marianne lost her patience and decided to resolve her need in a solitary manner.

Several minutes and three rounds of buckets later, I was in Marianne’s bathroom, once again dressed in my towels, the room filled with steam for good measure. After one last check to make sure everything in place, I stepped out, and knocked on the door of her bedroom. “The bath is ready, my lady,” I called, doing my best to sound tricky.

She said nothing, just let out a dissatisfied grunt to notify she had heard me. I dashed back to the bathroom, just in case she decided to call me in her bedroom. An interesting proposition for sure, but I wasn’t ready to be seen by her without the protective curtain of the steam to blunt the edges. My disguise was good, but not that good.

When Marianne walked into the room, wearing a loose dressing-gown, barely held together by

a sash, I could read a few emotions on her lovely face. The first was the annoyance. The reason didn't take long to confirm. "The next time, I expect you to wait in front of my door," she said with a sharp tone, with all the entitlement of a noblewoman used to get everything she demanded from the lower classes.

"Of course, mistress," I answered, raising my voice to hide my desire to laugh out loud, because it wasn't only anger I could hear in her tone. There was a strain hidden underneath, one that reminded me of the early stages of her encounter with Cornelia, before the redhead cut loose and satisfied her needs. A task that fell under my purview after my 'accidental' success during her last bath.

And the strain of her voice wasn't the only indicator. With a pull, she got rid of her loosely tied sash, giving me a glimpse of her voluptuous body. Even better, the limited view thanks to the steam cloud hung between us, the view had gained an exotic quality, the resulting beauty enough to strain the capabilities of the towel wrapped around my waist that secured my secret.

[+50 Experience]

When she started walking, her gown flowed behind her, adding to the mystique, but after a shrug of her shoulders, the gown fell on the ground, leaving her in her birthday suit as she covered the rest of the distance with the bath.

[+100 Experience]

Showing off my amazing maid skills, I was already at the edge of the bath before her arrival, my arm raised to help her. She grabbed my hand as her feet touched the bubbles that covered the surface of the water, and helped her to lower herself, no matter how much it hurt to hide that spectacular body in the concealing embrace of the water.

I wore the bathing glove on my right hand with some soap while she soaked in the water. She reached for her wine glass, already filled with a generous amount, and took a sip that noticeably changed the amount inside.

I planned to let her wait a few minutes as she sipped some more wine, mellowing her further in collaboration with the gentle caress of the hot water, but she changed my mind when she sent a glance to my way, biting her lips at the last second to prevent herself from saying something. Likely asking me to start quicker, I presumed. As a humble servant, who I was to disappoint?

I gently grabbed her right arm, the one that wasn't currently occupied with the wine glass, and started rubbing with my gloved hand, while the naked one supported from below. At first, the

delivery was restricted to the glove, but soon, the fingers of my naked hand joined the dance, slowly going back and forth in a rhythmic pattern to support the massage.

Even more, when I reached higher parts of her arm, I positioned my left hand carefully, resulting in the back of my hand, resting 'accidentally' on her breast. She flinched a bit on my touch and turned to me, but I kept my eyes on her arm, not giving the slightest indication that I had noticed her gaze. A while later, she took another sip and returned her position, her eyes closed to enjoy the massage, implicitly accepting my touch.

[+100 Experience]

Satisfied with the result, I continued to dally on the upper part of her arm, while continuing to rub her breasts gently, not just for pleasure but also to make her get used to my touch. However, only after shifting into her other arm, I had realized that, in the excitement of the moment, I failed to attend a rather important task, sneakily refilling her wine glass. When I turned towards her, the wine glass was already empty, resting on the side.

"Another glass, mistress," I asked, hoping to fix the issue, but I just received a shook of her head in return. A pity, as her tipsiness would have increased the ease of my task. But a moment later, I shrugged, as the challenge would make the eventual result only tastier.

With that decision in mind, I have subjected her other arm the same stretched out treatment while she enjoyed the gentle embrace of the water, ignoring the signs of her impatience. There was a certain pleasure in watching her as she struggled not to order me to hurry up, not wanting to risk what she thought as successful concealment of her intentions. It was interesting just how easy for her to convince her to the obviousness of the servant class...

[+1 Subterfuge]

Still, internalized class discrimination in the society wasn't the topic I needed to focus right now, not when I had a unique access to such a voluptuous beauty, especially when she occasionally bristled in the water, which raised her breasts above the protective cloud the bubbles, tempting me to dismiss the caution and sink my fingers into their beautiful expanse. But I held back, focusing on slowly eroding her resistance through pleasure.

[+200 Experience]

After another extended treatment of her shoulders, I moved onto her back. On there, I decided to mix things up a bit by applying some of the knowledge I had gained from medical books. After a cursory pass with the glove, I have removed the bath glove from my hand, and pressed

my thumbs on both sides of her neck, on the first knot of her spine, and started dragging them down, my other fingers caressing her back to enhance the sensation.

Thanks to my stats, it wasn't exactly difficult to read her body language to fine-tune the pressure and the pattern of the caress I was applying on her back. I dragged my fingers down in a glacial pace, enjoying the softness of her skin while earning a moan of her. With the confirmation that I was on the right track, I focused on her back for a while, until she was straining to keep her moans inside.

I put back the bath glove before moving back to her shoulders, but this time, focusing on the front side while my hands dipped dangerously close to the curves of her breasts. No reaction from her. In the second pass, I made sure the caress the edge, the exact move that had alerted her the previous time despite her tipsiness, but this time, it went without a reaction as well. She had been mellowed enough.

It was the time to give her a full-frontal treatment, I decided as my gloved hand sank into the water, and made a pass over her breast. It was a neutral, clinical pass, easy to defend in case it angered her, but once again, it went unmentioned, with no reaction from her side, her eyes closed. When I made another pass, this time with more pressure, she reacted by a subtle pressing of her lips, but contrary to the last time, it only invigorated to go further, recognizing the sign of a held-back moan.

I continued caressing her breasts exclusively with my gloved hand, just in case of an adverse reaction, couldn't help but feel amazed at the benefits of a well-constructed identity.

[+1 Subterfuge]

[+300 Experience]

As the seconds stacked tall enough to create a pile of minutes, I decided it was the time to push further. Perhaps it was ill-advised, but the glove I was wearing was limiting the sensations, giving me just a taste, making me long for more. My left hand started listening to the orders of my brain as it slowly sunk into the water, and sank into her breast.

[+250 Experience]

The feeling I was getting was heavenly, but there was still one important issue, namely, why a maid was holding her breast for such a long time. I decided to go with a simple explanation, and used my grip to raise her breast, my gloved hand washing the underside of it. Her breasts, despite their largeness, was firm and shapely enough to not to need such a treatment, but she

must have been more lost in the pleasures of the flesh, because a moan, a rather throaty one, was the only reaction from her.

I let out a relaxed breath at her reaction. It was one thing to know the implicit reason for my presence, and another to get implicit permission to push even further. My naked fingers started dancing on her breasts, paying lip-service to the excuse of creating the reach, while the gloved hand hungrily danced on the bottom of her breasts.

I decided to leave another layer of caution behind and positioned my hand directly above my hand. Her nipple, hardened with arousal, started to press on my palm, tempting me to twist it toyingly. Unfortunately, that was out of the question, so I limited myself to gently increase the pressure of my palm, adding a touch of friction to the balance. Something she enjoyed, if the sudden arching of her back was any indicator.

[+300 Experience]

But even as she started showing increased signs of arousals, her eyes stayed firmly closed, probably not wanting to be distracted from the heated daydream that was playing in her mind. Why not spice things up more, I thought as a sudden inspiration struck me. Yes, both of my hands were currently busy, not to mention using my other appendage was completely out of question, but luckily, magic was always ready to provide an answer.

It was difficult, trying to use magic this close to another accomplished student, but her rather distracted state helped me a lot, and the lessons I learned from Helga was enough to bridge the gap. I took a deep breath before slowly shaping up my mana into telekinetic force, creating an almost unnoticeable disturbance on the depths of water, just an inch away from where her legs met each other. The water started twirling as an orb, which delivered an invisible message to her most sensitive spots.

Almost, but not quite, evidenced by the increased frequency of moans, not to mention they were a touch louder as well. It was a moan that begged for a final climax.

[+500 Experience]

She was on the edge of an orgasm, and it would take a hard push into the soft flesh of her breasts, or a quickening of the small water trick I was using. And since she was already on the edge, plagued with an unmet orgasm, giving her the release she was seeking would be the nice thing to do.

Naturally, I slowed down.

It was amusing to watch her expression after I dispelled the water trick. A moment's confusion found itself between layers of pleasure as she tried to understand the reason for the sudden loss of pleasure. And I chose that exact moment to move down even further to her stomach. Even with her eyes closed, I could read her internal argument from her expression, considering ordering me to go back to my previous post.

I could easily imagine that order leaving Cornelia's lips, but Marianne was not as forward, even to a servant that was supposed to follow her orders. But it was convenient for me, because it gave me the excuse to dally around her stomach, my arm occasionally rubbing against her nipple under the guise of an accident, keeping her arousal up, but not to a point where she would find the climax she was seeking.

[+500 Experience]

Level UP!

[Select one of the following skills: Advanced Arcana, Basic Fire Magic, Basic Politics]

While another level was always welcome, I couldn't help but feel intrigued by the skill selection. The magical ones were quite clear, but politics was an interesting one. I hadn't seen anything remotely close in all the books I had read in the library. On the other hand, it didn't mean much, as I was still limited to the public parts of the library, which meant that anything remotely controversial wouldn't have a place there. And I could imagine a skill like politics hidden in the depths of the library, accessible only for the most influential noble families. Considering the interesting ways I had managed to use subterfuge, I could only begin to guess the potential for the political one.

I was tempted to choose it as my new skill, but at this point, I could ill-afford to take the risk of it turning out useless. In my circumstances, there was little application for it. I chose to improve my Arcana skill instead, wanting to maximize the benefit from my sessions with Helga. And frankly, arcana magic had too many applications for me to actually ignore.

With that resolved, I barely held back a laugh when I pulled back, only to create a panicked expression on her face. "It's time for your legs, milady," I said preemptively, reminding her that we were still halfway in.

[+3 Speech]

It was nice for the system to acknowledge the trick I pulled with a double-increase of my speech skill. I walked with deliberate slowness, and when I took my new spot, her leg was already up,



waiting for my attention.

Since her eyes closed, there was nothing preventing me from smirking darkly as I put my thumbs on the soles of her feet, and started rubbing both of them at the same time. Her reaction was divine. Her back arched once more, in an angle sharp enough to raise her body outside the confines of the pool, enough to give me a glimpse of her most sacred place, making me thankful that I had used a second towel to prevent a view that would have exposed the ruse.

[+200 Experience]

The amazing view she presented tempted me to give her the release she had been looking for, but not enough to break my commitment to the drawn-out route. The minutes passed as I massaged her feet first, then slowly climbing up to her calves, followed by her thighs. I enjoyed the experience, but it was a tense enjoyment, as the situation forced me to stretch my newly expanded abilities to its limits to keep her in that sweet spot, grabbed the tight embrace of pleasure, making it hard for her to think, but never enough to allow her to reach the climax, keeping her on the edge.

The shape of her face as I pulled back was simply masterful, an interesting mixture of shock and disappointment trying to worm itself to her pleasure-addled expression.

[Achievement: Measured Massage. Deliver an extended treatment carefully balanced along the edge without toppling at either side. +300 Experience, +1 Precision, +1 Manipulation, +1 Perception]

[+300 Experience]

“Please stand up, mistress,” I asked, but despite the subservient meaning, the tone was anything but so. My voice was laced with the best-implied command I could manage, stretching my speech and manipulation to the limit. It worked for a while, as she stood up, and with my help, stepped out of the bath. I grabbed her hand, and led her towards the showering area to rinse her off.

She started to recover after the shower, though she was still tense with her unmet orgasm. She opened her mouth as I closed in once more, holding a fluffy towel in my hands. “You still look tense, mistress,” I said, keeping my eyes away from her face as appropriate. Of course, that had nothing to do with the amazing view I had as I slowly dried her body. “Maybe a massage would be helpful,” I added as I wrapped the towel around her torso.

[+1 Speech]

[+200 Experience]

“A good idea,” she answered calmly and started walking, but her blush betrayed her nervousness. I stayed a step behind her, watching her hips sway with each step. The view was amazing, because I had intentionally picked a small towel for her, barely covering her generous hips, giving me an amazing view.

[+100 Experience]

There were unexpected perks to being a servant.

[Level: 6    Experience: 16140 / 21000

Strength: 6    Charisma: 12

Precision: 10    Perception: 10

Agility: 9    Manipulation: 12

Speed: 6    Intelligence: 8

Endurance: 8    Wisdom: 17

HP: 234 / 234    Mana: 280 / 354    ]

## SKILLS

[Advanced Subterfuge (45/50)

Advanced Arcana [25/50]

Basic Speech 18/25    ]

# Chapter Ten

Walking behind Marianne was a pleasure, especially when she was dressed only in a short towel, a tempting sway on her hips, enhanced further by her unmet desire. Of course, it wasn't comparable to the view that followed once she stood next to her bed, and let the towel fall on the floor. The amazing view of her behind filled my vision, supported by a glimpse of her glistening nether lips as she crawled on the bed, lying prone.

[+100 Experience]

Her lack of concern for a maid's presence was definitely useful, enough to make her take a revealing and vulnerable position without the slightest concern. As much as I would have liked to keep her beautiful breasts in my field of vision constantly, I wasn't ready to be on her sight without the comfortable steam cover.

My eyes devoured the contours of her body as I closed the distance, enthusiastically noting the details of her body now that she was bereft of the protection provided by the cloud of steam. When I stood above her, just inches away, I was tempted to examine her curves for hours, but her tenseness was obvious even for the naked eye. It wasn't the best time to take a risk, I decided and started working.

And it wasn't like my work was a chore, I noted as my hands landed on her back, going back and forth along her spine, repeating the earlier trick from the bath, this time without a restriction. Her reaction was instant, in the form of a small moan, one that she suffocated halfway, but enough to confirm her intention.

[+200 Experience]

I watched as her eyes flickered open. Her neck turned, allowing her gaze to meet my face, but it didn't take long for them to close once more as I continued my obvious act, trusting my disguise to hold despite the unfavorable visibility, betting on the fact that her distraction shone brighter than the lights of the room.

[+1 Subterfuge]

I continued my task of slowly caressing her back, but I couldn't help but feel self-conscious about the possibility of an accidental discovery, which was a real possibility under the bright lights of the room. I had managed to slip successfully once, but it wasn't a reason to retake that risk, especially when I was going to push the situation much further. "Milady, would you like me

to dim the lights a bit, a darker room would be more relaxing,” I suggested, making sure that my voice trembled with a sufficient dose of fear, as it was appropriate for a commoner maid to feel insecure when daring to notify their betters about their opinion without prompting, no matter how simple or sensible.

[+1 Speech]

I relaxed even more when she waved her hand without even opening her eyes, and the lights in the room dimmed considerably. Only a candle left in the room, flickering just a few feet away, filling the room with moving shadows to give a mystic feeling, allowing me to cut loose.

Though, it was also annoying a bit, because her careless display of magic in an area that wasn't her primary focus drove my deficiencies to the surface. I knew that I shouldn't feel impatient. It had been just a few days since I had unlocked the secrets of my power, and feeling disappointed just because I was yet to overcome the people with years of opportunity to improve theirs was misguided at best. I needed at least another week to do that!

And it wasn't like I was restricted to direct confrontation to hit back, evidenced by the fact that I was in her most private room, caressing her naked body. Of course, it would have been if I didn't have to hide behind the identity of a female maid, but one couldn't have everything. Not yet, at least.

The darkness served more than just assisting my disguise, as her moans were considerably more frequent when my hands started dancing over her body once more. The darkness helped to enhance her sensations, yet another useful detail about her body which would allow me to play her like a string instrument.

[+200 Experience]

With the unexpected assistance of the darkness, it didn't take long for her pleasure to rise to the earlier point, just a notch before the climax. I was watching that particular way she was biting her lips, so I chose that moment to slow my treatment once more. My hands danced up and down on her back for minutes, each second making her tenseness tighter and tighter, to a point that if I wasn't disguised as a servant, she would be begging for my mercy.

I chose that moment to move down on her body, caressing her plump cheeks with a fleeting touch. In another circumstance, I could imagine her exploding in anger for my daring to touch such a private location, but the extensions in her long-awaited meetings were enough to sway her on that point. I kept the pacing, betting on that her shyness overcoming her impatience.

But I could see that it was a losing battle from the ways her hips rose, her legs parting slightly to give an unrestricted view of her most intimate place, which was dripping arousal. Adding to her almost constant moans, I could see that her resistance was about to collapse soon, one way or another...

[+500 Experience]

The easiest thing to do would be to increase the pressure on the small of her back slightly, triggering her arousal. It should be enough, both the pleasure I had received, and the increase in my experience. Not only I gained another level, but I had also made significant headway for the next one. It should be enough.

But it wasn't. I opened my mouth, with the sudden realization that I would probably die because of my this newfound greed, if not today, quite soon. I also knew that I might not find another opportunity to ask that particular question if I missed this amazing opportunity, because she wouldn't be caught in surprise by her own reaction.

"Milady," I murmured, making my voice trembling even more than the previous time. "I would like to ask a question, but I'm afraid if it might be a bit too presumptuous." She grunted in reply, too far gone in the pleasure to answer, and I continued. "My previous lady was from the Northern Plains, and she had educated me in the various massage techniques to help her cope with stress..."

"What kind of stress?" she said, the possibility I was implying enough to make her raise her head.

I continued, acting like I hadn't already noticed her understanding. "I didn't mention it to other servants, afraid that they would find it shameful. They don't exactly fit with the Empire's traditions."

"I see," Marianne murmured. "Did your mistress feel stressed a lot when her husband was away," she asked as she put her head back on the bed.

"Not particularly, no," I answered. "On the contrary, she needed it more whenever the master was back home. For some reason, she never needed it when the master was away. She was usually busy leading the defense of the area, discussing with the commander of the guard for hours in her private chambers," I added, acting as clueless as I could do while implying that my supposed mistress was cheating her husband while he was away. When Marianne said nothing, I was afraid that I had pushed my idiot act too far.

[+1 Speech]

The system warned me just as Marianne opened her mouth, informing me of my success. “I see, you may try,” she murmured, with a hint of excitement coloring her tone. Then, her tone shifted to threatening. “But if you tell it to a living soul about it, I’ll make sure no one finds your body.”

“Of course, mistress,” I said, displaying a good mixture of fear and obedience. Even with everything, I doubted that I could have convinced her if it wasn’t for her unmet desire.

[+1 Speech]

“Excellent, you may start. But no word to anyone else,” she said. Luckily, her face was buried in her pillow, so she missed the sudden hunger in my face.

“As you wish, mistress,” I said as I dragged my hands to her inner thighs, parting her legs wide, enough to give me the full view of her nether lips, ready for my attention. I gently rested my thumbs on the edge, where her lips began, and dragged down, making her shiver helplessly. Just a bit closer to the inside, and she would have exploded rather spectacularly, an ending I carefully avoided. Now that I had unrestricted access to her body, I wanted her tenser than a catapult about to go off before she reached the ending she deeply desired in an explosive manner.

I repeated my last movement, caressing the edge of her lips, taking the exact same route to remove any doubt that it was just accidental. And now that she had a clear idea what the massage included, I pulled back, and focused on her inner thighs, rubbing back and forth, some of them bringing me closer, while others dragged my fingers away from her wetness.

[+300 Experience]

It was a beautiful experience to watch her ass starting to rise in anticipation whenever my hands dragged closer to her bottom. She started trembling with each repeat, tempting me to push forward as a desire to watch her trembles from a point-blank range coiled around my heart.

But watching her squirm was even more enjoyable as I focused on her inner thighs, listening to her gasp in arousal whenever my hand closed enough to dance on the edges of her wetness, each louder than the other.

Ultimately, I decided to reward her, just because I pitied her, of course. It absolutely had no

relation to the way the towel around my waist started to get too tight, the desire swelling high enough to drown my patience mercilessly. I waited until her hips rose, which gave me good access to her nether lips. I brought my thumbs over them, but not on the lateral edges. No, one of them landed on the edge of her clit, ready to draw circles around, while the other took a position at her entrance.

She stiffened just a moment before my thumbs started their dance, anticipating the rush of pleasure she would receive. But the severity of her action was nothing compared to when I drew several circles in rapid succession, finally pushing her to the other end of the arousal. A moan left her mouth, stronger than any other that had left her mouth, and she started trembling beautifully, dimness of the room giving an otherworldly feeling to it.

[+600 Experience]

It was too tempting to resist. I took a step back and broke my legs a bit, enough to reveal my shaft, beating it as quick as I could without making noise while enjoying the beautiful view in front of me.

While it looked like she would continue laying without moving for a while, I needed an excuse in case she decided to surprise me. Just standing on her foot was not enough. With that in mind, I put my right hand on the sole of her feet, caressing gently.

It was an amusing twist of fate when she turned to face me a minute later, I was at the edge of my own climax. "It was a decent massage," she murmured, her voice decidedly mellow.

I didn't want to get away without reaching my own climax, so once again, my wits dominated any sense of self-preservation. "Do you want to stop it early, mistress," I said with a clueless voice while wrapped the towel around my waist once more, a decidedly painful experience considering the erect state of my manhood.

"It wasn't all of it?" she asked, astonished.

"Of course not, mistress," I answered. It might not be the smartest thing to do, but I already started it, so there was no point in cutting it short. "The full course takes more than an hour, but in the end, the mistress usually ended up really relaxed."

"An hour, you say," Marianne murmured, intrigued. "And you say your mistress looked even more relaxed than I am?"

"Usually, she was too exhausted to even lift an arm, mistress," I explained. "Sometimes too

exhausted even to dress before sleeping.” When I noticed the shine in her eyes, I knew that I was successful. The notification that appeared in my field of vision was a nice confirmation nevertheless.

[+1 Speech]

“We still have time,” Marianne murmured, in a disinterested tone so fake that I wouldn’t have believed even back in my idiot days. “Why don’t you show me the full range of your massage technique.”

“It’s a bit harder than the previous portion, though, mistress. I just want to warn you about that.”

Marianne chuckled. “Don’t worry about it, I’m no slouch in endurance. I can take your strength.” It would have been a rather accurate brag if I were an Abnormal like she assumed rather than a Melius with a strength of six, which, combined with my leveraged position, would mean that I could do whatever I could do, and she was helpless unless she relied on her magic.

But it wasn’t the right time to educate her on that fact. “Could you please move to the side a bit, milady?” I asked. “I need to climb on the bed for the next part.”

Another questioning glare found my way, but as usual, only to meet with the mask of a stupid but well-meaning maid. A satisfied expression was on her face when she buried in the pillow once more, suggesting her belief of total control over the situation. An amusing illusion that I, unfortunately, had to sustain.

For now, at least.

Still, as I climbed over her bed, my knees pressing on the soft surface at both sides of her naked body, that sacrifice hurt considerably less than any other situation. Wordlessly, I pressed my elbows to her back and started rubbing her back, optimizing the pressure based on her reaction while leveraging everything I had read about the human anatomy.

Already riding the pleasure of her previous climax, it didn’t take long for her to fall under the sway of my follow-up treatment. I waited until she started purring like a lost kitten that found its way next to a roaring fireplace. Then, I lowered my arms until my forearms were resting on her back, increasing the treatment area. And if, during that, my fingers caressed the edges of her rather generously-sized breasts, it must have been a total accident, no matter how many times it repeated.



[+400 Experience]

When her hips started to rise once more, it was time to push further. After a brief yet effective treatment of her neck and shoulders, I moved down, until her plumb bottom lay underneath my grasp. It was either now, or never, I decided as I pulled the towel away from my waist, and quickly constructed an illusion of towel instead. It wouldn't have past the simplest muster under the normal circumstances, but a combination of the darkness and her distracted state should allow it to slip unnoticed even if she turned.

[+1 Arcana]

With that completed, one of my hands busied itself treating my shaft, while the other focused on the plumpness, leveraging the excuse of the massage to acquaintance myself with the elasticity of her skin, occasionally traveling down to visit her nether lips, enjoying her ever-intensifying wetness. Soon, I started spending more time between her sopping wetness than her plump bottom, increasing her moans as a result.

[+400 Experience]

Treating myself to pleasure while a sexy blonde moaned with pleasure underneath was sufficient, until one point when it wasn't. The longer she lay with her face buried in the pillow, determine to focus on the pleasure, the more I felt invincible, like I could get away with anything. And of course, like every rational human would, I decided to put that feeling to test.

And the test case was obvious. I lowered my shaft lower until it was snugly squeezed between her cheeks. I watched her carefully while continuing to deliver the same treatment, trying to see if she would react in an explosive manner. She failed to notice any difference.

The next step was starting to move, but I knew that it was a rather dangerous push in the current situation. So, I brought my index and middle finger to her entrance, probing it in the excuse of a massage, slowly at first, but picking up speed every second she failed to show an adverse reaction. Soon, the first digits of my fingers disappeared inside, much to her jubilation, followed by a string of gasps.

When I was sure that she was sufficiently distracted, I started moving my hips, her shapely bottom providing enough friction to make it pleasurable. It didn't take long for her moans to increase even further, enjoying the presence of my shaft squeezed between her asscheeks, even if she was on the black about the exact source of the pleasure.

When her moans quickened, so did my treatment, both my fingers and my shaft, increasing her

pleasure even further. I was on the edge just as she was, too far gone to gather the patience to keep her just a step behind her climax. She started trembling as another orgasm hit her, even stronger than the previous one.

The rocking of her body proved to be the last thing I needed. A climax of my own hit me with full force, and I started spraying my seed on her back, too distracted to take note of the risks. Luckily, she was even further gone, and didn't let a whimper of protest as her back covered with a very generous amount of my seed. With eight points of endurance, my body was capable of releasing a surprising amount.

[+1000 Experience]

[Achievement: Mischievous Massage. Sneakily leave a generous gift at the end of the treatment +500 Experience, +1 Speed, +1 Agility]

I didn't have enough time to clean her body before she noticed, I realized, unless I somehow increased the time it took to recover her from. I quickly started spreading it on her back, hoping that when she asked, I could claim it to be a With that, for the first time, I let my fingers cut free on her nether lips, bringing the extent of the capability that was possible with ten points of manipulation and eight points of precision, while using the full extent of my wisdom to read her reaction.

The results were even more explosive than I hoped in my wildest dreams. Already sensitive from her last climax, her moans picked up instantly, and she started showing signs of an impending orgasm. I pushed my fingers as deep as her barrier allowed, even drunk in pleasure, not willing to take that particular step.

But luckily, I had an alternative to test. The moment I finished spreading my cum on her back and her ass, I used my cum-covered fingers to probe her puckered hole. Unfortunately, there, I first my first snag. "Not there," she managed to murmur. "Stop."

"As you wish, milady," I said, and reluctantly pulled my finger out of her puckered hole. But in her slit, I stayed for several more beats, until she started rocking under the influence of another climax.

[+500 Experience]

As much as I wanted to turn her over and continue the same treatment on her sensitive breasts, I was not in a position to ignore a direct order without a consequence, especially when I had already pushed the boundaries that much. Instead, I looked for something to cover the sharp

smell of cum, and saw several bottles of fragrance on her table. I levitated one of them and used a few drops to suppress the smell before she could lift her head.

When she gathered enough energy to turn, I was already on the side of her bed, my head lowered, stretching my acting capabilities to the limit to give the impression of a dutiful servant. "Do you want me to attend you for a quick shower, milady," I said, keeping my voice perfectly even, like what had just happened was completely ordinary. And a small miracle happened, and she bought my act of cluelessness.

[+1 Subterfuge]

"No, just help me to dress. I want to rest," she murmured before burying her head on the pillow. When I came with her nightie, she barely had the strength to lift herself from the bed, and slipped her nightie on, uncaring of the nakedness she presented, which wasn't that unreasonable considering everything that happened. The sight of her bountiful breasts still gave me some experience, though, which was always welcome.

[+50 Experience]

"You can leave now," she said as she threw herself on the bed once more. This time, I followed her command, as even though she looked like she was about to fall asleep before I could leave the room, actually dallying around until she could was too risky. I had done enough for the night, though it was unfortunate that I wasn't able to gain another level.

It wasn't like I lacked the assistance to help me level up.

[Level: 6      Experience: 20890 / 21000

Strength: 6    Charisma: 12

Precision: 10    Perception: 10

Agility: 10    Manipulation: 12

Speed: 7      Intelligence: 8

Endurance: 8    Wisdom: 17

HP: 246 / 246    Mana: 280 / 354      ]

## SKILLS

[Advanced Subterfuge (47/50)

Advanced Arcana [26/50]

Basic Speech 22/25 ]

# Chapter Eleven

I was feeling cheerful as I returned to the library the next morning. Why wouldn't I, after an amazing experience in Marianne's room, I returned to my room for a long and relaxing sleep. My mood only improved when I saw that the Head Librarian was still away. With my improved subterfuge skill, I no longer feared to be outed. If my disguise was good enough to fake being a woman while attending another in the bath, faking the act of my idiot past wouldn't be a problem, no matter the observer.

Unfortunately, the same couldn't be said for the various shenanigans that were going on. I couldn't imagine Cornelia taking the risk of using the library as her forbidden-love den. I definitely wouldn't dare to walk around in a ranger disguise in the library while she was here, meaning not only I would lose my voyeurism opportunities, but also I would lose my excuse to talk with Helga.

Then, I saw her walking towards the depths of the library, and I was familiar with her mannerisms enough to catch a certain excitement in her steps. Today, I decided to join her early, because I had a lot of gaps in my arcana skill to fill. I wanted to see the speed of improvement with a dedicated teacher. And, spending time with her as much as possible before the Head Librarian returned was a prudent idea.

I walked around several minutes, being 'accidentally' visible until one of the assistants ordered me to dust all the books on the back of the library. A clear attempt to make me keep away from the crowd, as all library books, including the relatively unimportant ones in the main section, were enchanted against basic challenges like dust and moisture. It fit my disguise not to question that order. Luckily, I had no intention of doing so in any case.

The Mule disappeared in the depths of the library, and a minute later, Orlin the Ranger walked out...

Since I already knew the general direction she went, it took only a few minutes for me to find Helga. Once again, she was dressed in her thick robes, making me curse the dressing habits of the students of magic, preferring thick, shapeless robes over anything else, just because it was the tradition.

Luckily, I remembered how her body looked, so there was nothing preventing me to imagine the way her body stretched as she tried to reach for the top shelf, trying to get a book. Distracted by her task, she didn't notice my presence. With the help of my agility, sneaking to her was quite easy.

I kept my silence until I was close enough to hug her, leaned to her ear, and whispered. “Do you need any help, beautiful.”

The result was spectacular. Startled by my presence, she turned in her adrenaline boosted speed, a fist-sized ball of lightning already gathered in her palm, ready to be released. Impressive conjuration speed, I noted, though the same couldn’t be said for her speed in aiming. Before she could release the spell, I wrapped my hand around her forearm, and changed her aim. “Orlin?” she whispered in surprise as her lightning hit the ceiling, and discharged harmlessly against the ward.

“Hello, beautiful,” I said even as I placed one of my hands on the small of her back, the other, which was around her forearm, moving up until our fingers were gently intertwined.

For a moment, she was frozen, dumbfounded. The reason was hard to pinpoint, as it might be because of the passionate kiss that marked the end of our last encounter, it might be my enhanced charisma affecting her, or it might be our closeness, enough to restart our kiss by just leaning forward.

Then, her eyes grew in panic as she realized how close she had been to turn me into a charred mess. “I’m sorry Orlin!” she exclaimed, loud enough to make me pull back for a moment. “I almost attacked you! Please forgive me.”

“There is nothing to forgive,” I answered as I reestablished our closeness. “But if you’re feeling bad, I have a rather good idea for an apology.”

Her mouth opened reflexively before her brain could engage to catch the insinuation in my voice. But for me, the shiny pinkness of her lips was much more interesting than anything else she might say at the moment. So, I leaned forward, cutting her words short in a rather enjoyable manner for both of us.

[+50 Experience]

I wasn’t surprised when she froze as our lips touched. Regardless, I continued to treat her lips with a soft, lingering kiss, my arm around her waist tightening enough to make our bodies touch, just enough to feel the rapid rise of her heartbeat. I didn’t want to scare her off, so I tried to act in a measured manner while my lips danced over hers, trying to coax a reaction.

I hadn’t had to wait for long for the said reaction. First, her lips started to move in an attempt to match the rhythm of the mine. I let her succeed for a moment before picking up speed. She followed my lead without a delay, soon, our lips were following the invisible music of a heated

dance.

[+100 Experience]

Level UP!

[Select one of the following skills: Advanced Speech, Basic Biomancy, Basic Lovemaking]

Leveling up couldn't come in a better moment, considering the situations I gained experience. At least, right now, I was in a situation where I could continue in autopilot while trying to decide which skill to pick next. I couldn't say the same for the skill selection. Speech was an obvious option which helped me a lot, but under the circumstances, it was sufficient, and biomancy was something I hadn't given the slightest thought. The only thing I knew was it was an inferior version of healing magic, allowing the users to affect the other lifeforms in return.

At that moment, lovemaking seemed like an obvious choice, but funnily enough, it was the way Helga wrapped her arms around my neck to pull me deeper into the kiss that discouraged me from it. Reactions of both Marianne and Helga showed that my advanced stats already gave a sufficient edge to me on the topic, and considering the incredible jump with the other skills, I feared that sex would lose its excitement.

With an impulsive decision, I skipped speech as well, roughly for the same reasons, and picked biomancy, despite knowing very little about it. What was life without a little risk, after all?

Then, I felt Helga's tongue pushing against my lips, bringing me fully back to the moment. I parted my lips, allowing her tongue to slip inside my mouth, rewarding her for the initiative. While her tongue ravaged my mouth, I decided to shelve the considerations for my new skills for a later moment. The present called for my undivided attention.

I tightened my grip around her waist, smashing her chest against mine, enjoying the firmness of her chest against my muscles. Simultaneously, I finally counter-attacked her presence in my mouth. The battle stayed balanced for a moment before she retreated, which turned into a total rout. I followed, restarting the skirmish, but this time in her mouth.

When she pulled back to take a breath, I chose to bring my lips down, sucking her neck in a way that turned her attempts to take a breath into a sharp gasp. When her arms around my body tightened further, I decided to take it as an invitation to push further. My lips stayed on her skin as I moved down on the length of her neck, leaving lingering kisses, each earning its own moan.

[+300 Experience]

Unfortunately, I felt her stiffen when I slid my hands downward. It was a small, unconscious move, but I decided to take it as a sign to pull back. It was better to leave her wanting rather than forcing her to draw a line. “Long time no see, beautiful,” I said with a satisfied smirk after pulling back.

“We just talked yesterday,” she managed to whisper, blushing, though I didn’t think that it was about the question itself. More likely, it was about our continued closeness, our bodies pressing tight, her back against the shelf, and my arm still firmly around to prevent her escape.

“It was a long night,” I said with a crooked smile, which increased her blush even further. I leaned forward slightly, but thanks to the distance between us, it brought me to a prime location to restart our kiss. Her lips parted open reflexively, but instead of continuing the kiss, I reached up and pulled the book she was trying to get when I arrived. When I passed it, a confused expression popped on her face before she remembered her objective when it was broken by my surprise appearance.

“Thanks,” she murmured.

“Always a pleasure,” I said as finally let her go, but our fingers were still intertwined as we walked to the large table, already loaded by the books. I only let her hand go to pull a chair for her, earning a shy smile as a reward. For myself, I chose to sit next to her rather than sitting across her, opening the book on arcana that I picked up on the way. “You don’t mind if I study next to you, or ask some questions when I get stuck, right?”

The answer came in an instant, with noticeable urgency. “Of course not. You can ask whatever you want!”

“You’re as kind as you’re pretty,” I answered, squeezing her hand just for emphasis. She stammered a response impossible to decipher. Thankfully, the underlying sentiment was easier to decipher.

It was an excellent opportunity to employ the tricks I learned from my latest adventure with Marianne, though in a much-reduced dosage. I started reading my book while letting my hand fall on her leg in an accidental manner. I didn’t expect her to believe that of course, but from the way her smile competed with her blush to catch up, it was clear that she had no intention of calling me off on that, which was enough.

I let a few minutes to pass, through which I kept my hand intentionally immobile, letting her get used to our casual contact. It was sufficiently effective, as she was able to turn her attention on



the book she was reading, but she had to backtrack several times, suggesting that she had trouble staying focused on what she was reading.

Several minutes later, I squeezed her leg the moment I started speaking. “I don’t understand how to balance the structure on three runes. Wouldn’t it cause a continuous conflict that ultimately breaks the effect?” I asked, despite knowing its answer. I had three reasons for it.

The first was to maintain the impression that I just had a few points on arcana. The second was her habits of teaching. Starved to contact due to the discrimination she experienced, she was more than happy to launch deep discussions on the topic, which came with some great insights. It would be much more effective if I had the option to actually hold a debate on the more complicated parts, but still, it was much better than anything else than I could do alone.

The third reason was even simpler, making her get more and more used to having extended contact. In the second minute of her explanation, I started squeezing her leg softly. On fourth, my hand started moving up and down, but sticking around her knee. Around the ten-minute mark, when she finally finished her explanation, my ‘absentminded’ caresses ended up in her thigh. But the results of that moment was spectacular.

[+100 Experience]

[+3 Arcana]

I was about to return to my book when I was stuck with a sudden inspiration. “By the way, what do you know about biomancy,” I asked her, hoping to get a couple more questions in advance.

“It’s an amazing skill, totally underrated by the research community!” she said with sudden jubilation. “They are willing to dismiss all the possibilities it represents just because it’s less effective on healing.”

I wasn’t expecting such an enthusiastic reaction from her. “Do you have any focus on that?” I asked.

“I wish,” she answered with a sigh. “Unfortunately, I’m having trouble leveling up enough to get the necessary steps for my status,” she mentioned absentmindedly. It took quite a bit of willpower to keep myself from asking her exact situation on her levels, which was a rather dangerous social blunder. Even the amount she admitted was a bit much. Even though she looked too excited to notice, I wasn’t willing to push her more on the subject.

“Why is that?” I asked, which triggered another very long explanation on the various potential

applications of biomancy on the transformation of non-human material, for a range of purposes from healing to combat support. It was hard for me to keep up even with my skill points, which was rapidly increasing as her explanation continued, and my rather impressive stats. I even kept my hand in place during her explanation not to distract her, because her explanations were working wonders.

As she went through her explanation, I couldn't help but theorize about her skill configuration. For a moment, I entertained the probability that she lied to me about not using any biomancy, but I discarded that quickly. She wasn't good at lying enough to slip that past me. She probably had a generic skill relating to the theory, assisting her to generate a more accurate understanding.

In the end, she talked another thirty minutes on biomancy, occasionally slipping back to wider issues on magic, but the results were worth the loss of time. Towards the end, after making sure that nothing would distract her from her academic zeal, my hand continued its journey on her leg.

[+100 Experience]

[+2 Arcana]

[+7 Biomancy]

"How it is possible," I said after she finished her explanation, which left her blushed and short of breath.

"What?" she asked.

"For a girl to be this beautiful and smart," I answered, watching in amusement as the blush spread to her face once more. She opened her mouth, but unlike the academic explanation, her words were not spilling out in a great hurry. Instead, they were shuffling inside her mouth, fighting not to be the first one to leave the confines of her lips, still puffy from our earlier kiss.

"You're just adorable," I said as I slipped my fingers through her hair, moving through a smooth caress, then transitioning to her shoulder from the tips. While I was doing that, she was leaning forward, so all it took was a gentle pull to restart our kiss.

This time, she didn't hesitate even for a moment, the vigor of her lips overcoming even mine. If that wasn't a sign to push further, I didn't know what it was. Since my hand was already on her shoulder, it only took a quick journey to slip down to her chest, gently cupping her breasts,

fighting the temptation to fully sink into the soft flesh of her breasts.

But then, her arms found my neck once more, her hold tight enough to hurt. As far as signals went, I couldn't imagine a more direct one without moving into a more vulgar territory. I would have hated to disappoint such a beautiful woman. A moan escaped her mouth as my fingers sank deeper into her breasts, loud enough to alert passerby's, but luckily, my lips were in a prime position to suppress that moan, turning it into a delicious vibration instead.

Meanwhile, my other hand had nothing to do. Idleness was a shameful quality, so I put it on her hips, sinking softly to her skin. I half-expected her to flinch, remembering the painful state of her bottom after Cornelia's treatment, but she either healed up quickly enough, or she managed to get the help of one of the healers, because she didn't react my hand adversely. I squeezed her ass even harder, forcing another moan off her lips, which I suppressed just as quick.

[+500 Experience]

Trying to push further was an attractive idea, but also quite risky. Yes, we were in an unfrequented area of the library, but unfrequented didn't guarantee complete seclusion. I trusted my abilities to give me an advance warning enough to erase the signs of a kiss, I couldn't guarantee the same if we were in a deeper state of undress. With great reluctance I pulled away from her sweet lips, leaving her panting.

She kept our gaze connected for a moment before the situation sank into her mind. Her eyes slid away as the redness of her face intensified even further, to a point that made me worried that she might faint. The difference between the girl that subjected herself to not-so-tender mercies of Cornelia without a hint of shame, and the one that was about to faint just because a sweet kiss was unbelievable.

I couldn't help but feel bad a bit, but not too much, because unlike the others, I didn't lie to her too badly. I just acted like a stranger, albeit a dark and mysterious one from a far-off land that would disappear in a few days. It might not be much, but it was enough to relax my conscience.

"I don't understand how the energy transference affects the construction of a dual-superstructure for a ward," I added, raising one of the points that were bugging me from the last part of our discussion. It was far more complicated for a ranger restricted to basic arcana and one digit wisdom to even understand its implications, but I bet on the fact she would welcome a distraction to focus anything other than our most-recent kiss.

She didn't surprise me, and launched another detailed explanation that I felt trouble following even with my current state. But the rapid increase in my skills were worth it, but I couldn't help but think it was unnatural. Her insights were incredible, but not enough to level me up that quickly.

Then it struck me. Technically, I was still in danger. Not only I was acting like a different person, but also I was misrepresenting the danger I was in. The System must be able to detect it somehow, which raised more questions about its origins. Maybe the temples were right, and each Melius had a divine messenger on their shoulder, rewarding them for the challenges they met. Though if that was true, mine seemed to be an especially perverted one.

With a sexy blonde in front of me, metaphysical questions weren't the best target to spend my time on, I realized when she asked me a question. Thankfully, I was good enough in multitasking to catch the question, and promptly answered in a level of detail sufficient for my supposed knowledge. The discussion continued in the same vein for a couple more hours, with her showing off the depths of her knowledge, and with me rewarding her with lingering kisses, and enthusiastic gropes which occasionally slipped under her robe. The rewards of the session was amazing.

[+2000 Experience]

[+14 Arcana]

[+9 Biomancy]

[Speech +2]

[Subterfuge +1]

While I wanted to continue the session for more, I couldn't risk one of the kinder assistants to start worrying about my disappearance and start searching. "Getting the attention of such a beautiful teacher has been an amazing experience, but I need to go before the rest of the group starts wondering where I disappeared."

"So soon," she answered.

"It has been more than three hours," I answered.

"But there is no clock around," she asked. "And you don't have a window large enough to see the sun."

I had a feeling that it was just a convenient excuse to distract herself from disappointment rather than a genuine question, but I still answered. I pointed at the small ray of light, spreading from a small window at the top. "The change of the angle from rays of light is enough," I answered. "On the wild, you learn how to pay attention to a lot of things."

Without a warning, I leaned forward and captured her lips in another lingering kiss, with my hands joining the fray soon after. Her reaction was even more heated than the last time, signaling that I might even get lucky if I played my cards right. Unfortunately, I was out of time, so I pulled back soon after, leaving her panting with arousal.

[+200 Experience]

I walked away without saying anything, then, just before disappearing amongst the shelves, I turned back, and whispered. "See you tomorrow, beautiful." Then, I disappeared, trying to suppress the disappointment from leaving such a beautiful girl behind to go and arrange books...

[Level: 7      Experience: 24240 / 28000

Strength: 6    Charisma: 12

Precision: 10    Perception: 10

Agility: 10    Manipulation: 12

Speed: 7      Intelligence: 8

Endurance: 8    Wisdom: 17

HP: 287 / 287    Mana: 360 / 413      ]

## SKILLS

[Advanced Subterfuge (48/50)

Advanced Arcana [45/50]

Basic Speech 24/25

Basic Biomancy 16/25 ]

## Chapter Twelve

I was walking in the library, once again dressed in my least favorite disguise, made worse by the fact that technically, it was my real identity, trying to look busy. I had been expecting to have a casual walk around the library while waiting for the workday to end, hoping that Marianne would call her new 'maid' for another massage session, or failing that, deciding to have another encounter with Cornelia in the library. But my plans went awry in an unwelcome manner when the assistant of the head librarian burst into the opening, and started raining orders with great urgency.

"What's going on," asked one of the others, unhappy with the sudden intrusion.

"I tell you what's going on," he shouted. "I learned that she is coming back tomorrow." No one asked who he was referring, the underlining terror in his voice could only refer to one person. The head librarian, one of the most famous war heroes of the Empire, and the undisputed ruler of the library, was coming back. And everyone knew that they would be on the hook if there was even one thing that was out of order in the library.

It wasn't hard to slip away in the chaos, as no one would remember to look for me as they burst into a flurry of activity, some for cleaning the floors, the others to make sure the books were in the correct order. It wasn't hard to understand why. The head librarian had no mercy when it came to any disruption in her domain, and if something was out of place, the staff would be on the hook for it.

But even as I faded away, I had to fight against disappointment. Because with her arrival, not only I would have to throw away my ranger identity, afraid of being caught, but also Cornelia would no doubt stop her library adventures. Arrogant she was, but not enough to intrude into the head librarian's domain, especially in such a vulgar manner. Even her family couldn't have saved her from the consequences.

An important detail started to worm itself into my mind. I needed to talk with Helga before I shelved my ranger identity for good. While silently disappearing would have no cost to me, it didn't sit right to me to leave Helga waiting desperately for Orlin to appear. I owed her enough to explain it to her.

This time, I was careful to pick and even more secluded corner to put on my disguise, in case one of the frenzied library workers dropped in. I even put a simple proximity ward as a safety measure. While doing that, I couldn't help but wonder just how easily I could control the mana flow to form a ward, not even needing to use an anchor. Another evidence of just how

important the skills were. Without them, I doubted I could replicate that feat without months of dedicated study, and even then, it was in doubt.

The same applied to the magical parts of my disguise. Just a moment's concentration was enough to put the spell on, something I was sure that even a master of arcana couldn't replicate easily, because the magical ability was just a part of creating magical disguises. Shaping them was a significant part of the challenge, and thankfully, my subterfuge skill was ready to assist me in that area.

But just as I was about to put the last touches in my illusionary disguise, an exhausted look, I remembered arcana wasn't my only magical skill anymore. I carefully gathered my mana, just a dash of it, and spread it into my body, to look like I was exhausted.

[HP -20]

A pained yelp escaped my mouth as I lost control of the spell. Apparently, experimenting with an unfamiliar spell while targeting myself was unwise. Who could have guessed?

While it was tempting to play around to get it right, I was rather short on time, so once again, I went back to my illusion skills to give the impression that I was slightly exhausted, then dashed towards the last location I had seen Helga.

Luckily, she was still at the last place I had left her, a book open in front of her. She didn't look like she was paying attention though, the dreamy look on her face suggested her mind was on something other than the dusty tome open in front of her. From her rather persistent blush, and her shy smile, I could make an accurate guess about her dreams.

Unfortunately, I needed to break her from her happy daydreams. I walked into the opening. Helga looked up, distracted by my sudden intrusion. When she saw me, she smiled at first, then noticed my haphazard state. "Orlin, is something wrong?"

"Yeah," I answered as I walked near her, but didn't bother sitting next to her. "I have just talked with the caravan master. We're going to leave early morning, tomorrow."

Helga said nothing, but her hand, clamping onto mine, tight enough to actually hurt despite the obvious difference in strength and endurance, conveyed her desperate sadness more than words could. I sat on the seat next to her, allowing her to process the situation. At least, I owed her that much. There was no hiding the tears that were slipping from her eyes. "So soon," she murmured minutes later, a whisper so low that it required me to stretch my enhanced hearing to the maximum to catch a glimpse of it.



I gently caressed her hair and pulled her to my chest, which made spill her tears even faster. I could understand where she was coming from. Like me, she was alone for years in the Silver Tower, but unlike my previous state, she had an understanding of what that loneliness meant.

“Unfortunately, things end,” I murmured. “Being nomads give us a different understanding of relationships. In our tribe, we don’t measure the relationships based on its longevity, because we never know whether we would survive enough to meet again. We believe everything is valued by the impact it created, feelings it awakened, and memories that remained. And what we have a beautiful one.”

[+1 Speech]

My words only made her cry harder, but it wasn’t a bad thing. Instead, I let her continue to cry as she got louder and louder, trying to process the shock. It was the most emotional I saw her being, which told me that my actions might have larger impacts than I might have thought. It wasn’t enough to change anything in my master strategy, but maybe some little tweaks were necessary.

My self-inspection didn’t survive for long. She started kissing me without a warning, pulling my attention back to the present in a memorable manner. This time, I followed her rhythm, my arms gently wrapped around her neck. She deserved that much consideration. The kiss stretched for a long while, conveying everything she wanted to say but couldn’t find the words for.

[+200 Experience]

[Achievement: Sensual Sendoff. A beautiful, emotional kiss that conveys feeling after an emotional farewell talk. +300 Experience, +2 Charisma]

When she pulled away from the kiss and jumped up on her feet, I thought that she had been overwhelmed with emotions and wanted to get away. And when she started walking away, it seemed that my assumption was correct. At that moment, I decided to let her go, allowing her to process the departure however she wished. The least I could do after the bastardy I had subjected her to.

But two steps later, I realized that she was still holding my hand, trying to pull me along. In a rare development, I was stuck in place, surprised by the sudden development. “Come on, let’s walk,” she said as she tugged her hand once more, a sudden determination on her face overcoming sadness in her tear-streaked face.

“Where,” I couldn’t help but ask.

“A hidden place, to make a memory both of us would remember fondly forever, one that would burn bright in our memories,” she said. That clued me what was about to happen, and I followed her. It didn’t take long for me to recognize the path we were taking. Ironically, to the same location Cornelia had subjected her to the bondage.

While we walked, I could feel her casting several spells, each targeting her own face. When she next turned to me, at the same opening I watched her resist Cornelia’s crop to get scraps of information as a reward, her face was clean, tear tracks and redness gone, replaced by a soft make-up. A utilitarian application of magic, I took note in amusement for a moment, before she clamped on my lips once more, this time with a lot of tongue, promising passion and desire...

When she pulled back for a moment, I didn’t think that she had changed her mind, because I could feel her gathering magic in the familiar shape of a proximity ward, which she established in a speed that would surpass mine, but not with a great margin, which gave me confidence that I was finally showing some decent improvement in my magical abilities.

But constructing wards weren’t the only thing she was doing. She used one of her hands to create shapes into the air in temporary anchors, while the other danced over the buttons of her robe, determined to free her body from its restrictive cover. As a gentleman, I did the kind thing and followed her lead, my cloak and shirt meeting with the floor at the same time with her robe.

She licked her lips with lust as she examined my chest, its tanned looks a part of the illusion I had set up, but the muscles were all real, another gift of my enhanced stats. I waited until she completed the second ward, ensuring not a wisp of sound would escape its confines. Meanwhile, I carefully examined the hidden spots which I used earlier to great benefit, ensuring that they were empty.

When the construction of the ward finished, she jumped at me with a palpable desire, throwing her shirt away, revealing a utilitarian corset underneath. Her body deserved something sexier, but I didn’t make it a problem. After all, it wasn’t going to stay on for long.

She hit my body with great speed, but I was ready, and it didn’t even shake me. Her legs wrapped around my waist to keep her afloat while her lips met with mine with a desire that surpassed even her previous kiss. Her grip around my waist was tight enough to keep her in place without slipping, and her arms were around my neck for further support, but nevertheless, I placed my hands on her bottom.

Purely to help her, of course. What ulterior motive could I have in putting my hands into her plump bottom? And if my hands had slipped under her skirt while doing that, I could guarantee that it was an accident.

But as our tongues battled for supremacy, one of my hands decided to get a solo adventure. It climbed upward until it found the strings that kept her corset together, and pulled them open one by one, in a sensuous pace that contrasted greatly with her frantic kisses, every little caress on a recently freed section of her back increasing her pace further, something I was happy to match.

Her corset stayed in place even after it was completely untied, pinned in place between our pressing bodies. Something I wanted to find a solution. In the end, I decided to stick with the basics, and slipped my hand into her short hair, and pulled her head back. A moan escaped her mouth as she pulled back, and her corset slid away, finally revealing her beautiful breasts on my reach.

[+500 Experience]

I decided to do what the situation begged me to do, and buried my face in her bosom, generous in size and nakedness, enjoying the warmth of her skin most intimately. That close, I could hear her heartbeat, but frankly, I found the prospect of testing the softness of her breasts more interesting, especially after seeing their gravity-defying achievement to stay up. My hands were busy, but my lips were still available for the test, so I clamped around her breast, extracting a moan of her. A cry left her mouth when my teeth joined the test, but it didn't exactly convey unhappiness.

"They are amazing," I murmured in astonishment as I pulled back for a moment. My compliment worked wonders on her face, her arousal pushing away the last scraps of hesitance.

Even as I captured her lips once more, I took a step towards the nearest shelf, and pushed her until her back pressed tightly against it, just enough to allow her to loosen the grip of her legs without losing the position.

But then, I realized one thing, that I needed to break off the kiss to ask her to loosen her legs, so that I could remove her skirt. Luckily, there was an easier way. I grabbed the zipper, and pulled it down, and when it reached the bottom, I continued pulling, but created a small ethereal blade, a trick that had been taught by the same busty blonde that was currently coiled around me, and cut rest of the distance.

Her skirt fell on the floor, followed by her panties just a moment later. She must have hated it, because the next second, she took revenge, grabbing a hold of my pants, and melting both it and my underwear in a superior display of magic. Something I could do, but not based on the capability I revealed to her. She pulled back, a smug smile on her lips, finding a rather amusing amount of pride in her achievement.

Though her smugness melted into a panic when I shifted her a bit, aligning my shaft to her entrance. "Are you sure?" I asked her, giving her the choice, something she deserved to have under the circumstances. It didn't take long for her to construct her determination from the uneven stones of panic.

No answer left her mouth, but then again, it wasn't really necessary, not when she restarted our kiss while choosing to lower herself, my shaft sliding into her wetness, I couldn't help but moan in pleasure, as it was a sensation I had never tasted before. She lowered herself until her barrier prevented the passage, which then I destroyed with a sharp push.

She was mine!

[+2500 Experience]

[Achievement: Salacious Study. Take the virginity of a sexy bookworm in the second biggest library of the world. +1000 Experience, +4 Intelligence]

Level UP!

[Select one of the following skills: Basic Observation, Advanced Biomancy, Basic Melee]

Normally, the impressive gains of the system would have garnered significant amount attention from me, especially the skill selection, not to mention the library of the Silver Tower being the second biggest library was a very intriguing detail with a lot of implications, it was supposed to be the biggest one. But there was a limit to my patience, and having a sexy bookworm on my lap, determinedly pushing herself even deeper onto my shaft, giving me a tour of her untouched territory definitely registered as one. My attention wavering, I blindly picked the last skill on the list, and then turned my attention to more important topics.

Such as, giving my favorite blonde the best experience of her life. Carefully reading her expression, I helped her to raise herself back up, her walls, unfamiliar to a foreign presence, trying to squeeze me to death, but only managing to make the experience even more pleasurable. Our kiss oscillated between sensual sweetness and burning passion rapidly enough to give me a whiplash, but it made the moment even more special.

I pulled back to get a better view of her expression, which was a delicious mixture of pain and arousal as she wrapped her arms tighter around my neck, trying to push herself even deeper in her determination, trying to devour my shaft. I decided to help her a bit, and pushed my hips upward in a sharp motion, forcing myself deeper despite her tightness.

A pained yelp escaped her mouth, but there was no hiding the fact that she enjoyed the sensation immensely. And since her back was still against the shelf enough to provide extra support, there was no point in keeping my hands on her hips, while they could be assigned for more fruitful tasks. I grabbed her breasts, and squeezed them mercilessly. From everything I had seen, it wasn't unfair to say that her tastes fell on the rougher side. Whether it was about her personality, or it was an effect of her deal with Cornelia, I didn't know. Nor I had time to ponder, because the next notification the system gave me.

[+150 Experience] 25% experience penalty due to level equality with the target

That was unfortunate, I thought, using the full extent of my willpower to not to mutter those words loudly, as that way, ridiculous misunderstandings lay. The fact that I had limits on the experience gain was unwelcome, though made sense. Otherwise, there was nothing preventing me from being locked into a room with any random woman, and quite a bit of food and water, to infinitely grind level.

But once again, I shelved the thought, focusing on the delicate art of pleasure, my sole target being the sexiness wrapped around my presence. I rocked back and forth inside her, each push loosening her further, allowing me to slide deeper and deeper. Soon, she pushed her weight against the shelf, enjoying my presence with her eyes closed. I used the opportunity to enjoy her curvy body, covered by a thin sheen of sweat, her heartbeat strong enough to make her chest ripple...

She was beautiful.

I shifted my hands back to her hips, this time, not to keep her up, but to align her perfectly before attempting a total invasion. She moaned painfully even as her eyes jerked open, but her only response to connect for another kiss, our tongues battling once more. Even when the frequency of my pushes increased, she kept the kiss connected, though the twirls of her tongue getting more and more desperate. It wasn't hard to recognize the signals of an impending orgasm.

When she clamped around me without a warning, my only reaction was to wrap my arm around her waist. Once again I walked while carrying her around my waist, but this time, each

step moved my girth inside her, which, combined with her arousal, making her cry so loudly that I feared about whether the silencing ward would be able to hold her presence.

[+750 Experience] 25% Penalty!

I actually stopped for a moment to check the ward, but her magical abilities proved strong enough to match her sexiness, so I continued my walk, each step creating another explosion of pleasure for her. Then, I sat on the table, with her still on my lap, giving her the control of the situation.

I was surprised when she started jumping up and down on my lap with a reckless abandon, surprising me with her display of initiative. For some reason, I was expecting her to be more hesitant when the situation was left to her control, but I was no way dissatisfied. Her hips moved faster with each repeat, like she was testing her rapidly expanding limits, and the sound of flesh hitting flesh filled the opening.

In her hurry, it didn't take long for her to start trembling with another climax, her eyes clouded with pleasure. Once again I wrapped my arms around her waist, this time pushing her on the table, pushing into her frantically, as I could feel my own climax closing in.

I impaled her again and again, watching her pleasure-filled face, subtly changing with each repeat, while her walls wrapped me snugly. It was truly heaven. It was a pity that I hadn't had any more time with her, that I needed to disappear after today. And even for this session, it was obvious that she was drowning under the effects of the unfamiliar pleasure. Another orgasm, I thought that she might handle, but anymore, and I wasn't sure that she could return back to her room, which would create a scandal that neither of us could handle.

With that in mind, I didn't resist the sensation to explode when she tightened with a third orgasm, though I managed to pull out, spraying her spectacular breasts with my seed, not wanting to leave her filled with my seed. With an endurance of eight, I wasn't willing to bet on chance of not impregnating her.

[+1500 Experience] 25% Penalty!

I sat on the chair, trying to catch my breath as I watched her trembling in pleasure, fighting against unconsciousness, while I fought against the temptation of sliding inside her once more.

She managed to push herself to a sitting position, and captured my lips in one last, lingering kiss, one surprisingly somber considering what had just happened. "Go," she murmured. "I want to stay inside your memory like this, in all my exhausted glory."

“As you wish, beautiful,” I said, and stood up, but before leaving, captured her lips for one last lingering kiss, promising that I would remember her. I knew that it wasn’t honest, but at least, she would have the special memory of our first time for an eternity... I pulled my shirt on, and created the illusion of a pant before leaving the opening. “Goodbye,” I whispered, then disappeared in the depths of the library...

[Level: 8      Experience: 31140 / 36000

Strength: 6    Charisma: 14

Precision: 10    Perception: 10

Agility: 10    Manipulation: 12

Speed: 7      Intelligence: 12

Endurance: 8    Wisdom: 17

HP: 308 / 328    Mana: 460 / 520      ]

## SKILLS

[Advanced Subterfuge (48/50)

Advanced Arcana [45/50]

Basic Speech 25/25

Basic Biomancy 16/25

Basic Melee 0/25      ]

# Chapter Thirteen

It has been a week since the Head Librarian arrived. A week since I discarded my ranger identity, cutting away the most satisfying interaction that was available for me. A week since her indomitable presence destroyed any opportunity for a carnal encounter in the library for horny students, destroying my voyeur activities as well. While in the library, I stayed in my Mule personality all day, afraid of awakening the suspicion of her steely eyes.

I still didn't know if Cornelia had managed to find another location for the encounter. I tried to find out, using subtle inquires while dressed as a maid, but until to date, I wasn't able to find any solid evidence. Even Marianne didn't call me, or more accurately, her faithful but dim maid Selena, for another bath, cutting that path as well. Meanwhile, Helga was always in the library, throwing herself on her studies with an enhanced fervor, trying to fight sadness through overworking. Luckily, with the Head Librarian in place, nobody dared to mess with Helga, afraid of getting the attention of Iron Lady.

The only benefit was I was able to maximize every skill I had, other than melee, which I picked accidentally during the middle of tasting Helga for the first time. I even made great strides in using my biomancy abilities, giving me the ability to heal myself, albeit slowly and with a significant mana cost, and making changes on my body and my face, enhancing my subterfuge capabilities even further.

I wasn't able to increase my stats in any way though, which didn't surprise me. There was no way that such an obvious thing hadn't been tried before, and it would have created a big event if it actually worked like that.

But these weren't the only thing I had done. For the first time since I had gained my powers, I strayed outside, scouting the surrounding areas of the Silver Halls, fighter and ranger part of the school. There was a large forest in that area, specifically for training purposes, consistently under high-level patrols to ensure that no dangerous monster lived there. It was even separated into several sections, each for a different level of capability.

For a week, I watched as the usage patterns, which hours were the busiest, how people gained admission, which parts people were allowed solo, and many other small details. Luckily, I had a lot of disguises for that. Thanks to all the improvements in my magical capabilities, I no longer needed a secluded area and several minutes to create a workable disguise. A second in a concealed area gave was enough for me to layer the illusions into an unbreakable structure that would pass the muster for any reasonable assessment.



Though scouting wasn't the only thing I had done. I also managed to sneak into the storage room disguised as a servant, an unimportant one that held the broken equipment, too damaged to be worth the effort of repair. But I had an excess of mana, and after a few tries, I was in possession of a cheap set of well-maintained equipment. A chain mail complete with its helmet, a longsword, and to complete the set, a buckler.

I even managed to steal a used permission form before it was burned by the guards, allowing me to forge a fake one, giving me admission to the safest part of the forest, with the added exception that I was to be allowed there during both day and night. Very rarely there was anyone in the forest during the night, as with the limited vision greatly increased the risk of an ambush from one of the monsters. And during the night, there was no guarantee that a stronger monster hadn't infested the forest.

Under the right circumstances, even a class one monster could kill someone that it was supposedly harmless against. I hoped that my high perception, supported by a proximity ward, would be enough to offset the disadvantages. After all, going there during the day, a time where it was crawling with students hoping to farm a few more experience points to get another level, was not an option. I couldn't afford the risk of getting caught.

I walked into my room, and a servant, carrying a large sack left the room. Another stop in a dark corner, and a young warrior continued his way, a sword on his belt, a buckler on his arm, his shining sword and his proud look all shouting a green warrior with little experience. A common view, as many minor houses had spent minor fortunes to get them in the Silver Halls, who then walked around like they were at the king of the world until they angered someone strong, teaching the difference between the pretenders and the real deal.

For my current purposes, unlikeable and easily forgettable worked just fine. Just to enhance the impression, I even used by biomancy to temporarily reduce my height a couple of inches, loose clothes hiding my muscles, weakening the personality I reflected even more.

At the entrance of the forest, I passed the permission to the guard wordlessly, distinctly turning my nose up to them, following the finest noble tradition, and then walked into the forest. I walked into the shadowy part of the forest, without a light source with me, hoping that two moons shining in the sky, one full, the other half, making it bright enough for me to see around, though not as much as without the crimson light of the third one.

I maintained my pompous walk until there were several trees between me and them, cutting off the path, then dropped my pompous walk, replaced by a soft prowl, the sword in hand, but also ready to send a blast of pure magic if things get dicey. Just to keep things extra safe, I

established a proximity ward around, preventing sneak attacks.

My luck seemed to be working, because the first monster that I met was a dire rabbit, a class zero creature that was two feet tall and four feet long, relying on its agility and stealth to do the job, as it lacked any other quality. One of the best targets for leveling for the weaker people, as especially during the day, on an open field, it was one of the easiest threats to handle. Its teeth, longer than three inches, was a big threat, but it was just a bad matchup against me. It jumped at me from behind, but I was much faster, and pushed my sword to its throat halfway.

[+1 Melee]

Realistically, I wasn't expecting any experience, but I wouldn't be sad if something had changed and I received some. Not that I really needed it, as even if everything had been normal, even a class one creature would have given me a couple of points of experience at best at my current level, and a for class zero one like a dire rabbit, even one experience was unlikely. That was how classification worked. If a creature killed gives a hundred experience to a level five slayer, it was categorized as class five, and if a level seven received a hundred experience, it was classified as class seven.

But it was extremely hard to push through higher levels, because not only more experience was needed to advance higher levels, but also the monsters got stronger faster than their class might indicate at first glance. A level three warrior could kill a class three creature without a low chance of dangerous injury under equal circumstances, but it was reverse for a class ten. The monster would win nine out of ten fair battles, most without a considerable damage.

That was one of the reasons nobles were almost only ones that were able to push through level ten, and only the major noble families had the resources to push their members over twenty without excessive risks, supporting their hunt with a small army, though only if they were lucky enough to have members with a level cap over twenty. It wasn't unheard that a noble family to collapse in a generation, because lady luck decided to give them a generation limited to single digits. No matter the support structure, it was hard to maintain a strong estate by a bunch of level sevens.

I was distracted by another dire rabbit assault, which was a bit surprising, because they weren't really smart, they usually avoided people with bloodied swords. Still, it took just a slash to destroy it. I might be just a beginner in sword fighting, but I had ten points in both agility and precision, meaning a class one creature was nothing more than an excuse to practice my technique.

Encouraged by the effectiveness, I started moving deeper and deeper into the forest, killing dozens of dire rabbits, but didn't bother picking anything off them, because they were effectively worthless, even their meat was horrible, only consumed by peasants in times of hardship. There were a lot of those rabbits and they bred quickly, which was the only reason of their continuing survival. Their females gave birth each week, with their litter reaching full size in a few weeks. With that numbers, it wasn't hard to imagine them actually invading the world without other monsters hunting them for sustenance.

As I moved deeper into the forest, I had to fight a few dire foxes, class two monsters quite a bit more dangerous than dire rabbits. For once, they had teeth long and sharp enough to kill a low level warrior if caught unprepared, but also they had a rudimentary understanding of tactics, using foliage and other physical objects to sneak before covering the last dash. Unfortunately, the proximity ward turned their effort into a waste, and they fell to a swing or two. That rhythm, I maintained for almost an hour, with a rather decent return in terms of skill.

[+7 Melee]

Just as it happened with my magical skills, it was impressive just how a few skill points changed everything about the way I fought. My swings flew sharper, my stances more balanced, my timing more precise.

I was planning to extend my expedition, but then a rather impressive figure passed nearby, quite a bit over six feet, and carrying a sword even taller, its enchantment thick enough to be felt. But not even for a moment, I had though it was a man. She wore a shirt instead of armor, and even though it was a loose, shapeless shirt, it failed to hide her rather impressive bosom.

But she swung her great sword with an amazing expertise, suggesting that she was either had a very high level, or was lucky enough to get a specialized combat skill. Melee allowed its user to master a lot of weapons, but sword mastery was obviously superior in terms of effect at the same skill point. There was no exact calculation on it, but approximately, expert melee provided the same benefits as advanced sword mastery, meaning that it wasn't very preferable. Luckily, while I picked melee accidentally, it fit to my situation much better.

I needed to sit on my place, but I couldn't help but feel intrigued as she cut through the small and medium sized creatures, not even stopping for a breath. But then she disappeared between the trees, and I decided to return. While following a sexy warrior strong enough to kick ass was a tempting idea, she was noisy enough to get the attention of the others, and the last thing I needed was someone trying to talk to me in this disguise.

I left the forest, and after another break, I was once again a servant carrying a huge sack. When I arrived back to my room, I was planning to dress back to my unloved library assistant identity, but a note slipped under the door, from Marianne's maid, asking Selene's help to prepare another bath.

"It was about time," I murmured with excitement as I quickly dressed into my female disguise. I was starting to worry that I had pushed Marianne too much during our last session. I found the old maid in the storage room, boiling the herbal water, and after a quick talk, once again I sent her for an early night, promising to tend Marianne for the rest of the night.

I had some very interesting ideas on how to tend her.

After two repeats, preparing the bath required no thought, especially since the completely mastered arcana and subterfuge increased my capabilities much more. I even had a reasonably convinced that my illusionary disguise would hold naked unless she started to get handy. As while I could hide my manhood from her eyes, but illusions didn't work on touch. But I wasn't worried about that, as I doubted Marianne would have any concerns on somehow making a servant to feel good. It was all about her pleasure, well to her knowledge, at least.

I walked to her bedroom after finishing the preparations in the bath, only to find her sitting on the bed, wearing just a dressing gown, loose enough to reveal that it was the only piece of clothing on her. A book was in her hand, but I was familiar with her expression enough to recognize she wasn't paying attention to it. Combined with the restless tapping of her feet, it suggested some interesting things. "The bath is ready, mistress."

[+60 Experience]

The notification I just received was very good news. Not because it gave me a lot of bonus, but it told me that Marianne was higher level than Helga, meaning I would still receive complete reward for my efforts.

"About time," she said, quite a bit louder than necessary, but surprisingly, it wasn't an angry exclamation, which would be the emotion I would have expected to see in a spoiled noble girl bored while waiting. But then she started to walk quite bit faster than the usual, uncaring of the way the front of her dressing gown sliding open even further, it gave me a better idea about the reason for her touchiness.

It seemed that Cornelia failed to find an alternative location for their private encounters.

Excellent, I thought as she opened her arms, and I freed her body from her robe, leaving her in

her birthday suit, and she walked towards the bath with the same hurry she displayed earlier. I followed her in the same pace, so when she sank into the bubbly water, I was in my usual place behind her, with the bath glove in my hand.

Her arousal was palpable, begging for me to mess with her like the previous time, making her suffer under a slow tease. But that would be too easy. After our last encounter I had gained a new skill, and I couldn't wait to test it on her.

Under normal circumstances, trying to use a biomancy spell on her would be a horrible idea. She was famous for her prowess with healing magic, which made her uniquely qualified to detect my manipulations on her body, however weak they were. But unfortunately for her, two facts worked against her. She didn't expect any magic from a poor maid, doing her best to help her mistress; and more importantly, arousal had a tendency to make her distracted. After all, she managed to miss how I had been pleasuring myself in her rather plump bottom the last time.

With decision made, my attention back on my job. After the progress of the last time, I didn't spend much time on washing her arms or her neck, and quickly moved onto her shoulders, rubbing them with wide back and forth moves that allowed me plenty of contact with her breasts, touching them just the way she liked, something I had ample opportunities to learn.

[+300 Experience]

And her moans suggested that she enjoyed my 'accidental' touches quite a bit. I continued in the same vein, each move allowing me to move deeper and deeper onto her chest, her moans getting louder and louder. It was clear that she stopped trying to hold her moans back, which made sense after the way our last encounter ended. Why should she feel self-conscious about a few little moans after I had finger-banged her into multiple orgasms.

But her obvious arousal gave me the opportunity to test my expanded magical abilities. Carefully, I have molded some mana, and cast a spell on her to increase her sensitiveness, a spell that I invented by reversing the working principals of a painkiller spell. The intelligence boost from my latest achievement worked wonders, allowing me to successfully apply the tricks I had learned from Helga.

No matter how measured, I was still taking a significant risk, so when instead of an angry shout, another moan left Marianne's mouth, I realized that my spell had successfully affected my target. Powered by the realization, I let the glove to slip away from my hand, and started caressing her breasts with both hands, throwing away the pretense of helping her to bathe.

“Yes, squeeze them harder!” Marianne murmured with a great fervor, signaling her enjoyment of the choice. Encouraged by her response, I sank my fingers in the depths of her breasts, increasing the enjoyment we both received from the situation. I couldn’t help but smirk as my fingers sank deeper and deeper into her large globes, finally fulfilling one of my dreams.

[+1000 Experience]

I certainly hadn’t been expecting her to start shuddering with a surprise orgasm. I either miscalculated the effects of the spell, or her breasts were even more sensitive than my wildest hopes. Regardless of the reason, it was a positive surprise, so I moved to the other side of the bath while she trembled silently, enjoying the aftershocks of her orgasm.

It wasn’t a spectacular orgasm when compared to the others she experienced after the extended edge play she had enjoyed -and suffered- the last time, so her recovery didn’t take long. But when she opened her eyes, I was already rubbing her feet dutifully.

“You’re really good at this,” she commented even as she leaned back, after everything, uncaring that it revealed the white skin of her breasts, marred red by my enthusiastic massage.

“Thank you, mistress,” I said in a fake obedience, my eyes on the ground, which also helped to hide my smirk. A good thing, as my smirk conveyed an unmistakable sense of dark satisfaction which would have jolted her out of her dazed state. “My previous mistress was really diligent on baths and massages, and she taught me well.”

“She should be proud, you have magic hands,” Marianne said, unaware of the literal truth she had stumbled upon. I continued her massage, and soon, her moans started to increase.

“Thank you mistress,” I repeated. “You honor this little servant with your kind words.”

“Nonsense,” she said, followed by another moan. “It’s nothing less than you deserve. Actually, I’m going to tell Griselda to give you a silver coin, for your discretion and your exemplar services.”

Once again, I thanked her with the appropriate glee of a servant who just managed to get a small fortune. But I found her referring to my discretion interesting. It seemed that after that fateful massage, she spooked enough to check the maid gossip network. I was lucky that she didn’t went any deeper, because it would have revealed the non-existence of a maid named Selene, forcing me to throw away yet another identity. Not a huge deal on the larger scheme of the things, unless the worst somehow happened and she managed to trace it back to me, but still inconvenient.

Luckily, it wasn't a concern for now, not that it meant that she would escape the punishment she just earned. She managed to worry me, even if just for a moment, and there should be a cost attached to it...

"Should I continue, mistress," I murmured. "Or would you like to receive another massage. Maybe we can even move into the second phase."

That managed to jolt her out of her relaxed state. "The second phase?" she murmured in shock. "You're telling me that the previous one wasn't the complete massage."

"No mistress, I had to cut it short because you were feeling exhausted. But I can show the rest of it as well if you're in the mood."

She chose to stand in the bath in lieu of an answer, then stepped out of the bath while I dashed out, towel ready. She opened her arms, fully displaying her nakedness while I dried herself quickly. She didn't even bother to wrap the towel around herself, and started to walk towards her room, completely naked, the dance of her hips spectacular.

[+400 Experience]

It was going to be fun...

[Level: 8      Experience: 32900 / 36000

Strength: 6    Charisma: 14

Precision: 10    Perception: 10

Agility: 10    Manipulation: 12

Speed: 7      Intelligence: 12

Endurance: 8    Wisdom: 17

HP: 328 / 328    Mana: 510 / 520      ]

SKILLS

[Advanced Subterfuge (50/50)

Advanced Arcana [50/50]

Basic Speech 25/25

Basic Biomancy 25/25

Basic Melee 8/25 ]



## Chapter Fourteen

I couldn't help but feel infected by Marianne's excitement on the way to her bathroom. She didn't say anything, but also, she didn't need to. The spring on her steps, the way her walk quickened, and occasional fleeting glances she sent back like she was trying to make sure that I was following her were enough. The way her body swayed with sexy energy despite her hurry, driven unconsciously by her arousal, was just another piece of evidence I welcomed, and an erotic marvel to watch. Something the system agreed wholeheartedly.

[+200 Experience]

As she stood next to her bed, she waved her hand, and extinguished all the lights in the room, except a small ball of flickering light, filling the room with shadows and mysteries. The view was no less heavenly as she stretched her body on her bed, her damp skin shimmering under the flickering lights, once again straining the cover of the towel. But thanks to the lesson with Helga and my week-long training, my illusion abilities were at another level.

I loosened the second towel that kept my boner in check, putting an illusion to hide the resulting tent. Marianne was too distracted to notice the usage of magic around her, so she busied herself in sinking her face on the pillow, leaving her naked body under my hands.

But she chose to speak before I could climb onto her bed. "There are some massage oils on the small table next to the mirror," she informed. I didn't say anything, not that she expected me to. After all, one of the traits of a good servant was to understand the desires of their mistress without excessive questions.

And I know exactly what she desired, but it was unfortunate that it wasn't yet the time to give her that. After picking up the oil bottles, I sent them a small wave of magic, using my biomancy to get a better understanding of their qualities. It was one of the disregarded benefits of biomancy, to analyze and manipulate the material produced by plants and animals, even long after their extraction. Most nobles found such things inferior. Why shouldn't they, when they could just hire a commoner alchemist to do the same things for a few pieces of silver instead.

Of course, by doing so, they surrendered the ability to manipulate these materials at will, an ability I had every intention of abusing. It took just a few seconds for me to analyze them and learn of their effects, and another few seconds to increase some aspects of it, such as the subtle sensation of heat they produced, or the additional sensitivity they created on any skin they were applied.

Marianne had no idea what she was about to experience.

I climbed on her bed, the small bottles next to me, carefully placed on the bed with their tops firmly shut. One of them, I picked, dousing my hands with a generous dab. Then, I put my hands on the softness of her back, moving along her spine in a tortuously slow pace. For the first ten minutes, she was subjected to relatively conservative treatment, enough to make her moan occasionally as she once again started journeying the road towards the climax, but I hadn't done during the previous massage. And considering she just had one in the bath, I didn't need my enhanced perception to know that she was slightly disappointed.

And disappointing such a beautiful lay wasn't the gentlemanly thing to do, I decided to pick up the pace. The movement of my hands quickened, subjecting her to alternating pressure, and before my hands even started to explore the sides of her breasts, her moans rose both in volume and in frequency.

But I had too much to do to enjoy that small achievement. I changed position, so that I was sitting on her calves rather than her thighs, which gave me the access I needed. But I didn't dive into my target instantly, instead, I focused on her thighs, which devoured my fingers in their thick sexiness. I treated the vast expanse with large circles, slowly moving onto her inner thighs, each repeat driving me closer to her nether lips, which was shining bright with her arousal.

But this time, I had no intention of giving her an easy escape. My fingers danced on her entrance, only occasionally straying into the areas that gave her a jolt of pleasure, but as usual, never enough to push her through the barrier. Watching her squirm in a helpless pleasure was too amusing to miss. My fingers occasionally strayed into the confines of her slit, which earned a rather loud moan from her as well.

[+800 Experience]

From a technical perspective, the best thing to do was to keep the position for a length of time until she started to lose her coherence, but it came with one huge drawback. It required me to resist the temptation of her arousal-stained nether lips, begging me to test her obliviousness in an escalating manner, which might or might not include a certain throbbing part of my body.

"If you may turn around, mistress," I said with the usual inflectionless voice of my fake personality. She followed it in an instant, giving me a view of her face, wrapped with her soft blonde hair, her lips formed a pout to allow her to breathe easier, which had quickened to remove the heat she was under. Unfortunately, there was only one way to remove that heat, and she wasn't going to receive it for a while.

I folded a towel for her face, covering her eyes, which she actually unfolded further, covering most of her face with it, clearly hoping to use it to hide the effects of arousal from her body. Which was pretty ineffective, as her body was an open book to read. Still, it helped me to act in more freedom. But it wasn't the only thing I had in mind to provide myself with that freedom of movement. While I covered her breasts with oil, I also constructed a small ward that I invented myself over her face.

It was a simple thing, a very weak ward, once triggered, that would block the light for just a second. I invented it, not because it was a hard design that required my particular genius to create, but because it was almost completely useless. But, under the unique conditions I was in, it would block her sight for a second in the case that she removed her towel, allowing me to put things into order, avoiding a crisis.

With that done, I started subjecting her chest the same treatment her back received, but in a more torturous manner. First, I started on her sides, then slowly focused on her stomach, once again with large circles that allowed me to caress the edge of her breasts. When it was time to move onto her breasts, she was already squirming helplessly under the effects of an orgasm that was denied for long.

The strength of her wiggling only intensified as I focused on her oil-covered breasts, their already-high sensitivity enhanced even further. I stayed extra-careful, as I learned my lesson about her increased sensitivity on there. I acted slowly, every little caress causing her to squirm more. With each second, I started to take more liberty in playing with her breasts. Pushing them together, sinking my fingers deep into them, even twisting her nipples on occasion.

[+1000 Experience]

But I didn't stay there. Wanting to leverage her utter distraction further, I leaned forward to fulfill a desire that was filling my heart since the first night I had been bathed with that beautiful image. I leaned forward, and captured her nipple between my teeth. Softly at first, but seeing that she didn't react negatively, I decided to push even further. My tongue joined the fray, wrapping around her nipple, my lips working overtime, and if her moans were any indicator, I wasn't the only one that was enjoying the change in the circumstances.

I decided to reward her enthusiastic acceptance, and placed my knee between her thighs, close enough to rub her nether lips. The blunt treatment was exactly what was needed to push her even closer to the climax without actually letting her arrive there. Once again, the jump in her moans signaled that it was working excellently.

There was a limit I could resist the allure of her breasts. While covering them with bite marks would have been satisfying, but one of the things that would push her out of her haze, so the option was out. But she was still half-gone under the effect of her denied orgasm, I decided that it was the time to be adventurous once more. Since I had long removed the second towel to constrain my erection, I only needed to pull my towel to the side for the grand reveal. A small treatment which ensured that my shaft was covered with the same slippery, arousal enhancing liquid, I slid it between her breasts, then squeezed them to enhance the situation even further.

Honestly, I was expecting just a moment's pleasure from that risky move. In my mind, the unfamiliar effect of the move would jolt Marianne from the pleasure-filled haze she was deliciously suffering under, which would force me to use the second of darkness provided by the ward for frantic hiding.

Surprisingly, it didn't work like that. Instead of pulling the towel on her face in confusion, trying to see the source of the unfamiliar sensation, she continued to lay motionless, the slight increase in the volume of her cries the only difference. Encouraged by the opportunity, I started sliding in the prison created by these heavenly mounds of flesh, each push bringing me closer to a climax of my own.

Under those circumstances, managing the level of her pleasure, under those circumstances, were extremely difficult. Too much pleasure, and she might climax, ruining all the effort I put in to push her towards a climax. Any less, and her haze would disperse enough for her to wonder about the nature of the weird cylindrical object trying to wear down a path in the pristine valley between her breasts.

Previously pristine valley, if I were to be accurate, as the sensation from the situation, assisted by the effect of the massage oil that was having on me, was enough to push me towards a climax of my own. I pulled at the last second, spraying her breasts with my seed, but once again, it went unnoticed, probably dismissed as another dab of massage oil. Well, who was I to disappoint? I started spreading that on her breasts while continuing my not-so-kind massage.

[+1500 Experience]

[Achievement: Precariously Painted Peaks. Manage to cover a world-class set of mounds with special paint, without getting noticed. +500 Experience, +2 Agility]

Level UP!

[Select one of the following skills: Basic Stealth, Advanced Biomancy, Basic Ranged]

This time, I wasn't as distracted as my last level-up, so I had enough time to consider the choice. And while both stealth and ranged combat sounded like decent options, the applications of biomancy, even at the basic level, was too interesting to not to further that area further.

With that done, I once again focused on the busty beauty that was lying in front of me, waiting for an orgasm that was still far away. "It's time to turn your back, mistress," I said, as I had spent quite a bit of time with her beautiful breasts. Once again, it was time to focus on other areas. Even as I said that I dispelled the darkness ward, which surprisingly went unused. I couldn't help but think about all the other implications it had.

It was amusing to see an expression of begging in her eyes as she pulled the towel away, but even more amusing was the conflict she felt, keeping her mouth closed, feeling unable to ask me to work a bit quicker. With a grumbling expression, she once again lay on her back, her bottom slightly up, indicating that she was ready for much more.

Unfortunately, I had to disappoint her. Instead of pushing her hard, I put my hands on the small of her back, caressing her body softly. Her moans didn't take to rose, tainted by a pang of hunger I intended to let continue. I didn't stay in the more secure areas forever, of course. Soon, my fingers were dancing between her lower cheeks, even caressing her puckered hole a bit. That temptation, I managed to resist; for tonight at least.

It didn't take my fingers to drift down to her entrance, probing it softly for a moment before moving upwards to her clitoris, creating a few soft circles which tempted her with the promise of the finish line, a promise that turned out to be empty when I chose to slow down just as she was speeding up.

"Are you enjoying the massage, mistress," I murmured. "It's not to harsh for you, right?"

"No," she murmured in a muffled voice. "Actually, I wouldn't mind if you were a bit harsher," she said.

"As you wish, mistress," I said, and even as I said that, I pushed two of my fingers into her slit, while used my other hand to subject her bottom to a harsh, but pleasurable treatment. Her moans picked up speed, but I stayed limited. She started gasping soon after, stiffening under the anticipation for a final, but once again, it was false hope, as I chose that exact moment to slow down the treatment she was receiving.

"Faster," she murmured a few more minutes later, but there was a desperation in her tone that I decided to take it as a warning. I risked her wrath if I decided to extend that edge play for

more. This time, I didn't bother to answer with words, just changed the pacing of my fingers from a gentle rub to a frantic push, her warm juices squeaking nicely. Under the sudden change of pacing, her climax took seconds to achieve.

[+1000 Experience]

However, that was just the beginning of what I termed as the second phase. My fingers stayed inside her, slamming in mercilessly despite her rising frustration. But meanwhile, my other hand started traveling up once more, until it slid under her body and grabbed her breasts.

The resulting moan would be enough to bring a dead man back to life. Considering that, it shouldn't be a surprise that my shaft jumped back to full hardness the instant my ears communicated that sound to my brain. I squeezed her breasts harder, enough to leave my mark, knowing that she could easily heal herself after the treatment. Soon, she was at the edge of arousal once more.

I decided that it was the perfect time to experiment on my biomancy skill. Not only she was far too gone to notice the effects, but also I needed to improve it more. And what riskier situation than using that skill on a master of healing herself. I molded the mana carefully, in complete contrast to the frantic dance of my fingers, creating a temporary, but a complicated spell. I waited to a moment her moans were particularly loud, then let the magic spread onto her body.

[+3 Biomancy]

And from there on, there was only one way of testing whether the spell worked. I discarded the last bit of constraint that was keeping my fingers in control, subjecting her body the most intensive assault my enhanced body could sustain, my perception giving a real-time breakdown of her responses, while my precision and manipulation providing me with the best way to leverage these openings.

[+800 Experience]

Her moans rose to a point I hadn't heard before, filled with pleasure and desperation, getting louder with each passing second. But, she didn't climax, prevented by the nifty spell I managed to sneak in.

For a moment, I lamented the fact that I didn't have the chance to pull back and watch her from afar, as she needed my constant attention to keep her in that hyper-sensitive state. Still, I couldn't say that it was a big sacrifice, not when my fingers danced in her ever-flowing arousal,

while the others sinking deep into her breasts freely without a word of protest.

She might be a bit slow to understand she was being played, but she was smart enough to realize there was something wrong with her state. "What's going on," she managed to slur in her dazed state. "I feel like I'm about to explode." Luckily, it seemed that she was too distracted to muster the concentration for a magical assessment, which would put me in a rather dangerous situation.

"It's the effect of the second phase, milady," I explained, while my hands still continued their tasks without skipping a beat. "It takes a while to end, but the effects are worth it." Then, in a sudden hit of insight, I decided to change the play a bit. "But if you want, I can move onto the third phase. It's a bit harsher in the application, but should work in a few minutes."

"Do it," she exclaimed, not for the first time, committing to a mistake under the effects of her arousal. Unfortunately for her, I had no intention to let it slip in a moment of mercy. With two fingers still inside her entrance, blasting mercilessly, my thumb found her puckered hole, and still slippery with massage oil, it didn't take too much effort to slip inside.

"What are you-" she started, which soon turned into a helpless cry as I pushed more of my thumb into her hole, exploring another part of my discovery.

"The third phase, mistress," I said even as I sped up the treatment even more. But I needed to push even more if I were to prevent her from raising an argument against it. For that, I made a quick change in plans, and pulled my hand from her breasts, and leaned down until my head was between her legs, my tongue out.

"You-" she started, but whatever she was about to say, died before she could utter a second word when my tongue found her slit, covered with her juices, and started beating it mercilessly. In her aroused state, her reactions were an open book, allowing me to optimize my approach pretty quickly. "Please-" she attempted once more, which collapsed soon after.

"The third phase is working amazing, mistress," I said, pulling back for a moment before returning my attempts to get a full comprehension of her taste. "And if I may say, your taste is delicious." That was a rather extreme thing to say, but I was also aware that I had pushed my disguise more than it could bear. It was time for my maid to disappear.

The third time she tried to open her mouth, I was even quicker to prevent. A second finger slipped into her asshole, which turned her attempt to a pained cry, as it was a rather untimely attempt from my part. But the pain was quickly drowned by pleasure if her reaction was any

indicator.

I lost the track of time as I let myself under the control of my instincts, drilling her both holes at the same time, one with my tongue, one with my fingers, which soon turned into four, introducing her into anal play with a rather harsh lesson. I was distracted when a sudden explosion of a delicious aroma filled my tongue while she started to shudder so hard that, I would have thought that she was having a stroke if it wasn't for my medical knowledge.

[Achievement: Magnificent Massage. Bring a sexy lady to the land of unconsciousness with your skillful fingers. +500 Experience, +2 Endurance]

[+2500 Experience]

The climax caught me with surprise, as I was expecting the spell to hold. I pulled back, and examined her body, covered with sweat, rocking, but it was nothing compared to her face, her haughty expression replaced by a pleasure-filled one that would compete against the best courtesans.

Still, there was the mystery of how she managed to climax. At first, I thought that the spell broke because I somehow constructed it wrong, but an examination showed that her pleasure reached to such a point that the spell failed to keep all of it back. And, since it was the last encounter maid Selena was going to have with her, what was the harm of having one last joke. I destroyed the spell, which flooded her system with a fresh dose of pleasure, enough to trigger another orgasm before even the first one subsided.

As she started rocking, edging unconsciousness, I leaned forward and whispered into her ear even as I grabbed her hair rather harshly. "I hope you enjoyed the third phase, mistress." She tried to answer, but it was at that moment the unconsciousness overcame her, and she collapsed.

As I threw one last glance to her blemished body, I couldn't help but pity losing my access. Unfortunately, I pushed my luck as much as I could. I quickly dressed and left, leaving her naked body sprawled on her bed, used and exhausted.

[+1000 Experience]

I needed to find her maid, and explain about my 'sudden transfer', while also conveying her mistress' strict orders about being left alone tomorrow in her room, with no one to enter.

I wanted Marianne to wake up used and exhausted, enough time to process what had



happened. And I couldn't wait to see what she would do without a target to exact revenge...

[Level: 9    Experience: 42400 / 45000

Strength: 6    Charisma: 14

Precision: 10    Perception: 10

Agility: 12    Manipulation: 12

Speed: 7    Intelligence: 12

Endurance: 10    Wisdom: 17

HP: 405 / 405    Mana: 570 / 585    ]

#### SKILLS

[Advanced Subterfuge (50/50)

Advanced Arcana [50/50]

Advanced Biomancy [28/50]

Basic Speech 25/25

Basic Melee 8/25    ]

# Chapter Fifteen

As I left Marianne's maid behind, still dressed as Selena, after explaining to her that there had been an emergency decision taken by the house, calling me back to their estate, something she didn't enjoy hearing. Regardless, I walked away, but my blood still flowing quickly in my veins. I needed some physical exercise to throw away the excess energy if I were to catch any sleep. Unfortunately, I didn't have any convenient target for my favorite physical activity, now that the library was out of commission for that purpose.

Luckily I had an alternative, though an inferior one. Physical combat. I stopped by my room and picked up a sword, though this time, I didn't bother dressing in a fake warrior costume with all the armor, instead choosing a hooded cloak that would hide my identity as I sneaked into the forest. During my earlier visit, I have seen that the security there wasn't exactly I would call alert, especially after the nightfall, where most students were smart enough to avoid the time that favored the monsters. They were still patrols around, of course, but they were aimed to prevent monsters from entering, not students from leaving.

For me, the increased risk was an acceptable trade-off for reduced oversight. I was starting to get chafed by all those fake identities as I got stronger. Not enough to fore-swear their usage, but I could feel the temptation to be actually known, rather than acting as a scavenger. But before revealing myself fully, I needed to make sure my combat skills were appropriately in place.

Once again, I sneaked into the weakest forest, one that was filled with class zero dire rabbits, and class one dire foxes, intent on cutting another path through them, getting more skill points while simultaneously exhausting myself enough to be able to sleep. For more than half an hour, I continued, chasing and killing monsters, mostly by my sword, but also relying on my magic on occasion, trying to integrate some quick blasting spells to my combat routine, or curing occasional wound I received. It was tempted to drain my mana by casting life-spells on the creatures, earning a huge boost in my biomancy skill, but I still kept most of my mana pool untouched just in case. After all, I didn't have anyone to support me if things went sideways.

[+9 Melee]

[+2 Biomancy]

During that journey, my concentration was only broken when I saw the same warrior girl I had seen before, once again cutting a swathe through a pile of monsters, each blow felling at least two dire rabbits.

For a moment, I just stood there, appreciating the view. Standing straight, she was tall enough to tower over me by several inches, and the great sword she carried just added the majesty she displayed. Her raven black hair shone under the moonlight, each swing making them flew with the wind. Her muscles, while showed, wasn't large enough to detract from her sexiness, and they shone with a sweat thick enough to signify that she had been fighting here since I had last seen her hours ago.

It was an interesting situation, not because she was able to down those weak monsters in one blow, as it was an achievement anyone could replicate, but because these rabbits were still attacking in a rush, which would have meant that she had to have some kind of magical effect driving them to attack. An interesting solution, considering that each kill resulted in one or two experience. A truly torturous way of leveling up. Also, it was dangerous, even in such a well-vetted area, because it wasn't unheard of for perimeter wards to fail, and a stronger monster to slip in. And while a dire rabbit was manageable even when driven into a frenzy by magic, the same couldn't be said for an elemental bear or something more dangerous.

But still, I doubted that she was swinging her sword non-stop for the hours I was away. For once, even for a Melius with endurance focus, swinging that sword for hours was no small feat. But maintaining a proper mindset for the battle was even more difficult. And if one's focus faltered in the dark, even the weakest monster could be deadly.

My assessment was correct, it turned out, when I felt the dispersion of a magical field, and the rabbits froze for a moment, taking an account of their situation before dashing away in panic. She pressed her sword on the ground, leaning on it as she battled for her breath.

It would be a lie if I claimed that I wasn't tempted to stray into the blood-soaked opening and try to strike a conversation, but in the end, I decided otherwise. Even with my speech skill and charisma, approaching an alone lady exhausted in battle in the middle of a deserted forest was an unnecessary challenge, especially when I didn't even need to train my speech.

With that decision, I turned my back, and went deeper into the forest, which was easier than I had been expecting because of the small depopulation caused by the nameless battle maiden.

After a minute of walking, I received the best confirmation I could about the accuracy of not spending all of my mana. I was cleaving another rabbit, an innocent creature if I discounted its teeth, strong enough to dent steel, its eyes, glowing with an eerie red, and its thirst for human blood; when I felt a warning flash from my proximity ward going off in a way, buzzing with a strength I never felt before.

The same moment, I heard a soft noise, one that might be easily mistaken for the breeze. If it wasn't for the proximity ward, I might have fallen for it even with my wisdom and perception stats. But with the warning, I decided to listen to my instincts and threw myself to the side while hastily constructing a shield, the strongest I could manage in less than a second.

[-50 Mana]

[-30 HP]

It turned out to be a good decision, because a black paw appeared from nowhere, mid-swing, barely slowed down by the barrier as it swung close to my face. A cold sweat spread to my body when a part of my brain decided to assess just how close I had been to an early demise. Sometimes, high intelligence and wisdom carried its own side effects.

I constructed another shield as I rolled on the ground, this time strong enough to hold back the follow-up attack, and observed the enemy in front of me that almost killed me. A curse escaped my mouth when I noticed my enemy, while it attacked my shield ineffectively.

[-50 Mana]

A shadow wolf!

I had no idea why a fucking class eleven creature was on the premises, nor I had time to speculate. I needed all of my attention to survive. I felt the time slow down as adrenaline was pumped into my veins. I tried to remember everything I could remember about them.

They were nocturnal hunters, and had a reputation for killing the whole parties who dared to camp in the deeper parts of the forests. They were pretty rare, as they were territorial enough to not to allow another shadow creature in their domain. They were fast, strong, but all above, stealthy.

Funny enough, the last part gave me confidence. I wouldn't say that the shadow wolf was weak for its class. Its reputation as a party killer was well earned, hunting the stragglers one by one in the night, then melting back to shadows before the rest of the party could respond.

Luckily, I was well-equipped enough to deal with it thanks to my unique set of skills. I had high enough perception to catch its sneak attacks with the help of my proximity ward, and my agility was high enough to allow me to avoid its lightning-fast dashes. While I would have preferred to have a higher speed, my precision was enough to allow a successful counter-attack. And most importantly, I could cast defensive spells instantly, without trying to coordinate with a mage.

Fuck every book that claimed multi-classing was a bad idea. I was alive because of it.

It attacked the shield that separated us, but once again, failed to penetrate through the barrier. It proved it smarts when, instead of trying to break through the shield by brute force, it turned into a dark cloud, mixing into the darkness, effectively becoming invisible.

My grip on my sword tightened even as I molded some mana to my left hand, ready to go off. My perception was doing overtime while I waited for its assault. Just like before, it came in a flash. Unlike the last time, I was ready, coiled like a spring, and the moment I received the warning from my proximity ward, my sword flashed, meeting its paw halfway.

The creature pushed me back even as it roared, and the screech of the metal reached my ears. Who could have guessed that the damaged sword I had stolen from a garbage can wouldn't have lasted against a semi-legendary creature! But the sword was just a distraction, only there to delay it while I brought my hand under its chin, and sent a bolt of eldritch energy to the soft spot under its chin, putting as much as energy I could manage in a spell.

[-165 Mana]

It proved fast enough to prevent it from stabbing to its brain, but it wasn't a complete waste. When it pulled back, a part of its face was absent, and along with an eye. Most of its chin was gone as well, removing the threat of a bite attack along. However, it looked pissed, something that was confirmed a moment later when a furious roar reached my ear.

And against its fury, I had a broken sword and a mana pool half empty. Trying to repeat the same tactic was tempting, but I wasn't willing to bet against its adaptability. So instead of trying to sneak, it chose to rush in a furious assault. I rolled away at the last second, but it wasn't without a cost. I carried a mark of its fury on my left shoulder, deep enough to be deadly if left untreated for a while. Still, I was alive, which was much more important than the alternatives.

[-220 HP]

I could barely able to stand up when it came with the same furious rush. I sent another bolt of energy, but it just dodged, giving me a second to put another barrier around me. It collided with it, but failed to break through it, which made it roar once more.

The scene repeated a couple of times, while I tried to come up with a spell it wouldn't be able to avoid while doing the sufficient damage, but came blank. There was a reason most preferred elemental magic for pure combat purposes. Even my melee abilities were useless with my broken sword, with a reach barely longer than a bread knife, and a blunter tip.

I was just contemplating a range of suicidal tactics to increase my chance of survival by a sliver when I heard a shout. "Catch." Both I and the wolf turned towards the sound, and we saw the same female warrior I had observed earlier, but her presence took the back seat against a more important detail. Her greatsword, traveling towards us while turning like a wheel.

The wolf dodged away easily, but I had a more interesting plan, and less suicidal than the others I could think of. I dispelled the barrier, and took a soft step forward, stretching my abilities to the limit as the sword passed the same space I was occupying just a second ago. My hand flashed, making me thankful for my precision, which, combined with my melee, allowed me to catch the sword midway.

I let its momentum force me to turn, but I directed towards the same area the wolf was trying to land. It realized the danger it was in, and tried to shift back to its shadow state, but it was too late. I swung the sword in a great cleave, aiming its legs...

The result was spectacular. I was expecting it to wound one of its legs, deep enough to hurt its mobility if I was lucky enough. I certainly wasn't expecting it to cut through its legs like a knife through the butter, effectively immobilizing it. The sword had some serious enchantment on it, I realized, enough to make it a true treasure.

[+6 Melee]

It collapsed on the ground, helpless, but it was silent like it understood the fate it awaited him, and accepted. It was an alpha, and was willing to accept its fate with honor. One last chop would have ended it.

I didn't want to be the one to deliver that swing, however. While I was dealing with the creature, the surprise guest of the night closed in the distance, and looking at the creature with awed eyes. "A shadow wolf," she murmured in fascination.

"A rather interesting surprise, don't you think, milady," I said, feeling jovial now that the danger had passed. Then, without a word, I twisted the sword so that I was holding the tip, while the hilt was facing hers. "Thanks for the sword. It is magnificent."

"It is amazing, isn't it," she said with a sudden display of joy. "It's the miracle that carried our house name for seven generations, and now it's my turn," she added, this time with a sense of challenge, like she expected me to push back. She probably received rather skeptical comments on a woman having such a lofty goal, I realized. She relaxed when I nodded respectfully rather than making an issue. "Wouldn't you like to finish it before giving it back," she continued,

gesturing towards my own broken sword. "Yours doesn't seem to be up to the task."

"It certainly isn't," I added. "But rather than taking it myself, I would like to gift that kill for the gallant damsel who chose to save this knight in distress."

She giggled at my comment before turning a serious expression. "Are you serious?" she asked. I suddenly had a feeling that, if I tried to do that with a weaker creature, I would receive a rather angry retort about her not needing handouts, but a class eleven creature wasn't something to be dismissed by pride. I could easily imagine certain nobles paying hundreds of golds for the privilege of delivering the killing blow, thus getting the experience. Of course, for me, the sacrifice was meaningless, considering that I would earn no experience from the deed.

"Like a heart attack," I said. "It's nothing less than a magnificent lady like you, beautiful and courageous deserves." She tried to look angry, which gave me another insight into her personality. Under normal circumstances, the same words would probably result in a beating. Luckily, the situation was rather far away from the land of normalcy.

"If you insist," she said as she took the sword. "But I insist that you get its carcass. Otherwise, it would be too much." I nodded, and she swung her sword with great expertise, lobbing the head of the creature with a wide swing. She looked at the empty space in front of her, no doubt watching the notification that appeared in front of her with fascination. But she wasn't the only one that

[Achievement: Deadly Dowry. Leverage a deadly catch that brought you to the brink of the death to catch the attention of a dangerously sexy lady. +1000 Experience, +3 Strength]

The achievement had been a nice bonus, not that I needed assistance in deciphering her suspiciously curious glances towards my way. I ignored her for a moment, and used my biomancy to heal myself, at this level, it was still very ineffective for it, but I could stop the bleeding at least.

[+1 Biomancy]

[-100 Mana]

[+15 HP]

But stepping the bleeding wasn't the only reason I used the spell. She still didn't know who I was, and the situation was as favorable as it could get to reveal a part of myself, and getting an ally, which had the potential to turn into ally with benefits if everything went well.

“I wouldn’t have expected a mage skilled enough to take a shadow wolf in single combat. I thought your ilk chose to hide behind proud soldier for protection rather than risking their precious hide.”

“You would find out that I’m a rather unusual mage, in more ways than one,” I said even as I let my hood to fall down, giving her an unrestricted view of my face. She might be the first one that saw it for a while, because I had started to use an illusion to hide it while I went around in Mule identity. I had to do it, because fourteen points of charisma were rather attention-grabbing.

“It seems so,” she said, unaware that the night wasn’t enough to hide her blush from my eyes. “But I feel curious just how much.”

“I would like to explain it, but I fear that the commission might bring some guards here, and I have some reasons to hide my prowess, the general distaste for mages who actually decide to fight instead of hiding behind the others only one of it,” I said, once again glad for my speech skill. I would have focused seducing her, but I expected guards to appear any second, and more I could carve off this monster, the better.

“Interesting,” she murmured, her eyes alight with interest, in more ways than one. The situation was basically a cheat code for seduction, I had to admit. A handsome, mysterious warrior of a great aptitude, cloaked in dark, suggesting a greater mystery was too tempting to deny for a brave warrior like her. “Maybe we could meet tomorrow night and you can explain those mysteries better.”

“Agreed. It’s a date,” I said, followed by a wink to reveal that the word choice was intentional.

She blushed. “Good,” she murmured. “By the way, my name is Aviada,” she said.

“A magnificent name for a magnificent name,” I said, enjoying her intensifying blush. “And I’m Caesar,” I answered, using my birth name for the first time in a long while. It tasted weird in my tongue, but for the first time in my life, it felt right, that I was finally strong enough to fulfill the implications of the name, which belonged to the biggest hero my city had ever produced.

“An ambitious name for a mysterious stranger,” she said before disappearing behind the trees. After a brief pause where I repaired my sword, I started skinning my trophy. The more I could get before the guards arrived and I had to disappear, the better.

After half an hour of tense skinning, and cutting, where I managed to extract every valuable part of the wolf, I had realized that there were no guards coming, which was curious. I didn’t



expect them to respond instantly, but even if the wards somehow failed to warn them, they should have heard the battle, or at least, felt the magic I had used. The blast that took half of the monster's face was not really sneaky, both visually and magically.

But still, no guard came, and I burned the worthless remains of the wolf -relatively worthless, as they could easily be sold to several golds, but I currently lacked the opportunity to do so, and it might be hard to explain how the Mule suddenly came across a shadow wolf spleen or intestine. But the head, I took along with the skin, bones, and some highly-magical parts like its claws, my biomancy once again coming useful in processing them for storage.

But burning and processing those took the rest of my mana, and when I returned to my room, I was completely exhausted. But despite my exhaustion, the sleep proved elusive. A part of it was my sudden brush with death. Just a moment's delay, and I would have died. Still, the sudden appearance of the monster, and the guards' suspicious absence was more important. Something told me that things were planned, and while I could be the target, my instincts told me otherwise.

It seemed like I had a mystery to solve if I wanted to keep my new paramour alive...

-----

[Level: 9      Experience: 43400 / 45000

Strength: 9    Charisma: 14

Precision: 10    Perception: 10

Agility: 12    Manipulation: 12

Speed: 7      Intelligence: 12

Endurance: 10    Wisdom: 17

HP: 187 / 450    Mana: 15 / 585      ]

SKILLS

[Advanced Subterfuge (50/50)

Advanced Arcana [50/50]

Advanced Biomancy [31/50]

Basic Speech [25/25]

Basic Melee [23/25] ]

# Chapter Sixteen

I woke up with the first rays of the sun, which was insufficient as rest, as while I recovered the mana I spent during my rest, I had to spend almost all of it recovering several hit points. It was tempting to sleep a few more hours to recover some more, until my library shift started, but another information-gathering task awaited me.

[+4 Biomancy]

[-400 Mana]

[+113 HP]

Once again in my servant disguise, this time as a stable-helper, I slipped to the warrior section of the area, and worked there for a couple of hours. With my latest radical jump in strength, the work was rather easy even in my exhausted state, something I had appreciated a lot.

More importantly, I had managed to collect a bit information about my mystery helper. It turned out, it was easy to make idle servants gossip about a sexy woman over six feet tall and an aggressive demeanor. Unfortunately, due to traditional roles expecting a noble lady not to dirty her hands with such nonsense, exacerbated by the said aggressive demeanor, there was a fair bit of resentment towards her, which meant that there was a lot of inaccurate and plain vicious gossip about her, and even for me, separating them was a difficult task.

Some claimed that she killed all of her brothers, while others claimed she hunted the men stupid enough to get near her for sport, while simultaneously claiming that she was a whore that had routine intercourse in the monsters in the forest, and a lot of other ridiculous claims. The only consistent thing was she was a part of a small house with a glorious past, and she decided to take the path of the warrior after the untimely death of her brothers to raise her house reputation, rather than doing what was expected of her and find a decent match, while focusing on the magical arts.

The other undisputed fact was that her sword was a treasure onto itself. That, I had no trouble believing, because that monster of a sword had cut through a class eleven monster with just a cleave, with only a modest strength of six to support it. Yes, shadow wolves weren't known for their defense, but only because of their scarier abilities.

So, when I stood on the line, listening as the head librarian stood ahead of us, my mind was still on the task of separating useful information from garbage, when I noticed a slight limp in her

steps. It was a simple thing, barely noticeable even with my perception, but it was enough to pull my attention.

I started to watch her body language with my full attention, which was hard due to a rather thick robe she was wearing, but thanks to the wide variety of experience I had with loose-style female robes -both wearing them for disguise and peeling them off from sexy ladies- I was able to catch a limp on her steps, which she was trying to hide.

That made me look even deeper, which allowed me to catch the other signs of a wound she was trying to hide. Curious, because she had a reputation for a highly-accomplished mage. I didn't know whether she had any healing abilities, but it shouldn't be hard to find a decent healer, which would keep it secret for her even if she wanted to keep it hidden. Which meant that it was either something recent, something she couldn't ask any help for, or something that couldn't be cured by a regular healer.

Another mystery. It was a pity that this one, I couldn't have risked trying to solve it.

But there had been an unexpected side effect of my careful examination. It forced me to register all of her qualities, such as the rather lovely structure of her face, disrupted only by the tight way she gathered her lovely chestnut hair in a tight bun, stretching her skin to an unpleasant sharpness. Her lips, forcibly thinned to hide the fact that they were thick enough to be pouty. Her beautiful brown eyes, hidden behind a pair of edgy, intimidating glasses.

And just like that, something clicked in me. I had been tricked by her demeanor and the mode of dress, registering her as an old lady past her prime, something her reputation as a war hero only reinforced. But now that I was examining her, I could see that she was a beautiful woman in her early thirties, using every little trick available to her to look stern rather than cute.

[Achievement: Crack in Character. A new patch created by noticing an interesting detail. +100 Experience, +1 Perception]

Of course, that didn't change the fact that she was a very accomplished mage, with a level close to thirty based on the stories on her achievements, and with a personality pricklier than a dire porcupine, which made trying to reach her a dangerous proposition. Still, I had a feeling that it wouldn't keep my back if the situation presented itself.

But that was something for the future. When she finished giving the tasks of the day, I once again slipped towards the less-visited parts of the library, busying myself with books of combat magic. The last night's encounter proved to me that I was under-equipped in terms of combat

spells, and desperately needed a variety over pure blasts and shields.

After finishing my work, I was expecting to return to my room for a quick rest. Some of my mana had been replenished thanks to my leisure working pace in the library, but I wanted to sleep until it was the time to meet with Aviada to top it as much as I could manage. I wanted to be prepared for another surprise like the wolf.

My surprises were yet to be over, however, when I noticed a familiar figure following me in a way that she thought as stealthily. Marianne, my favorite massage customer. She had a hood over her face, and a cloak around her body, but it was a terrible disguise. Her curly blonde hair peeked through, and there was no cloth in the world, enchanted or otherwise, that could hide her delicious curves.

I was tempted to change my path towards a more crowded part, just to watch her trying to dodge the suspicious gazes of the passerby, but I had a feeling that Marianne wouldn't be able to weather too many of those glares before skunking away, and I was curious about what she wanted to talk about.

Instead, I took a turn towards a more deserted area that held the unused beddings and other types of inventory, giving her a chance to close in. I watched from the corner of my eyes as she closed in, but she lost her confidence in the last second. A ridiculous lack of courage, as thanks to experience modifier, I knew for a fact that she was stronger than level ten, but she still failed to close into an abnormal. Yes, she was a healer, but it didn't justify it.

I had to get lost, walking even deeper into the unused parts of the tower, for her to gather enough courage to confront me. And even then, it took a few minutes for her to take the decision to dwindle the distance. "Stop," she finally called as her steps quickened, and I turned towards her, the blank look of the Mule on my face.

In her hurry, her hood had fallen back, revealing her face, her pinkish color signaling the stress she was feeling. She took a deep breath, trying to gather her composure before starting to speak. "You'll call your maid back to here!" she ordered.

"What?" I answered, adding a thick tone of surprise that suggested I failed to comprehend her question.

It was fun to watch her lose her wind against the unexpected wall of stupidity. She stilled for a second, restarting her thought process, and repeated, this time, much slower. "Your maid, Selena. Write home, and call her back."

“Why?” I said, but this time, I didn’t bother to sound like the Mule. I have dipped my head down, letting the shadows of the corner to hide my expression, and while she was distracted by the question, dispelled most of the subtle disguise that was hiding the effects of my charisma increase.

“Because I order you to do,” she answered, like it was obvious.

“Really,” I said while raising my head once more, but this time, there was no illusion that hid my expression. She flinched, stunned by the sudden change of the situation. “So, I have to bother writing back to home and angering my stepmother, just because you’re feeling horny,” I added, the smirk on my face widening with every single word that departed my lips.

“W-what,” she stammered, missing the irony of mirroring my earlier phrase.

“Come on, Marianne,” I said, taking a step towards her. Trying to process the new situation she found herself in, she struggled to process my words, but she took a step back nevertheless. “Isn’t Cornelia enough to fulfill your needs that you needed to bother my poor maid.”

It would be a lie if I said that I didn’t enjoy the expression of shock that spread onto her face when I mentioned her secret paramour. Her face turned chalk-white as she realized that her most important secret was known by someone that was much-less Mule-like than she had assumed.

Her shock soon turned into panic, and her hand jumped up, a ball of fire crackling in her palm, reminding me my closest brush with the death, even closer than the fight against the shadow wolf. But this time, I wasn’t a weakling barely strong enough to hurt a fly. My hand moved in a flash and pushed her wrist up, sending her attack haywire. “Rude,” I murmured.

Her reaction was rather immediate. I felt a sudden shift of mana, indicating that she was preparing for a huge attack. I could have shielded myself, but that would reveal my magical aptitude as well, something I wanted to keep hidden as much as possible. Instead, I pulled my dagger, and pressed under her chin, sharp enough to remind its presence without actually drawing blood. “I wouldn’t do that if I were you.”

Just like that, the pressure from her assault dispersed, and I pulled the knife away. She was trembling badly, but I wasn’t feeling charitable after her attempt to erase me from the face of the planet. She leaned against the wall, and took a few deep breaths, trying to calm herself. From her reaction, I could see that she was even more removed from the danger than I had assumed, even when considering her specialization as a healer.

“Are you well enough to talk, or should I try to find a seat for myself while waiting for you?” I said, not so charitably warning her.

“But... You... Mule... How is it possible,” she murmured, with long breaks between the sentences, trying to process the fact that the idiotic but harmless worker she had seen around had such a dangerous secret in reality.

“For reasons that would take too long to explain, I had to arrange being sent here to avoid assassination, and that idiot persona was a part of my disguise, because it was useful. You can’t believe the secrets you find when people think you’re stupid enough to mix up and down.” I stopped for a second, my smile gaining a dark quality. “Or in second thought, you know exactly what kind of secrets that might be found, don’t you, sweetie,” I added, caressing her cheek softly just to reiterate the situation.

“Why are you telling me this?” she asked, clearly confused.

“Because you can’t tell anyone,” I said, but even as I said that, I realized it sounded like something a third-rate villain might say before killing his victim, so I quickly amended. “Because the things I know about you are much more dangerous, so you would be an idiot to reveal that. I would just lose my cover, which, for reasons that would stay hidden for now, starting to outlive its usefulness. How would your family react if they knew your unholy relationship with a woman from a rival family?”

My lengthy explanation was enough to push the situation for her. “What do you want?” she asked in surrender.

“Don’t be down, sweetie, I don’t need anything from you,” I said, which made her react incredulously. “Don’t be too shocked, while there is quite a few I could force from you, I’m not in a habit of blackmailing helpless damsels.” Which was a bald-faced lie, as I had no complications about using the said blackmail to my benefit, but the way she reacted to the situation revealed that she was even easier to manipulate than I had first assumed. Why should I have an angry servant while I could have a devoted one instead?

“So, you want nothing,” she reiterated, relief overcoming her surprise.

“Well, I wouldn’t say no if you occasionally drop by for a quick chat. Boredom is the biggest problem in wearing the disguise of an idiot. And with my loyal maid gone, I don’t have anyone to talk to. Before she departed, we were talking for hours, where she told me about her day.”

“She tells you about her day,” Marianne said, her panic invading her voice once more.

“Yes,” I said, stretching the word like it was a particularly delicious piece of food. I let my gaze fall down, devouring her body. “She told me everything, including the rather interesting adventures she had during her latest job assisting a rather curious noble lady.” I made a show of zipping my mouth, signaling that it will stay a secret.

“Thanks,” she murmured, but her voice was more stressed than relaxed. I understood where she was coming from. My commitment to stay silent wasn’t worth much with her information being worth so little. At least, that was what I had made it look like by revealing it in my own choice.

“Of course, I shouldn’t have to say it, that it needs to be a two-sided act, even including Cornelia. If you choose to talk to her about anything about me, I might find myself explaining some of your adventures without her.” I stopped for a moment, then continued with a teasing manner. “But it shouldn’t worry you. Luckily, she is even-tempered enough to handle it, right?”

That, despite the tenseness of the situation, managed to earn a snort from her. It wasn’t a perfect joke, but delivered by the supernaturally good timing and tone, enhanced by my speech skill, it worked wonders. It was an interesting tone, timing, and pacing of the words had even more important than the meaning they hold.

“So, what now,” she said, calmed after her short laughter.

“Nothing much, you’ll stop searching for Selena, as she had to leave for another task for the family, and I don’t want anyone to start asking about her linked to me. There was a reason she didn’t wear her family’s allegiance openly. On that topic, even among the servants, you need to be more careful who to trust. You’re lucky that I don’t have any ulterior motives towards you,” I said, probably uttering the most bald-faced lie that had ever left my lips.

“I understand,” she said in a slight annoyance for being patronized, which was my intention. Slight annoyance was much easier to manage than fear of one’s safety.

“Excellent. Try to drop by occasionally, as it will get without Selena’s company,” I said and started walking away. But just before disappearing around the corner, and facing at her, who was watching me with confusion, still trying to process the sudden change in the situation. “And, feel free to drop by if you want to receive a massage from Selena’s master, satisfaction guaranteed.”

[Achievement: Foxy Flirting. Twist dangerous and threatening situation into not-so-innocent flirting. +200 Experience, +2 Manipulation]



It was amusing to watch her dash away with panic, so much that I was tempted to follow her, applying a more direct method of seduction. Unfortunately, I still needed rest for tonight's meeting, in case that shadow wolf wasn't the only thing that was planned by the shadow planner.

I wasn't willing to believe that a shadow wolf accidentally sneaked into the level one forest the same night the guards decided to be suspiciously absent.

When I went back to my room, I chose to take a small nap, ignoring the temptation to start playing with the trophy bones I had picked. Even without spending it frivolously, I would be around three-quarter mark after another nap. I didn't even spend it to fully recover my HP, why should I waste it for a few pieces of bone.

I left my room about an hour before the promised meeting time, once again dressed as a servant. My first stop was the armory, and I managed to steal a sword and a dagger without much difficulty, dismissing the fact that their absence would cause some headache for the quartermaster. Their count was, unlike the ones marked garbage, was limited. They weren't masterpieces in any stretch of the word, and they didn't have a scrap a magic of their creation, but they were quite a bit more reliable than the one I had picked from the garbage, even after the magical treatment.

After that, I stayed in my servant guise while walking towards the female warrior section, waiting for Aviada to appear. Not because I wanted to talk to her, but because I wanted to see if her passage would trigger a spy.

A few minutes later, Aviada appeared at the entrance, and started walking towards the forest. I didn't have to wait for long, as one of the servants disappeared suspiciously the moment he had seen her, and a moment later, I felt a flare of magic. Even around the warrior halls, it wasn't that uncommon enough to be noteworthy, but not enough to make the servant's disappearance just a coincidence.

With the conspiracy targeting my new friend confirmed, I quickened my steps towards the forest, just in case the planner in the shadow decided to act quicker than I feared. Aviada was too interesting to lose quickly.

[Level: 9      Experience: 43700 / 45000

Strength: 9    Charisma: 14

Precision: 10 Perception: 11

Agility: 12 Manipulation: 14

Speed: 7 Intelligence: 12

Endurance: 10 Wisdom: 17

HP: 370 / 450 Mana: 535 / 612 ]

### SKILLS

[Advanced Subterfuge (50/50)

Advanced Arcana [50/50]

Advanced Biomancy [35/50]

Basic Speech 25/25

Basic Melee 23/25 ]

## Chapter Seventeen

I wasn't too far behind Aviada in entering the forest, but while she decided to stand as a part of the house, I had sneaked around the perimeter, sneaking through the ward rather easily. It wasn't a weak ward, but the fact that it was mostly geared to contain monsters made my work much easier.

After a pause where I removed my servant disguise and changed into my hooded cloak, I dashed towards the opening where we promised to meet, killing occasional dire rabbits and foxes with a swing of my sword. Melee fighting might not be as effective as magic in killing strong monsters, but it was much more efficient when targeting the weaker ones. Also, it allowed me to maximize my melee skill.

[+2 Melee]

Thanks to my quick pace, I stepped into the opening soon after Aviada, but as I stepped in, I couldn't help but do a double-take. The subtle, but extremely effective change in her attire had caught me surprised. She was still wearing the cloak she had been when she left her room, but it was unclasped, revealing what she had been wearing underneath.

As the last night, she chose to wear a simple shirt rather than armor, but the shirt didn't have the same cut. It was tighter, still easy to move in but enough to add a hint of sexiness, something that was further enhanced by the small dip in the chest area. It wasn't a particularly deep cleavage, but with her chest size, it hadn't had to be to look sexy. And the fact that she was carrying her bloodied sword with an obvious mastery just enhanced the impression.

"How are you this fine evening, my noble savior," I said, going with a classical noble opening, but with just enough derision to indicate it was a joke.

"Rather well, mysterious warrior," she said, the subtle pressure on the word of mysterious hinting that, unlike last night, she expected some explanation.

I gave a mock bow, which made her chuckle. Then, when I started walking towards her, suddenly, I felt several triggers in my proximity ward, in the familiar presence of rabbits. The same motion I pulled my sword, I killed the closest one. Another swing killed one more.

The reason for the sudden assault would have been obvious even if I couldn't feel the presence of the lure spell. But more interesting, now that I was near her, I could feel that it wasn't her that cast it, but the sword, making it even more precious than my initial assumption.

A glance at her showed that she was busy watching me even as she killed her share of monsters. What she was expecting to see was obvious, so I decided to give it rather than pointlessly extending the situation. With a wave of my hand, I created ten different arcana bolts, each flying towards the target without missing, and killing them. An impressive-looking spell that required great magical expertise. Unfortunately, it didn't do much damage, even struggling with class one creatures with stronger damage. On the plus side, it was cheap.

[-5 Mana]

"Impressive," she said even as I stopped feeling the effects of the lure spell. "It's rare to see a mage that decides to learn the way of the sword, and even rarer to find one that could wield it half-decent, which makes you a curiosity," she continued as she closed in.

I might have taken insult to her arrogant way of talking, but the hint of interest underneath her tone went a long way to soothe my pride. "I aim to please," I said with another exaggerated bow, but she continued watching me without a hint of humor. "Let's just say that for reasons too long to explain, I had to fake being an Abnormal since I was a child. A drawback to it that I lacked the resources to guide my development, and being a master of both blade and magic seemed too attractive. When I finally managed to arrange to come to Silver Tower, it was too late to turn back, so I leaned in my unique situation further."

"Does it work," she asked curiously.

"That's a loaded question. The utility it gives is certainly useful, but it comes with a rather big trade-off in maximum power. But all around, it works well for my lonesome road."

"I understand," she said with a nod, which didn't surprise me. After all, I had constructed the story based on the information I was able to gather this morning. The story was structured in a way that would get her sympathies, showing both self-sufficiency and courage while plagued by the kind of structural problems she experienced in her life. Even better, it true enough to sustain any examination she could bring to bear.

For a moment, the silence stretched, then she said. "It must be disappointing, unable to live up to your promise," she said. "Even with such a specialization, you were able to kill a shadow wolf alone. I can't imagine how strong you would have been otherwise."

"I find it's for to best not to focus too much on what might have happened if the dice of fate rolled differently. I am here, and I'm strong enough to defend myself and mine. The only annoyance is the role I had to take as a stupid library worker, but I'm used to it, at least. Also, I

can't say that I was able to kill a shadow wolf by myself. Your help was decisive."

"Nonsense," she said, waving the compliment away. "I have seen the state of it when I arrived. It was just a matter of time before you killed it. And more importantly, you managed to avoid its ambush in the darkness, alone, at a time that you have no reason to expect such a danger. I doubt that there is a handful of the students that would manage such a feat in the school. I don't doubt that there are even some teachers that would have fallen to it."

I just nodded in appreciation. What she said was correct, though it was more about the match-up between my skill set and the strength of the monster. I certainly wouldn't expect to survive against a more well-rounded monster in that caliber - not yet at least. "But that still leaves the question about who was responsible for its presence."

"What do you mean?" she asked.

"It's already unlikely for a shadow wolf to sneak through the wards around the school unless it was tempted by something." She glanced towards her sword, but I cut her off. "No, the lure your sword has is not loud enough to be felt outside of the wards. But if I wasn't closer, using magic, I have no doubt you would be its target," I added, subtly reminding her that my presence saved her life, as some hidden appreciation wouldn't hurt.

"But if it wasn't my sword, what was it?" she asked.

"That's the question," I said. "But the fact that it managed to sneak in without raising any alarm while guards were absent is definitely suspicious. Until we can find better evidence, it's better to assume that it was a conspiracy aiming one of us, and try to stick into the crowds as much as possible."

"But that's not possible," she answered. "I have my reasons, but I can't afford to slow down my leveling!"

I could feel the strength of her determination as she spoke. Luckily, I had no intention of actually dissuading her. "Well, if you're determined in that, maybe we could work together. It would be safer." I could see she was dissatisfied with it, so I quickly moved to placate her. "I have no problems with you getting the lion's share of the rabbits and other critters. I don't really need the experience from them," I added, reinforcing her impression that I had a very high level, which made any possible benefit from the rabbits even less important.

"That might actually work," she murmured, looking thoughtful. Then, a smirk spread onto her face, adding a teasing quality to her face. "Of course, I need to make sure you're good enough

to keep up,” she added.

Despite knowing just how ill-advised it was, I decided to answer her challenge by pulling out my sword. “To the first blood?” I asked.

“That works,” she answered, but even as the answer left her lips, her sword was cutting the air with great speed. Unfortunately for her, I could see her readying for that surprise strike before she could even move, and leaned back slightly, enough to make the sword miss me in a hair’s breadth.

That show of courage worked wonders in enhancing the hint of respect in her eyes. It was not without a reason. Only through the absolute confidence in my agility and perception, I was able to take that risk, because I had seen just how effective her sword had been on a class eleven monster. A mistake might cost me my life, but once again, I found such a risk was easy to take to impress such an unusual, yet impressive, specimen of femininity.

She attacked once more, but this time, I parried. She looked dissatisfied by the path I took, but that was replaced by surprise when I changed the trajectory of my sword at the last moment, and rather than meeting the edge, pushed away on the blunt side. Or more accurately, tried to push as I found out that she was a great deal stronger than me. It was around fifteen, if I were to guess.

If her smirk was any indicator, she was aware of the gulf between our strength, and had no complications to leverage that. Instead of letting her sword fly away, she kept them in contact, changing the angle to rub the edges together. I took a step back, but not before she took a huge chunk out of my sword.

Intending to spice up the fight a bit, I raised my hand, about to send a few arcane bolts to her, to see how she would react, but the sight of sudden disappointment stopped me. Clearly, she was hoping for a martial only fight. Since impressing her was much more important than winning, I used the mana I had molded for a repair spell, dragging my finger along the edge of my sword to fix the edge, and reinforcing it a bit for the good measure. Just like that, the smile was back on her face.

[-10 Mana]

“Handy,” she said cheekily before rushed towards me once more, this time much faster, showing that her strength wasn’t the only physical stat she had been focusing for. Her agility and speed weren’t anything to scoff either, though they were not at the level of her physical

strength.

Once again I pulled back. I was afraid of meeting her strength and superior technique, supported by her more than decent agility. Her better reach made the situation even worse. My enhanced melee helped, but only a little. The only thing that allowed me to put a decent resistance was my mental abilities, particularly the manipulation, tricking her with a number of feints, preventing her from fully focusing on the assault.

But even then, the duel continued only because she wasn't applying her maximum capacity. It was obvious that she was more than capable of taking the victory in a purely-physical contest. But at least, I was giving enough to make it fun for her.

A minute passed with attacks and ripostes. I could see the beginnings of boredom on her face as she got a hang of my fighting style, and I chose that moment to push her sword with a display of agility I kept hidden, and stepped inside her guard. She could have killed me easily in that position, but wounding me slightly was out of option.

My sword slashed for once before I pulled back. "Just a bit more," I said, but while saying that, a flirting smile was on my face. The reason, the large gash I had left on her shirt, revealing a delicious view of her flat stomach.

[+20 Experience]

For a moment, her expression was blank as she gazed at me, making me afraid that I had pushed the situation too much. But even then, I kept my smile steadily, and bringing all the charm that could be sustained by fourteen charisma. Luckily, it was enough, and a blush spread on her face, followed by a flirting smile that somehow managed to look intimidating at the same time. She charged with a skill that she hadn't displayed before, and soon, I had a matching cut on my shirt.

"Just a bit more," she said, mirroring my phrase, and from there, the game was afoot. For the next few minutes, the duel continued with a renewed sense. It took a minute for my shirt to fall in tatters, leaving my upper body, and my brand-new muscles, in the display, but it wasn't entirely one-sided. I had managed to leave chip away her shirt enough to leave the task of covering her breasts to her chest bindings, which was, from what I could see, quite tight.

[+180 Experience]

[Achievement: Ferocious Flirting. Flirt through a combat situation risky enough to cause death in a mistaken move. +500 Experience, +2 Strength]

A smirk boomed on my face as I felt a renewed power filled my muscles, and I started pushing her more aggressively. My strength was still far from hers, but fresh two points were enough to enhance my strategic options significantly, especially since she wasn't expecting it. When I parried her next assault, I made sure to put enough strength behind my blow to make her sword veer out of my way, leaving me free to cut into

To her credit, she recovered quickly, but not fast enough to prevent me from leaving a vertical slash on her chest bindings. I wasn't able to cut it completely, but it loosened enough for her glorious breasts to show their full potential, while also giving me a good view of her tanned breasts.

[+200 Experience]

Her surprise lasted only for a second before she assaulted with a renewed vigor, revealing that just how much she had been underplaying her ability. Her blade swung with a skill that she hadn't displayed before, and my sword flew away from my hand without the slightest resistance.

She smirked as she brought the sword to my neck, creating a very small nick, but it hurt quite a bit despite its size, another indicator of the rather impressive value of her sword. Her chest puffed with the pride of her victory, which, under other circumstances, might have annoyed me quite a bit, but since my attention was more focused on the great view created by her move, I let the situation slide. She was aware of my gaze, and quite satisfied by it.

[-5 HP]

[+150 Experience]

"That wasn't terrible," I said with a challenging smirk. "But how about a more even fight, no weapons," I added, which made her courage waver for a moment, but my speech skill wasn't only useful for the situations I could talk. A quirk of my eyebrow gave the impression of an unintentional noting of her reluctance for a challenge that she wasn't holding an overwhelming advantage.

I wasn't surprised when she pushed her sword into the ground with a renewed challenge on her face. "Let's do it," she murmured. I couldn't help but smirk as I lunged forward, feinting an assault before pulling out at the last moment. She managed to react at the last second, but with significantly less skill than what she had for the sword fight, suggesting that she had picked a more specialized combat skill rather than picking melee.



Another assault later, took a hold of her arm, but only for a moment, because I didn't want to give her an opportunity to grab me. I didn't want to convert the situation where she could bear her full strength. But while I was pulling back, I kept a hold of her shirt, which, thanks to all the cuts over it, came off with a ripping sound, leaving her chest-bindings as her only protection.

Her arms rose to her chest in reflex, but a moment later, she let them fall, choosing to lunge towards me instead of trying to secure her modesty. The adrenaline was working even better than I could have hoped for, loosening any inhibition she might feel.

[+100 Experience]

With another level so close to attain, once again, I was tempted to push my luck. During the next attack, I managed to twist after grabbing her arm, and took a position behind her, forcing her arm behind as well. A yelp escaped her mouth, but it was cut short when I pushed my shaft onto her tight ass, stripping the pretense of the situation.

[+200 Experience]

Level UP!

[Select one of the following skills: Basic Stealth, Advanced Melee, Advanced Speech]

I quickly selected melee before shifting my attention back to the situation. She was frozen, so I decided to introduce some movement to the situation, and started the dance of my hips. "Do you surrender?" I asked.

"Never," came the answer, but she was unable to hide a rather obvious sense of desire from her tone. I could feel that a rather fun event was about to happen.

Naturally, the involvement of the conspirators chose that exact moment to come to the surface, in the form of a trickling in the proximity ward I had set up. "Duck," I called her even as I raised my hand, glowing with a bright purple as a bunch of elemental hyenas burst into the opening, ready to attack.

I sent the bolt to them, disrupting their formation even as Aviada rolled for her sword. But despite the danger, I saw the opportunity to boost my experience. I 'accidentally' hooked my finger to her already-damaged chest bindings, and her momentum did the rest, leaving her half-naked, her breasts dangling under the effect of the sudden momentum change.

[+150 Experience] 25% Penalty due to level equality!

I couldn't exactly say that I was happy learning her level, as, from the way she fought, I had been willing to bet that she was stronger, but she probably just had a higher-than-average stat distribution, supported by a bunch of over-specialized skills. At least, the angry glare she sent me was promisingly playful as she took a defensive position.

Watching the way the moonlight danced over her tanned skin was a promising idea, but unfortunately, I had more immediate concerns, such as, the pack of elemental hyenas that was ready to pounce.

-----

[Level: 10 Experience: 45200 / 55000

Strength: 11 Charisma: 14

Precision: 10 Perception: 11

Agility: 12 Manipulation: 14

Speed: 7 Intelligence: 12

Endurance: 10 Wisdom: 17

HP: 380 / 500 Mana: 550 / 680 ]

#### SKILLS

[Advanced Subterfuge (50/50)

Advanced Arcana [50/50]

Advanced Biomancy [35/50]

Advanced Melee 25/50

Basic Speech 25/25 ]

# Chapter Eighteen

Things were about to get heated, but not in a way I might have preferred, I thought as I shielded myself and Aviada from a burst of fire, courtesy of the pack of elemental hyenas surrounding us.

[-20 Mana]

Taken alone, elemental hyenas weren't exactly a challenge for my level. Compared to other class six creatures, they neither had the strength or the endurance to justify their rather high experience gain. As their name indicated, they had the ability to use elemental magic, but not in a level that would be truly staggering, even for someone around level five or six unless they had really terrible stats.

The problem was their unique ability to link their casting power to create much stronger effects. So, larger the pack, more devastating their attacks became. The only thing that kept them from becoming a threat against the towns and cities was the fact that only very rarely a pack had more than a dozen members.

Luckily, it wasn't one of those rare times, as I doubted that I would have been able to resist a fireball from a full pack, especially with the relative combat-weakness of arcana magic. Seven hyenas weren't trivial by any stretch of the word, but it wasn't too hard to handle as well for a level ten tag team, especially when one of them was equipped with a spectacular enchanted sword, while the other had an average stat score over ten.

And the earlier arcana bolt I had sent worked in my benefit as well, distracting three of the hyenas enough to prevent them from joining the spell, hence the ease I could block their assault. But I could sense they are gathering their magical power for another spell.

While they were doing that, I leveraged the proximity ward in place to get an instant sense of their formation. The three I had assaulted with the arcana bolt had pulled back towards the leader of the pack, which was easy to detect because the gathering mana was centering on it. Luckily for us, their pulling back had left their formation unbalanced, with two of them far enough from the rest.

"Attack left, I'll distract the others," I ordered Aviada, as sharp and commanding as I could manage. We had the advantage, and I wanted to keep it. She said nothing as she charged forward, while I sent a wave of concussive force towards the main pack of the hyenas, forcing most of them to jump away.

[-50 Mana]

Their spell fizzled. Without the contribution from the rest, the leader's assault only managed to create a weak bolt of fire, which I pushed away negligently. Under normal circumstances, my strategy would be a horrible one for a level ten mage, wasting a huge chunk of mana for a temporary benefit. But I had two advantages that changed the situation. First was my mana pool, which was significantly higher than any other level ten thanks to my high stats.

The second was Aviada, who already managed to slay two hyenas caught flatfooted by her assault. I watched her from the corner of my eyes, my attention split between the supernatural grace she displayed while destroying those monsters, and the way her sexy body coiled in the process.

[+75 Experience] 25% Penalty!

The leader of the hyenas noticed the threat our approach represented as well, and responded with a bolt of lightning. Aviada charged the larger pack, ignoring the threat it posed, trusting me to handle it. I had no problems creating another shield, dispersing it.

[-25 Mana]

The rest of the battle collapsed rather easily. Hyenas, even the elemental variety was rather cowardly, and seeing half of them dying without inflicting the slightest damage was enough to destroy their resolve. They tried to rush away, but I chose to cast another spell, binding them in place. Another wasteful spell, as it only held them in place for a moment, but it was enough for Aviada to finish them all but one.

[-50 Mana]

The last one, realizing the danger Aviada was posing, decided to attack the seemingly weaker target, and dashed for me with great speed. Not fast enough that I couldn't nail it with an arcana bolt, but I was aware the disdain Aviada had for magic, or more acutely, mages that did nothing but staying behind while raining spells, so I used telekinesis to grab my discarded sword instead. With my strength and its momentum, the last hyena hadn't had a chance of survival, cleaved into two with a calculated swing. Unnecessarily brutal, but I had a feeling Aviada would appreciate it.

[+1 Melee]

"That was fun," Aviada murmured as she pressed the tip of her bloodied sword on the ground,

noting the cleaved presence of the last hyena. She stood like that for a moment, giving me the full view of her breasts, the view enhanced further by her breathing, then she brought her arm over her chest, a smirk on her face.

“Watching you dispatch them was a true pleasure,” I said, letting my eyes dip down her chest pointedly. I had a good enough handle on her personality to know that trying to hide my gaze would earn no respect from her. And letting her take the experience of seven moderately-high class creatures without a word didn’t hurt either.

She said nothing, but her seductive smile was answer enough. She walked towards her clothes, dispatched on the ground, and passed them to me. “Could you fix them for me,” she said. I did so without complaint, considering I was the one responsible for it. Of course, if I had the choice, I would have preferred her to stay like that, but it was the second assault, and it added some urgency to our situation.

While I fixed it, she once again stabbed her sword to the ground and turned her back to me. But, rather than asking the bindings back, she raised her arms. As a gentleman, I had to help her, of course, so I started to wrap the bindings around her chest once more. If my hands touched the soft skin of her breasts, it was completely accidental!

[+150 Experience] 25% Penalty!

She turned back to me, and after the slight delay while she put her shirt back on, we were ready to talk. I could see that she had a serious expression on her face. “It confirms that yesterday’s assault was not an accident,” she said.

“Yes,” I answered, but my tone wasn’t as somber as her, which made her look confused. “It’s not as bad as I feared,” I continued. “It proves that whoever was involved, they don’t have the ability to pick the exact creature they let in. The likeliest possibility is that they weakened the wards on the outer walls, and bribed a few guards to look the other way.”

“How do you know that?” she asked.

“Would you have sent a pack of hyenas to fulfill a task which a shadow wolf failed?” I asked, and she just nodded. “I think the best thing to do for me to disappear, while you find a teacher or guard captain you trust, and tell them that you met with some extra-strong creatures in the training forest. That would force them to update the wards, which would make a repeat of the situation impossible.”

“And the conspiracy?”

“It’s best if we don’t mention it,” I explained. “We still don’t have any evidence, and it’s for the best if you don’t make an enemy of the guards. Them looking away is bad, but we don’t want them to get directly involved in the conspiracy as well.”

It was a testament of the trust I had managed to generate in such a short amount of time that she just nodded in acceptance. Clearly, she had a distaste towards more concealed forms of doing business, and was more than happy to leave me on control. For a few minutes, I carefully went over all the things she needed to mention and avoid, handling the conspiracy far too important to prioritize flirting at that point.

“So,” she murmured, sounding no less disappointed than I was. “That’s it for tonight, I presume,” she said.

“Unfortunately,” I answered. “And it’s best if we don’t meet here tomorrow, as there is no doubt that there will be a lot of guards around tomorrow.” She looked downcast, but I was quick to console. “But don’t worry, I’ll make sure that you’ll get a note about our next meeting. Until then, goodbye,” I added.

I leaned close, and put a gentle kiss on her cheek. The unexpected closeness made her blush. “See you around, milady,” I said before walking away, feeling her gaze over me as I disappeared amongst the shadowy foliage.

-----

The next day, I was wandering around aimlessly in the library, trying to penetrate the mystery around the mysterious assaults against my newest possible paramour, but I managed to hit a barrier.

I had been hoping that the servant from the last night who worked as the lookout would give me a clue on the identity of the instigators. Unfortunately, when I went in the morning, I learned that he had been found murdered at the spot of the breach, and the official statement claimed that he was a hidden mage that was responsible for opening the breach, who died when the first wave of creature had passed.

I didn’t believe a word of it, of course. It was clear that the instigators and the guards in their employ -either bribed or a part of the scheme- covered the situation by sacrificing him. It was a masterful stroke, I decided, successfully shifting the blame while plugging a potential information leak. Too bad that it made my investigation significantly harder.

Luckily, I saw a familiar face entering the library, promising to alleviate the mindless drudgery I

had been experiencing. I saw Marianne browsing between the shelves, moving deeper as her face was scrunched with focus as she looked for a particular topic. And to make it even more fun, she was in the deeper parts of the library, not exactly as obscure as the location of her adventures with Cornelia, but hidden enough for a little chat.

I sneaked close until I was sufficiently close. “May I help you?” I asked, making no attempt to hide my voice.

She flinched as she rapidly turned, the way she stumbled suggesting that agility was not one of the stats she managed to increase. “You!” she said with a sharp tone, but luckily, she had enough presence of mind not to shout.

“Long time no see,” I said with a cheerful manner even as I let the full impact of my charisma to the surface. “Is there anything I can do to help, like assisting you to find the book you’re looking for.”

“Not likely,” she said but when I looked at with an amusing questioning.

“Really,” I said. “Honey, I’m sorting those shelves for the last several years. Don’t you think there is a slight possibility that I might know where to find a few obscure books?”

“Maybe you do,” she murmured, avoiding my gaze. I listened to her calmly as she rattled the names of several books in rapid succession.

“I’ll be back in a minute, wait for me here,” I said, and jumped back to the library. The books she asked for were quite obscure, but luckily, she was looking at them at the correct section, so it didn’t take long for me to assemble them. When I walked in front of the same shelf a few minutes more, I had several books in my hands, and she was sitting a chair, looking uncomfortable. I was glad to see she hadn’t used the opportunity to get away. Misguided pride was always useful. “Everything you asked for, honey,” I said as I placed the books in front of her.

I could see that she wasn’t entirely happy about her pet name, but also, she wasn’t in a position to antagonize me over it. She chose silence as she opened the first book, and started browsing, a not-so-subtle message, trying to indicate her busyness, likely hoping that I would just go away.

I had no intention of letting the opportunity slip away. Instead, I turned back, making a show of reorganizing the shelves. My back was turned, but it wasn’t hard to conjure a small mirror in an obscure place, angled correctly, allowing me to watch her while keeping her oblivious.

The way her eyes darted between me and the small corridor between the shelves that led

towards the more crowded areas of the library, assessing the merits of staying versus beating a hasty retreat. Her desire lay on the latter, but her pride didn't allow her to take the former. Though the role of her underdeveloped sense of danger couldn't be overstated, not knowing even in a relatively open location, things I could do.

But first, I needed a way to ensure my ploy wouldn't be destroyed by someone dropping by. It took all of my concentration to establish a weak proximity ward, barely more than a tripwire. I could have established something stronger, but it might have alerted Marianne. Or even worse, the head librarian might have noticed it despite the distance between us. Discovering the existence of her hidden femininity didn't mean that she suddenly became any less threatening.

With that complete, I turned away from the shelves, and towards Marianne, who was looking the books in front of her with a deep concentration, so obviously fake that I would have known she had been watching me regardless. I didn't call her on that, as her ploy forced her to stay silent as I walked towards her.

The fact that she didn't flinch when I put my hands on her shoulder was yet another evidence of her awareness. She tried to stand up, but with the strength difference between us so great, I was able to prevent that instantly. She could have used the magic of course, which I couldn't have prevented without escalating into a battle, but it seemed that she was equally reluctant to take that step as well.

"What are you doing," she asked even as I started to squeeze her shoulders in a complex pattern.

"Giving you a massage," I said in such a natural, matter-of-fact tone that it surprised her into inactivity. "Without Selena, you're looking really tense, so I decided to help you a bit." It wasn't even a lie. She was much tenser than the last time, likely the combined effect of a sudden lack of massages, her inability to get some quality time with Cornelia, all compounded by my knowledge of her secrets.

I leveraged the full effect of my increased stats and everything I had learned during the sessions I was disguised as Selena to the maximum effect. Subjected to that, I wasn't surprised when the first thing that left her mouth was a helpless whimper. "That's enough," she said, but that would have been more effective if it wasn't interrupted by a moan when I destroyed a particularly tense knot on her shoulders.

"Are you sure," I asked even as I continued the systemic destruction of the knots on her back, each earning another moan.



She stayed silent for a moment as she mulled on the answer. Well, not exactly silent, as occasional gasps and moans still escaped her lips. More accurately, no answer left her mouth while she considered her answer, each passing second swaying her decision a bit more. "A bit more wouldn't hurt," she whispered in a defeat, one easy to digest if her quickening gasps was any indicator.

[+100 Experience]

After her explicit approval, I decided to move onto the next stage. I gently pushed her forward, my hands wandering along her spine, a journey ending on the small of her back. I was tempted to dip deeper, treating myself for another dose of her spectacular bottom, but I kept myself back. No need to push her too much in our first encounter -from her perspective.

But being restricted to her back and shoulders didn't mean that I was helpless. As her tenseness slowly decreased, the nature of my touches changed from clinical to sensual, something that she elected not to comment, too distracted by her pleasure.

[+200 Experience]

The speed of her change was over my expectations, making me consider the relative merits of pushing for more, but a warning from my proximity ward invalidated that option without reaching the decision. Luckily, our uninvited visitor wasn't walking towards us, meaning, I was able to take my tame pulling back, waiting until she was just at the edge of another loud moan before pulling back.

"Much better, right?" I said with a proud look on my face.

She opened her mouth, but stopped just as the first word was forming on her lips. I was willing to bet my ability to gain experience that she was about to order me to continue before realizing the position such a request would put her under. Instead, she nodded wordlessly, and turned back to the book that was still open in front of her.

My attention was already on the shelves when another student walked into the same part we were in, and I walked away, distant enough to hide from Marianne while still keeping tabs on her. I watched as she sent a message through magic, an expensive spell, which cost quite a bit of mana even in short distances, therefore used only in emergencies. They were almost impossible to track. Luckily, I had a good idea about the identity of the recipient.

-----

[Level: 10 Experience: 45725 / 55000

Strength: 11 Charisma: 14

Precision: 10 Perception: 11

Agility: 12 Manipulation: 14

Speed: 7 Intelligence: 12

Endurance: 10 Wisdom: 17

HP: 500 / 500 Mana: 670 / 680 ]

#### SKILLS

Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Advanced Arcana [50/50]

Advanced Biomancy [37/50]

Advanced Melee [26/50]

Basic Speech [25/25]

# Chapter Nineteen

After seeing Marianne sending that message, I made sure to stay around close enough to notice when she was leaving, but far enough to avoid being noticed, not wanting to discourage her from visiting her good friend Cornelia. It was good that I did, because only a minute later she stood up and moved for the door at a speed that could almost be described as dashing, proving the effectiveness of my massage tricks.

I followed her of course, only stopping a moment to disguise myself as a non-descriptive servant on the way, my mind on the ways of breaking them quickly. A servant accidentally coming across them was an option, but not a good one, considering Cornelia's response when I stumbled on them. That night, the only thing that saved me was their belief in my inability to speak about it. So, it wasn't my preferred way of interdiction.

That track of thought turned out to be useless when Marianne took a direction towards the outside, rather than the storage rooms like I was expecting to. Instead, she took a path that would directly lead to the training forests.

The same place that was out of commission due to elemental hyena incident.

I continued to follow her from a distance, but this time, not because I was needed to break the ploy, but to watch her reaction when she was being turned away.

Soon, she arrived at the forest, only to find several guards around the perimeter, some already having arguments with the entitled students that weren't very familiar with the concept of rejection. Marianne was no different in that aspect, of course, but her non-confrontational attitude prevented her from making a spectacular mess.

Frustrated, she turned back, only to meet with Cornelia at the halfway. Another heated discussion started, mostly in whispers which I was too far away to hear, but their body language was easy to read. Cornelia, always as fiery as her hair color, wasn't happy about being denied, and Marianne was doing her best to calm her down, but succeeding, she was not.

Feeling adventurous, I decided to use their distraction to slip a spell on Marianne, one that would increase her arousal markedly, but hopefully not to a point that would make her check for external influences, which would make a great experience. After all, the situation she was in was already arousing.

[+1 Biomancy]

[-14 Mana]

Marianne wasn't able to prevent Cornelia to walk towards the guards. It was a loud, annoying, and ultimately, fruitless argument, and in the end, Cornelia was so annoyed that she even tried to grab Marianne to drag her along. Marianne pulled back, with enough presence of mind to realize the questions that would arise if she was seen like that.

She followed Cornelia, but her earlier enthusiasm was absent, clearly would prefer to write-off the night instead of staying alone with Cornelia. Not surprising, considering Cornelia's explosive anger and her sadistic tendencies.

I decided to do the gentlemanly thing and help Marianne. I stopped following them, instead, changed my disguise from a servant to a maid. My destination: Cornelia's rooms.

The idea was simple. With her obvious internal political battle and the existence of secrets she was eager to hide, it was the best way to remove her out of the equation, not just for the day, but for a foreseeable future, making her too afraid to wander away, afraid of losing her secrets.

The presence of maids was so common that sneaking into her room didn't take any effort. The first ward at the entrance was stronger and the more intricate than the last time, but considering the monumental increase in my arcana skills, it didn't take a moment to pass it. The second ward that blocked the entrance for her private room suffered the same fate.

In her angry state, I had a feeling that Cornelia would settle for a sub-par location to hide, therefore risking not only her presence but also Marianne's in the school. Everyone knew things like that happened behind the closed doors, but exposed publicly allowed everyone to target the victims sanctimoniously.

I didn't want to lose Marianne, not when I managed to train her perfectly.

Still, being in her room without the obligation to erase my track was a huge benefit, so I went through her library, stealing several precious books and scrolls that belonged to her family, focusing on the topics that Helga was interested in. One benefit of spending years in the library, I had the ability to instantly appraise the value of any written item. I didn't bother with money or other valuables. There were easier ways to acquire them.

After that, I molded a generous amount of mana, some as a shield, some to form a kind of magical lockpick. The latter, I didn't bother to form carefully. The wards on Cornelia's box was still too strong, and even if they weren't, my aim was to make her cautious enough to force her to stay in her room, not to send her to a crusade across the school, searching for her treasured

secrets.

In a manner of speaking, I showed the lockpick into the intricate web of wards that protected Cornelia's most important secrets, then dashed away even as a flare of alarm rose, a magical push that alerted Cornelia that her secrets might not be a secret anymore.

[Achievement: False Flag. Engineer a heist to block a rival from having fun. +500 Experience, +1 Manipulation, +1 Precision]

A strong rush of flame rose towards me, but my shield was already in place, diverting it long enough for me to get out. I dashed away, ignoring the panicked shouts of the maids, slipping to the first side corridor that wouldn't have anyone around, changing into a servant.

I changed my disguise four times until I could walk into my room, slipping the sack with the books underneath my bed. From outside, I could hear the commission going on. I needed to be careful with the disguises for a foreseeable future, I noted. But it was a worthy sacrifice. Not only I pushed Cornelia out of the equation for a while, but I also had the perfect bait for Helga.

Considering the indignity she suffered from Cornelia's hands just to get a peek to those secrets, I had a feeling that a fun reward awaited me...

But I didn't have much time to spend imagining that, as I needed to go back to the library. Unlike the past, Marianne knew a part of my secret, and there was a chance that she would get suspicious if I wasn't around when she returned. Yet another change of clothes later, I went back to the library, to do the same mind-numbingly boring tasks.

Unlike my expectations, Marianne didn't return to the library. But it was okay, because she wasn't the only blonde with something going on. Helga was in the library, in her usual position, in a forgotten but defensible corner of the library, with several thick tomes open in front of her.

I could see a hint of depression on her face, which was understandable due to the 'disappearance' of her ranger friend, unaware that he was closer than she might think. A pity that revealing the truth wasn't an option.

But that didn't mean that I couldn't distract her in a different manner. A little mystery would go a long way to give her something other to do than pining after an imaginary person. First, I passed near her with my cart, close enough to see which books she was reading. With my intelligence and my knowledge about her ultimate research objectives, it wasn't really difficult to guess which book she might want to pick next.

I prepared three identical notes, all with a subtle spell that would trigger a few seconds after touching, and slipped them inside the three books she was most likely to pick next. A neat trick to impress and unbalance her at the same time. It was a simple note.

'Helga,

If you're interested in having a better deal than what you currently have with Cornelia to support your research, come to the storage room six fifteen minutes after midnight.

This is a one-time offer that will disappear if you reject, or mention it to anyone else.

Sincerely,

A mysterious helper.'

With the notes discreetly slid inside the books, I pulled away to maintain the distance, waiting for her to take the bait. Her fast-reading shortened wait quite a bit. Several minutes later, she stood up, and picked one of the books I predicted. Her reaction when the note slipped out of the box was comical. I had to struggle to keep myself from laughing, which would have revealed my hiding spot between the shelves.

The sudden flash of energy that devoured the note hadn't exactly made her any calmer about the situation. She looked around, trying to see someone around, but I was hidden well enough to avoid detection. She looked around for a few times, trying to find the culprit. Failing that, she walked away, her dilemma visible on her face.

I watched her walk away, curious what she would choose tonight...

----

For the encounter with Helga, I picked a different set of clothes, predominantly black and gray, with a high collar that functioned as a mask when I lowered my head, its ability to hide my identity enhanced further with a hood. It wasn't the best way of walking around without being noticed, but my aim was to sell the story of concealment rather than actually hiding myself.

I arrived at the target location almost an hour before, subtly setting up several wards to dissuade any servant from walking in. I kept the wards as straightforward as possible. Helga would be quite alert, so, trying to slip an inventive ward that would affect her mood was an unnecessary risk.

Not that I needed it. Not only I knew one of her deepest secrets, but also the thing that forced her to that was in my possession. The deck was sufficiently stacked to my side, making further magical assistance a bonus I could dismiss. So, after making sure that we were going to stay alone in the storage room, I pulled back into the shadows, waiting for her arrival. While waiting, I practiced a bit to find the perfect voice I should use.

The door opened right on time, but before anyone entered the room, a subtle wave of magic spread through the entrance. A simple identification spell, trying -and failing- to be subtle. "No magic," I called even as I reached and disrupted the spell, with more power than necessary to highlight the fact that I could afford to do so. After all, not only I had a higher level than her - knowledge courtesy of the system- but also I had a very high and balanced mental score, making my mana abnormally large for someone at my level.

[-30 Mana]

No answer came. If it wasn't for the wards, informing me that there was only one interloper, I might have beat a hasty retreat. Moreover, I was sufficiently familiar with her methodical but slow spellcasting enough to make sure that I had the correct visitor. Not that she had the option to convince someone else to assist her. She had enough trouble meeting with people that wouldn't stab her in an opportune moment.

Despite everything, there was a silent pride on her shoulders as she walked into the middle of the room, the robe tightly wrapped around her. "Who are you, and what do you want?" she asked with a mostly-stable voice, trying and failing to hide the inflictions underneath it.

"My identity is unimportant for the moment," I said with a throaty voice, one that suggested darkness, but also a mystery. "And on what I want, you have that backward. I have something you want." With that, I kicked the scroll I had prepared for her, based on the same excerpts from the books I had stolen from Cornelia earlier the day.

She didn't immediately reach for it, which was a plus, showing her caution. Moreover, she hadn't immediately used magic, showing her obedience by following my earlier directive. "You can test the scroll," I allowed, not wanting to escalate the situation unnecessarily before I could establish a more reasonable basis than being a formless voice in the dark.

She was careful as she slowly prodded the scroll with arcana energies, methodically exploring to see if there was any trap, but ultimately, she spent far less time than she could, correctly deducing that if I wanted to harm her such a direct manner, I would have used something much more direct. Her eyes grew in shock as she slowly unfurled the scroll, taking an account of the

content inside. "How..." she murmured.

"I have my ways," I answered, even as I stepped out of the shadows. I could see her stance stiffening, but it was the only outward expression she had given.

"I'm assuming it's not for free," she said in resignation, which was a lesson she knew well. Nothing was for free in these halls. I nodded. "What's the price for it?"

"I want you," I answered even as I let a crooked smile spread to my face, bringing the full impact of my charisma to the surface. But even that wasn't enough for a bitter expression to spread to her face, mixed with resignation. She reached towards the top button of her robe.

"Not like that," I cut her off, sharply, acting like that misunderstanding was her mistake.

"What do you mean?" she murmured, caught flat-footed by the sudden change.

"I want your loyalty," I said. She looked at me uncomprehendingly. "I'm watching you for a while. Despite the absolute lack of support, you have done a lot to survive, not hesitating to make the difficult calls when it's necessary." I waited for a bit. "But it's not enough, is it?"

"Maybe," she murmured, not willing to admit.

"How many levels you have gained since you joined the Silver Spires," I asked.

"What it is to you?" she lashed out, feeling angry at the mention of her level, which was understandable. I didn't know her exact skills, but it was obvious they were more focused on the research rather than combat, the only reason she was able to get a scholarship in the first place. However, it also meant that it was almost impossible for her to grind alone. And she was a pariah, meaning no one supported her in the school.

"Just a curiosity, but you don't have to answer. It's not hard to guess that you hadn't gained a level since you joined the Silver Spires. How long it has been? Almost two years, right?"

She flinched at the reminder. "It's not that important," she defended herself. "I can always maximize my level after I returned to my family."

"Yes, but then you won't have access to the best library in the world," I said. The second best according to one of my achievements, but that wasn't a point that needed to be raised, not without being able to explain how I know. "Would you be okay to waste everything you have worked for, that making every humiliation that you endured to go to waste?"



“And what,” she spat angrily as she gathered her arms around her chest. “Are you going to make all better?”

“I can help you level up, and in return, I want not only full access to your research, but also your assistance on the tasks of my choosing.”

I could feel pride and happiness emanating her when I mentioned her research. With everyone else treating her efforts as a waste, she clearly enjoyed the recognition I gave to them, making them a part of such an important bargain. “How can I be sure that you’re going to deliver what you promise,” she said, trying to make it sound like she was still against it, but I knew her tells enough to read her acceptance.

“Well, then, what about a preliminary deal. I push you over level ten in three months, or you can call the deal off?”

She caught herself nodding halfway in. “Maybe I’m already higher than that,” she tried to say, but her frustration made her lie obvious. I didn’t even bother to answer, just sent a glance towards her, which made her blush. “Do you think you can help me gain three levels,” she countered, this time underplaying her level by one. A good attempt, too bad for her that I had been cheating.

“As long as you follow my words, that’s quite doable,” I said. After all, all I needed was to mortally wound a few hundred class five to eight creatures. I could easily forge a new permission slip when the forest was reopened into training sessions to a more dangerous area, and help her level up.

“When?” she said.

“Likely in a few days. The forests are currently closed due to an incident with the wards,” I said, giving a brief explanation of the rumors behind the sudden change, making sure to keep my voice to calm but impactful. But even as I gave the explanation, I could see her relax. My charisma and speech skill was really giving their worth, making her mellower by each passing moment.

[Achievement: Patient Poacher. Take the first step of converting a target into a long-term loyal follower by sacrificing short-term fun. +500 Experience +1 Charisma, +1 Wisdom]

“I think we can call it a night, since we agreed,” I said, giving three more scrolls towards her, but this time, using my arcana abilities to make them float. “Take them as an advance,” I said, then started to walk towards the door, satisfied with the meaningful stride in my mission to

convert my first long-term ally.

“When are we going to talk next,” she said just as I was about to disappear at the doorway.

“I’ll find you,” I said before slipping away, once again using the first opportunity to disguise myself into a servant. A minute later, Helga passed me, not even making a note of my presence, proving the effectiveness of my subterfuge skill once more.

It was late, but I decided to take a brief walk outside before going to my room. Being in the same room with Helga brought some memories to the surface that should best be left untouched for an easy sleep, and the cold wind would work efficiently.

And it was a good thing I did, because I noticed a familiar raven-haired figure walking towards the training forest, her sword strapped on her back. I didn’t bother to call her, assuming the guards would prevent her from entering. But that turned out to be a strategic mistake, because the perimeter guard acted like he hadn’t seen anything, but sent a small signal after she passed.

“Damn it,” I murmured as I started looking around, trying to identify a spot I could slip between the guards. And seeing four figures, all heavily armed, using the same entrance to slip into the forest made that need even more immediate.

I needed to hurry up!

----

[Level: 10 Experience: 46725 / 55000

Strength: 11 Charisma: 15

Precision: 11 Perception: 11

Agility: 12 Manipulation: 15

Speed: 7 Intelligence: 12

Endurance: 10 Wisdom: 18

HP: 510 / 510 Mana: 650 / 710 ]

## SKILLS

[Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Advanced Arcana [50/50]

Advanced Biomancy [37/50]

Advanced Melee [26/50]

Basic Speech [25/25]

## Chapter Twenty

Unlike Aviada and the conspirators that were targeting her, I didn't have an arrangement with the guards to turn the other way, so it took a while for me to find a spot where I could fade unseen. After passing the border, finding their tracks took another minute, delaying me further. I walked as fast as I could while following the tracks of four men in the middle of the night, afraid that I was too late.

Luckily, I managed to arrive on time. I could see the men closing towards Aviada, their weapons weren't drawn yet, but the same thing wasn't true for Aviada. Even from the distance, I could see that she was ready to burst into action, but she held herself back. Even with her sword, one against four wasn't the best odds to take.

I moved closer, not only to be able to listen to them, but also to be near her in case things devolved into violence suddenly. But I was careful, because one of them had established a ward to keep the monsters away, which unfortunately also worked against people. I needed to create a backdoor before sneaking into the perimeter. "Marcus," I heard Aviada saying. "What do I owe the presence of your ugly mug at this hour. Were you looking to have quality time with your friends? I heard that couples occasionally use the forest for that purpose."

The men were facing the other way, but one of them stiffened at Aviada's words, giving me a good idea which one was Marcus. Unfortunately, I still didn't know who the fuck was Marcus, or what he was trying to do. "I came to protect you," Marcus said, an obvious lie Aviada didn't bother to weigh, her sword still at its half-raised position, ready to burst into action in any second.

"Yes, that's obvious," Aviada said. "Four brave, strapping men, led by a former fiancée I humiliated by canceling the wedding after publicly beating him, following me in a dark forest... I never felt safer in my life." I had to admit, I was impressed with Aviada, even against the obvious mortal danger, there was no stopping her.

"Bitch," the one that I identified as Marcus shouted, preparing to charge, and from the way Aviada smiled, she was counting on that. Unfortunately, one of the others, the only one without a visible armor, grabbed his arm and whispered something, keeping him back. "The only reason you won was because of the unfair advantage given by your sword."

"Is this what you tell yourself when you cry yourself to sleep every night while trying to forget your humiliation," Aviada said, but this time, Marcus was expecting a taunt, and let it go with a shrug. Meanwhile, I managed to create a temporary gate on the protective field of the ward,

slipping into the perimeter without alerting the mage.

“You wish,” said Marcus. “I have no problems teaching you your place, permanently I mind you, but I’m feeling merciful. Relinquish your sword, and I’ll forget the damage on my reputation due to your cheating.”

I heard one of his hangers snort in amusement, clearly not buying the impression Marcus was trying to sell, but that didn’t make him move. I didn’t know who Marcus was, but considering the number of guards he managed to suborn, it was likely quite rich.

“Any time,” Aviada said, lifting sword even higher, its edge catching the glint of the moonlight. Combined with Aviada’s tall stature, and the ease she could handle her impressive sword, it was an impressive sight. Too impressive, because Marcus took a step back even as the others moved forward.

“Not when you still have that cheating sword,” Marcus said. “I want a fair fight.” His sneer made it obvious that the meaning he assigned to fair greatly differed from the common usage. “You’re going to use this one instead,” he added, throwing a steel sword towards her. It was a terrible sword, rusty with several chinks around its horribly maintained edge. It was more effective as a blunt weapon than as a bladed one.

“Are you sure?” asked the grunt in the middle, who had dressed as a mage. “What about the shadow wolf-” he tried to continue, but Marcus cut him off with an angry statement.

“Cut it out. How many times I have to tell you that it was your imagination. There is no way she would be alive if a shadow wolf actually passed the breach, and even by a miracle she managed to kill it, she would have more than a couple of wounds as a result.”

I nodded, glad to discover the people behind that particular mishap. Meanwhile, Aviada was carefully examining the additional muscle he brought with him, trying to decide whether to take her chances against four of them rather than languishing her sword, but in the end, she sank her sword to the ground, and picked the one Marcus had discarded instead.

“I’m going to teach you a lesson, bitch! You’ll pay for humiliating me,” Marcus murmured as he raised his own sword, an enchanted masterwork, though obviously inferior to Aviada’s ancestral sword. With that, he charged forward, and their swords connected with a loud noise.

The others spread out a bit, their hands on their weapons, ready to interject if things went bad. Aviada must be aware of it as well, because she was stronger and faster than her current display. She was trying not to give others an excuse to pull back. Marcus was a skilled warrior,

but not on Aviada's level.

But their formation had a very important advantage. They were spread around, leaving their mage, the only one that could notice my spellcasting, alone.

I took a breath before dashing forward, molding mana to create the quickest illusion I had to construct in my life. The mage noticed the surge of mana, but the veil of illusion hid him from the view, and his cry muffled by the silencing spell that followed. Both were simple spells that he could dispel in a second, but a second he didn't have. My dagger was in hand when the distance between us dwindled into nothing, and the dagger sank into his throat, while my fingers pressed against his mouth, preventing him from shouting.

[+3 Melee]

His fingers clamped around my wrist, trying to push me away, but even with the adrenaline, his strength was nothing. It didn't take long for him to start moving, and I dropped him on the ground, another illusion allowing me to steal his guise. I modified the veil of illusion to hide the still-bleeding body on my feet, and continued to watch the battle.

Aviada was still fighting defensively, and she didn't have a scratch on her, but the same couldn't be said for Marcus, who had two bleeding gashes, one on his arm, the other on his cheek. I started to gather mana, to be used in a surprise assault, while Aviada abandoned her defensive stance for a ferocious assault. Marcus' sword flew away, but he managed to avoid the assault. Aviada rolled to get her enchanted sword.

"What are you waiting for, you numbskulls!" Marcus shouted in anger. "Kill the bitch!"

It was the sign I was waiting for. I turned all the mana I had gathered into a mana blast, and threw towards the nearest target. It wasn't a spell that was preferred despite its strength, because it was slow to cast and easy to avoid, not to mention it didn't work well with magical resistance of the monsters.

But it was an excellent spell to get rid of a surprised human opponent, my target grunt realized a second before his head disintegrated into a pile of ash. I stopped maintaining the illusion over me, and Marcus' eyes grew when he noticed two of his grunts were already fallen.

A mistake, because Aviada used the opportunity to get rid of the other grunt, leaving Marcus with two-to-one odds, with him at a disadvantage. A bad matchup for a guy that needed three helpers just to feel confident enough to fight against Aviada. "Please," he whined, his earlier confidence nowhere to be seen. "We can-" he tried to continue, but Aviada cut his words with a

slash of her sword, separating his head from his body.

[Achievement: Speedy Saviour. Arrive at the last minute to save the life of a paramour. +500 Experience, +2 Speed]

“That was interesting,” Aviada said as she looked at me, still breathing hard.

“I’ll say,” I said. I thought about calling her on the unscheduled midnight trip, but after a moment, I decided to let it go. She didn’t have a personality that could take criticism, and for better or worse, the issue had been resolved. There was no need to create an argument that would break the mood when I was receiving a grateful look for saving her life. A more suspicious person would have explored the possibility of my involvement considering my lucky appearance, but luckily, Aviada had a more direct personality, which made the situation more fun.

“So, what now,” she asked.

“We need to put things in a way that would look like a fight between them,” I said, pointing at the four bodies lying in the different levels of dismemberment. Without saying anything else, I used my arcana abilities and levitated all four of them, shuffling them around it created a convincing crime scene, and another spell to remove the signs of our presence, including the footprints. I even changed the shapes of their wounds to make it more convincing. It wasn’t enough to trick a good ranger, but I was willing to bet that the guard that allowed them to pass would do his best to stick to the most obvious explanation, not willing to reveal his own involvement.

[-85 Mana]

[+2 Biomancy]

After that, we left the forest, keeping silent, partially to reduce the chance of getting caught, partially to give Aviada the time to process the situation. I was tempted to ask her to spend some time together, but unfortunately, that was not a possibility, not when there was a risk of escalation. Things were complicated enough without being caught out in a state of undress.

“By the way, why are you dressed like a servant,” Aviada asked, not bothering to whisper since we were alone in the corridor. Another careless mistake, as just because she couldn’t see anyone didn’t mean that there was no one around.

I sent a pulse to make sure we were alone before answering. “Nobody really notices a servant,”

I explained, but chose not to elaborate further until we arrived at the crossroads. "As much as I would like to spend some time with you, tonight is not the best for that. I'll see you in a few days, okay."

She nodded, and before she could say anything else, I turned and left, annoyed by the necessity of letting the damsel go after saving her from distress. Still, I had a better place in her mind. And hopefully, she would remember her gratitude in our next encounter.

PAGE

PAGE

PAGE

The next couple of days passed in a blur. Once again, I walked around the school, dressed as a maid, trying to get the latest information, but it turned out to be a challenge. The death of four students, two of them heirs to their houses, had managed to create quite a bit of stir. Thankfully, from what I could gather, the guard did the smart thing and used the story I had kindly prepared for him, which kept Aviada's name out of the proceedings. All the gossip was about a duel gone wrong.

With that closed, I decided to went back to the library, but not before I sat in my room, penning a rather long letter, using careful penmanship that wouldn't go remiss in a love letter, except for the complicated diagrams underlying the magical calculations. In the letter, I had detailed a rather complicated issue I was having on creating arcana bolts that would be effective against high-resistance monsters without wasting too much mana. I still remembered the danger I had run against the shadow wolf. I would have likely died if I had missed my attack.

But the technical challenge I was facing wasn't the only reason for the detailed breakdown of my own experimentations, as I had no doubt that Helga would require only a day or two at most to discover most of the things I discovered. No, I wrote a detailed explanation simply because, it was complicated enough to show my credentials, which would impress her more. At the end of the letter, there were several instructions for her to take for our meeting as well.

I felt a strange mixture of stress and excitement as I joined the usual morning meeting of the library staff, listening to the head librarian to distribute the tasks for the day. A wrong move here would have ruined everything I had worked for, but I couldn't help but watch her in appreciation since I had discovered the femininity that laid under her carefully-crafted serious facade. Too bad that I lacked the ability to make a move on her.



Maybe soon.

With that done, I once again moved to the back of the library, where I was once again tasked to gather the books that lay forgotten on the desks. One of the benefits of being known as an idiot, I was able to finish the tasks that were expected of me in a few minutes, and started walking around, searching for my targets.

Helga, I was able to find first. I used the same trick, examining the books she was studying to deploy the letter I had written for her. She looked around when she received it, but unlike the last time, it was a look resigned to failure, not expecting to see anyone around.

But the way her face brightened by every word on the letter was a sight to see. She was barely able to hold back shivers of excitement as she finished the letter, and dashed away to find the books she was looking for. The fact that she enjoyed the task I had given her was a positive development, meaning I would have more space to push in other areas before making her crack.

That task complete, I moved onto my next one, namely, finding Marianne, which, unfortunately, took quite a bit longer than my first self-appointed task. It was well past noon when I finally saw Marianne in the library, walking towards the less-occupied parts with a clear determination. Feeling curious, I walked towards the main corridor, close enough to alert her to my presence, but she continued to walk despite her intensifying blush, her gaze occasionally lingering over me.

She clearly wanted me to follow her, which meant I pointedly ignored her presence and continued my job, until a cough had disrupted my concentration. I turned towards the noise, only to see Marianne standing there. "Yes, sweetie," I said as I turned a not-so-gentle smile towards her, carrying the full brunt of my rather impressive charisma score.

"May I talk to you for a moment, M-" she started, only to come to a sudden stop. She didn't know my real name, and she was smart enough to realize that referring to my unflattering nickname wasn't the best way to start a discussion. "Please," she added instead, trying to recover ground after her near-disaster.

"Sure, go ahead," I said confidently, because I knew there was no one else nearby, thanks to the low-powered proximity wards I had set up around us. Thanks to my growing strength, hiding my situation was not the number one priority anymore, because I had to option to claim that I had been hunting alone during the night, as I was finally strong enough to survive such an ordeal. But the fact that I could survive the impact hadn't meant that I was willing to announce my

situation to the whole school just yet, hence the wards.

“Maybe in somewhere less crowded,” she whispered nervously as her eyes darted around. “Meet me around the storage rooms, the ones that are after the kitchen.” At that moment, I was glad for my observational capabilities, because, without it, I would be too afraid of a trap to follow her. But she was like an open book, and I could read everything through blue depths of her eyes.

“Whatever you wish for, my queen,” I said, tackling an exaggerated bow to the end, which wasn’t a cure for the shyness she had been displaying. She managed to give a trembling nod before dashing away, leaving me free to return my task; even if it was for just a few minutes before I disappeared after her.

I wondered what awaited me at my destination...

[Level: 10 Experience: 47225 / 55000

Strength: 11 Charisma: 15

Precision: 11 Perception: 11

Agility: 12 Manipulation: 15

Speed: 9 Intelligence: 12

Endurance: 10 Wisdom: 18

HP: 530 / 530 Mana: 650 / 710 ]

## SKILLS

[Advanced Subterfuge (50/50)

Advanced Arcana [50/50]

Advanced Biomancy [39/50]

Advanced Melee 29/50

Basic Speech 25/25 ]

## Chapter Twenty-One

It didn't take long for me to find Marianne, as only one of the storage rooms had an unlocked door. An amateur mistake, if a servant had passed around, they would've locked her inside. She could have blasted herself out magically, but I didn't think that she would appreciate the resulting paperwork.

When I walked inside, I used a simple spell to lock the door behind me, as I didn't want any interruption. In the room, Marianne was waiting for me on a chair, but jumped up to her feet the moment I had walked inside. I could see the nervousness on her face, but no fear, making it unlikely that she had been planning an ambush.

"You're the one that invited me here," I said, but kept my voice soft, to avoid making the situation too confrontational.

Her blush intensified under my expectant gaze, but it didn't prevent her from speaking out. "I wanted to talk to you about something you promised to do," she said, managing to keep her voice even, but I could see just how much effort it took for her to maintain it.

"A promise?" I said, despite fully knowing what she had been talking about. She whispered something, too low to be heard even with my enhanced senses. "Sorry," I murmured. "Can you repeat it in a voice that I can hear?"

"You mentioned that you might be willing to give me a massage," she whispered, but this time, it was a whisper loud enough for me to hear, even with her voice dwindling alongside the sentence.

"Yeah, I remember mentioning something like that," I said, doing my best to suppress a hungry smirk, but only with partial success. I had been expecting her to eventually fold to her own desires, especially since I had blocked the option of Cornelia, but I hadn't been expecting it to be so soon. Apparently, the treatment she had received during my undercover-maid career had spoiled her worse than I had been expecting.

She waited for me to continue, but I was contending in stopping there, and waiting for her to continue. It took several seconds for her to realize I was finished, and an equal amount of time to gather her courage for the next words. "May I take you up in that order," she managed to say, this time managing to keep her voice about a whisper, but barely.

Stringing her along was a tempting idea, but in her fragility, it was equally likely that it would

backfire, sending her with a retreat. It wasn't a risk I was willing to take, simply because she wasn't the only one that was feeling horny. I temporarily lost my access to Helga after discarding my ranger personality, and my attempts to woo Aviada had been delayed thanks to her ex-fiancee —though luckily, not anymore. Willing access to Marianne was not something I could gamble. "Sure," I said with a shrug before turning the impact of my charisma to the max, my speech skill helping me to time the delivery perfectly. "I could never disappoint such a lovely lady."

"T-thanks," she stammered, a sudden blush invading her face. I suspected that the beginnings of a crush rooted in her, the help of the mystery that surrounded me helping it significantly as well. If there was one thing I learned from my encounters until now -confirmed by wisdom-women loved the aura of a mysterious stranger.

"Would you prefer to use the storage, or would you like me to sneak into your room," I said, only after letting it leave my mouth that I noticed the rather dangerous slip I had made.

"You can sneak into my room!" she said in alarm, making me curse myself for the momentary slip. Apparently, even my wisdom stat wasn't the panacea for the foot-in-the-mouth disease.

"Well, I have a couple of paramours that I had occasionally met in their rooms, so, as long as you lower the wards and leave the door unlocked, it's not that hard of a challenge," I said in a casual tone. There were three reasons I came up with that excuse. The first, it further devalued the secret of my status in her mind. The second, it normalized our situation while simultaneously suggesting that anything between us would stay secret as well. Third, people liked to know they weren't alone in breaking the rules.

The fourth, it implied that I wasn't good at magic, not enough to break a standard alarm spell without triggering it, without me explicitly committing to that fact, so if needed, allowing me to break it without being busted. Assumptions could be as dangerous as a sword if wielded correctly.

I could see the curiosity flashing on her face the moment I had mentioned my other supposed paramours, which then turned red as she imagined the implied scenes... "Here is fine," she murmured hurriedly.

"Sure," I said, then noticed a cot that was lying on the floor. "I see that you're already prepared." She nodded softly. "Why don't you lay down and we can start." I let my smirk widen. "Unless you want to remove your robe, of course."

“No, with robe is fine,” she said rapidly as she threw herself on the makeshift massage table she had prepared on the floor.

I was amazed at the speed she was folding. Apparently, she was weaker to the withdrawal of pleasure even worse than my wildest expectations. As I closed in, my attention was grabbed by the subtle shiver of her skin, signaling her anticipation, mixed with trepidation. After all, to her knowledge, it was the first time a man was touching her skin in such an intimate manner.

I started by her neck, applying the full range of my massage skills to the fore from the start, trying to show her the difference between the so-called apprentice and the master. Thankfully, I had never applied my full range of capabilities while I was under the guise of Selena, not to mention my capabilities increased quite a bit due to my stat increase since our last encounter.

And it showed. A subtle purr started before even the turn of the minute, though it was short-lived, terminated the moment she realized she was making it. She sent a fleeting glance towards me to check whether I had noticed it, only to find a smug smile. “Maybe it was a bad idea-” she started as she tried to rise, for the first time realizing the vulnerable situation she put herself in.

The interruption came in a fun way. I slid my hand down as she started to speak, pressing a sensitive spot, and a pleasure-filled gasp interrupted her words. “If you prefer,” I answered callously, even as my hand danced on her back, destroying the stiffness that had been accumulated. “But you’re rather stiff, are you sure you want to stop early.”

If she could have answered in the first few seconds, the answer had been likely to be positive, but with her mouth occupied by moaning, she failed to answer. And when she managed to control her voice, the situation had changed. With her heartbeat thumping under my finger, clear despite the layers of clothing on the way, I doubted that it would be effective. “Maybe a just another minute,” she murmured, sealing her fate even if she didn’t know it yet.

From my end, the next half an hour passed in a familiar routine, pleasuring her without touching any scandalous spots while carefully reading her reactions to keep her on the edge. It was another sign of her naivety that she failed to recognize that tactic until it was too late despite already experiencing it several times from his disguised persona.

[+200 Experience]

I smiled at the notification. Not because of its value, as it was rather paltry for such a long effort, but it lacked the penalty indicator, suggesting she was still at a higher level than me,

which meant that I still had a convenient target to level up. Especially important, because I was yet to discover how the penalties were going to scale up with the level difference.

“Raise your arms,” I ordered her in a soft but even tone, one that expected casual obedience, like a teacher asking a student to show her answer. Under normal conditions, even with my speech and charisma, it wouldn’t have worked, but the situation was far from normal. She raised her arms, and I pulled her robe off her, its buttons I had untied beforehand without her noticing.

It took surprisingly long for her to realize that she had lost a layer of clothing, leaving her shirt and skirt with the task of protecting her body. Both were relatively conservative, but regardless, the lost layer meant that even the simplest of my touch had a renewed intensity. It was certainly amusing that when she turned her head in a way that she considered subtle, trying to come up with a way to argue against me removing her robe, but a mocking glare was enough to deter her, reminding her just how much it took to realize it.

It was another mistake, of course, but at this point, it was inevitable. She had been struggling under my touch, making things awkward in a way that would ensure a difference of opinion, without causing a total crisis.

Still, there was a lot I could integrate without giving her a reason to raise that difference of opinion. I focused along her spine, occasionally dipping as low as the small of her back before rising up, every retreat earning a disappointed sigh that she no doubt thought as unheard.

She was finally ready for more.

At first, I limited myself to intensifying the movement of my fingers, pushing her even closer to the edge, so that an accidental touch would be enough to put her on the other side. I could see her legs starting to rub against each other, which, unfortunately, would be enough to push her over the edge, so I placed my knee between her thighs.

“Mercy,” she murmured as she sent a pitiful expression to my way, but it met with an infertile field. Why would I let her escape my trap after spending all that time

“You want your release?” I asked, this time, abandoning my clinical tone for a dark amusement. Earlier, that tone would have sent her away packing, but now, it only made her shiver helplessly. She nodded. “Answer using words,” I countered, my smile widening.

“Yes,” she murmured.

“Excellent,” I said as I grabbed her shirt with both hands, and with a rather loud noise, ripped it off, the enchanted fabric unable to resist my improved strength. She shouted in a panic, but her attempts to stand up prevented by my hands, rubbing her now-naked shoulders. “Calm down, sweetie, the shirt blocks most of the pleasure, so I got rid of it. Of course, if you want to experience the weak version...”

“No, that’s fine,” she answered after a moment’s indecision. Her flare of disobedience dissipated, leaving me free to rub her naked skin, to mentally prepare her for the next step.

While on that step, I couldn’t help but think about Cornelia’s failure to instill obedience on Marianne, which was a poor showing of skill on Cornelia’s part. All she needed was to drag her around a bit, dangling the prospect of the pleasure in front of her, and Marianne would have folded like a house of cards. But instead, Cornelia prioritized her immediate pleasure with her usual impatience, forcing her to look alternatives where she could dominate with her power. And if all went according to the plan, that approach would be the reason Cornelia ended up in front of me, bent and weakened.

I turned my attention back to Marianne, who was rumbling and mewling under the throes of pleasure, her rationality dwindling with each passing second, replaced with mindless arousal. It was the time to enhance the situation with a touch of magic, I decided in a sudden moment of inspiration. With my advanced biomancy, it was easy to put a temporary spell that would prevent her from climaxing no matter how much pleasure she felt. And applied slowly, she didn’t have a chance of noticing the spell in her distracted state.

[+2 Biomancy]

[-30 Mana]

And with the specter of accidentally making her climax gone, I decided to cut loose, my hands dancing over shoulders without restraining before started a journey south, destroying the hooks of her corset one by one, each ruining her coverage a bit more. But she missed that development, preoccupied with the unbroken rise of pleasure that nevertheless failed to break the dam that held it together, failing to turn into an unquenchable flood.

[+300 Experience]

I moved onto her thighs, leaving her corset parted open, which partially revealed her spectacular breasts, tempting me to attend them, but I had a more precious target in mind. After I arrived at her thighs, I suddenly reversed the direction, but with a caveat. My hand was



under her skirt, pushing it up, revealing her milky thighs bit by bit while also caressing the softness of her inner thighs.

Her moans increased further, to a point when she didn't reach when her skirt received the same treatment with her shirt, abandoned to the side, its task left to her panties, which was rather insufficient in hiding her deliciously-curvy bottom.

Her thoughts finally managed to push through her haze when I sank my fingers mercilessly to her bottom, abandoning any pretense of giving a massage, mauling her flesh for my own pleasure. She tried to rise, using her trembling hands to support herself as her torso separated from the makeshift-mattress. "That's too much," she managed to say, miraculously, without being interrupted by a moan, though that determination only lasted a moment, and one escaped her mouth, functioning as the punctuation for her sentence. Unfortunately, it was a question mark where an exclamation mark was needed.

I elected not to answer, instead of letting my eyes dance over her torso pointedly. It took a moment for her to realize her corset hadn't risen with her, leaving her breasts naked for my perusal. A yelp escaped her mouth as she pulled one of her arms from the floor, trying to wrap around her chest to hide her breasts from the view. It had limited success, as her breasts were too magnificent to be hidden behind her fragile forearm.

"Sexy," I said as I leaned forward, my knees still on both sides of her hips, and closed in towards her. Panic danced behind her eyes, but otherwise, she was frozen in panic, the thick layer of pleasure that filled her mind preventing her from taking an action.

I grabbed her hair, just rough enough to create another layer for the pleasure she was drowning in, and leaned to her lips to a torturous slowness, and pressed my lips against hers, which stayed firmly shut.

At first, that was.

She lacked the strength and, more importantly, the willpower to resist the assault of my tongue into her mouth, which invaded the target without opposition.

[+1000 Experience]

[Achievement: Pushy Persuasion. Use an aggressive approach to seduce a nice-mannered beauty. +500 Experience, +2 Strength]

Her arm trembled in shock, which forced her to use the other for support as well, leaving her

breasts naked. The room was chilly, so in my usual merciful state, I decided to help her, my free hand sinking into her breasts. She tried to moan, but it dissipated between the assault of my tongue and the tight grasp of my lips.

My pants were getting uncomfortably tight, but still, removing them would be too extreme for the moment. But luckily, it wasn't the only solution. I lowered my body until my hardness was stuck between her rather generous booty, receiving a delicious massage as I moved back and forth, and the pleasure compounded when her hips started to move in the same rhythm with mine.

She deserved a reward. My hand, which was previously occupied with her breasts, started to travel down, and reaching her panties. I kept it over rather than sliding inside, but the difference wasn't big, as the fabric, drenched in her juices, was well-past the point of being able to perform as a barrier, however feeble.

[+500 Experience]

Under the multidimensional assault she was suffering, it didn't take long for her surrender to be complete. Her lips joined the heated dance as a participant rather than a helpless observer that suddenly found herself on the scene. I stopped grabbing her hair, preferring to enjoy the expanse of her breasts, but it didn't earn a negative comment, just more moans.

But kissing and caressing her wasn't the only thing I had done, no matter how enjoyable it had been. I was simultaneously using my magic to prepare her backdoor for the eventual assault, cleaning and lubricating at the same time, another spell she failed to notice in her distracted state. Biomancy had so many amusing little applications.

Meanwhile, the treatment she received continued to intensify, my fingers dancing around her clit, increasing the build-up of pleasure further and further, her moans getting desperate enough to escape the confines I painstakingly built.

[+3 Biomancy]

[-15 Mana]

[+750 Experience]

Then, without a warning, I grabbed the edge of her panties, destroying them with a rough pull. She was still not completely naked, but considering that it was limited to her shoes and a necklace that dangled between her breasts, I would admit that it wasn't a big issue...

It was the time to move onto the second act, I decided as I pushed her on the floor.

-----

[Level: 10 Experience: 50475 / 55000

Strength: 13 Charisma: 15

Precision: 11 Perception: 11

Agility: 12 Manipulation: 15

Speed: 9 Intelligence: 12

Endurance: 10 Wisdom: 18

HP: 550 / 550 Mana: 630 / 710 ]

#### SKILLS

[Advanced Subterfuge (50/50)

Advanced Arcana [50/50]

Advanced Biomancy [44/50]

Advanced Melee 29/50

Basic Speech 25/25 ]

## Chapter Twenty-Two

Marianne's breath escaped her mouth explosively as she collided on the floor. She lay motionless for a moment, trying to process the change in her addled mind, giving me just enough time to remove my pants, catching up with her in the scale of nakedness. I used the opportunity to remove her shoes as well, leaving her necklace as the only piece of accessory on her body.

Then, she managed to gather her wits enough to turn back, only to lose her breath once more. Unsurprisingly, I might add, even if it was a touch arrogant. During the last few weeks, my body had transformed from a shapeless blob into a chiseled masterpiece, a visual impact that was further enhanced by aura granted by my charisma. And to crown it all, my erection stood between my legs, dangerously present...

"N-no," she managed to say in shock, but it was a fleeting denial, ready to flutter away with the slightest wind. A wind that I was happy to provide, I thought even as I pressed my hand at her entrance, delivering a jolt of pleasure to her naked skin. Whatever she was going to say next disappeared into a moan that echoed on the walls, loud enough to force me to rapidly construct a silencing ward to prevent a wayward servant from checking the room.

[+1000 Experience]

[-25 Mana]

"Really, you don't want it," I said even as my fingers danced around her clit, triggering a new wave of pleasure that threatened to drown her without the escape valve of a climax.

It took four tries for her to answer properly, the first three melting down whenever I gently caressed her entrance, aborting her words in lieu of another moan. "My virginity," she managed to murmur at the fourth one.

"Why didn't you tell me so, honey?" I answered with an exaggerated cheer. "That's easy to solve." What I was talking about was easy to decipher when I jammed my thumb to her backdoor entrance, which I already magically prepared and cleaned for an intense session of lovemaking. It didn't prevent her from letting out a shocked cry, which was more pleasure than pain; inevitable at her current state. "Isn't that better?"

"N-no," she said, or more accurately, that was what I deduced she was trying to say. It was more of a gasp than a word, impossible to decipher even for my enhanced senses.

“Can you clarify, sweetie,” I said even as I pushed my thumb deeper, enjoying the way she had clamped around my fingers. She tried to shift position, but I was ready for it, and put my left hand on her back, pinning her in place. She tried to stand up, but it was a weak, reluctant move, easily aborted by the weight of my hand alone. And when my other fingers joined the fray by circling around her knob, even that ineffectual resistance faded away.

[+1500 Experience]

I maintained the position for a while, but my pace picked up speed. When I decided to let another finger to join my thumb in its efforts to loosen her puckered hole for the next step, I let my other hand start dancing on her back, bringing her pleasure to an even sharper state of overwhelming,

I could see that she was ready for the next step. The biggest evidence for it was the lack of protest even as I pulled my hand away, and placed my erection between her plump cheeks, sliding back and forth rapidly. This time, unlike my previous disguised state, there was no missing what was there, but like before, she let out no words of protest. She did send a glance back -which took a great effort on her part in her exhausted state- but in her eyes, there was only helpless surrender against the demands of her body.

“I hope you’re ready,” I said even as I changed the position a bit, aligning the tip of my shaft against her entrance, but just before I pushed in, I slapped my forehead in an exaggerated manner. “I forgot to lubricate it,” I said as I stood up and walked towards her other end. “Damn, what are we going to do?”

“W-what?” she murmured as she struggled to raise her head, and when she did so, she found herself just an inch away from my erection.

“Simple, honey,” I said. “I can’t, in good conscience, take your ass without a lubricant, it would hurt too much. If only there was a solution,” I said, making a show of waiting for a few seconds before letting my face brighten. “I found it,” I said even as I pushed my shaft forward, touching her lips.

The expression of scandalous shock on her face, thick enough to push through her pleasure-addled brain, was hilarious. It was likely that, as a noble heiress, she hadn’t once considered she would hear such a scandalous offer, let alone receive that offer in such a visceral manner. “I would never-” she started, but I was quick to cut her.

“That’s okay if you think that was enough for today,” I said with a shrug, but kept my position

stable. The level of desperation on her face as for the first time, she realized the depth of her mistake, enhanced further by the inescapable situation of it. She could have called it off, of course, but we both knew that it wasn't a real option, not with her body drowning in unmet pleasure.

She was mine.

"Good girl," I said as I patted her head patronizingly, which managed to awaken her annoyance, even if it was just for a moment before it was drowned by her desperate arousal. "Now, open wide, it's the time for your medicine."

The humiliating way I formed that order didn't prevent her from following it. She widened her mouth, surrendering to the inevitable invasion. The warmth around my shaft was positively delicious, enough to finally deplete my frayed patience. Instead of pushing it gently, allowing her to get used to my presence, I lunged forward in one sharp push, until the tip of my shaft was tickling the entrance of her throat.

It wasn't the nicest thing to do, but the resulting pleasure was too thick to ignore. I grabbed the back of her head, and pushing her even deeper, preventing her breathing. She gagged and gasped in a vain attempt to breathe while I enjoyed the virginal tightness of her throat. The tremors of her desperate moans increased the sensation even further.

A minute later, in a moment of mercy, I pulled out, examining her face, tears of strain filling her face, but it was nothing compared to the euphoria that was on her face. "Did you enjoy that, you whore," I said even as I caressed her cheek with a contrasting gentleness, and received an obedient nod in reply.

"Excellent," I said as I pushed forward once more, invading her throat once more, this time even deeper. "Just tap my leg if you need a break." And with that, one of the most pleasurable experiences of my short but renewed life had started. She coughed, wheezed, and trembled, but at no point, the tap that would make me stop had arrived. And despite the minutes that passed, she managed to stay conscious, probably only thanks to the supernatural endurance given to her by the system.

And with each passing minute, my pace increased, until I was fucking her face ferociously, in a way that doubtlessly damaged her throat — lucky that we both had access to healing magic to fix it later on. But the real surprise was the great tremor that caught her body a few minutes later, giving her an explosive orgasm.

[Achievement: Boundless Bliss. Create a pleasure explosive enough to break through a faultless magical barrier through sheer intensity. +1000 Experience, +2 Strength, +2 Speed]

[+2000 Experience]

Level UP!

[Select one of the following skills: Expert Arcana, Expert Biomancy, Advanced Speech]

It wasn't a surprise that when her throat tightened around my shaft, combined with the rather distinctive sensation of power spreading through my body due to level and stat increases, I started to fill her throat with my seed. But even then, I was familiar with the leveling up enough to pay the proper attention to the significance of the level up, and picked Arcana to improve. I needed to maximize the benefit of my studies with Helga, after all.

I didn't need my enhanced observational skills to know that she was about to fall unconscious as the orgasm hit her with all the subtlety of a crazed dragon. But that would not do, not when I just started. The solution was simple, I put my hand on her body, and cast a healing spell that would remove the exhaustion and clear the mind. It was underpowered, of course, just enough to keep her awake, but under the control of the haze. And I didn't bother to hide the move, as she was too far gone to notice it.

[+1 Biomancy]

[-10 Mana]

I had already pulled out of her mouth and had taken my earlier position behind her, my shaft - erect once more- pushing against her puckered hole. "You're ready for the main course, right, slut," I said, punctuating the degrading comment with a rather loud spank that sent her plump bottom rippling.

I wasn't surprised when she murmured weakly instead of the angry exclamation she would have used just minutes before. It was a pity that she didn't reply with an explosive moan of acceptance, begging for more, but I had a solid read on her, enough to realize her shyness was the only thing that prevented it. Not to mention the fear she was feeling at the prospect of her first real anal experience.

Initially, I was thinking about letting her lay on her chest while I abused my full access to her bottom, but her shyness was enough to change my mind. I rolled her with a push so that she ended up laying on her back, her eyes widened at the unexpected eye contact. While she tried

to process the new position, I took my place between her legs, and cast a small arcana spell to create a small bump on the mattress, just enough to bring her puckered hole into the perfect elevation.

The expression of panic and pleasure that danced in her eyes was delicious as I leaned forward, placing my crown against it. Her eyes continued to grow as my shaft slowly disappeared into her tightness. "Damn, your grip is delicious," I said with a smirk on my face, which enhanced the scandalous expression on her face, even more, her lips tightened further in shock.

[+1500 Experience]

[Achievement: Tasty Technicalities. Convince a noble lady to protect her virginity in an unusual manner. +500 Experience, +2 Manipulation]

Her sudden shock was understandable. Clearly, she had to expect the experience to be similar to our earlier massage session, covered with a veil of denial that allowed her to act like it was nothing more than a professional treatment, just a bit more intense than the usual. But our current position was too intimate for her to maintain that particular lie, particularly thanks to our eye contact.

A moment later, she decided to take the simplest option, and closed her eyes. I had to intention of allowing such a simple plan to succeed after all the effort I had gone through, but I wanted to do that in a fun manner. Since her eyes were closed, she didn't see the momentary glow of my fingers as I cast a small spell that would increase her sensation, nor she noticed its destination until my fingers clamped around her nipples. A gasp escaped her mouth as I squeezed her breasts, my perception providing me information about the exact pressure I should be using for the maximum benefit. She opened her eyes, but it lasted a fleeting moment when she met with my gaze, colored with a victorious amusement.

[+2 Biomancy]

[-50 Mana]

[+500 Experience]

But that was just a beginning. I pushed my shaft deeper and deeper, forcing frequent moans through the lips she tried to keep shut, with not an inconsiderable amount of assistance from my fingers mauling her bountiful breasts. This time, she managed to keep her eyes closed.

So be it, I decided as I leaned forward, and my lips pressed against her neck with surprising



gentleness, leaving feather-light kisses that made her shiver sexily. It was effective, because the gentleness of my lips was contrasted greatly with the merciless pumping of my hips, drilling deeper and deeper into her tightness without a shred of mercy, the lubrication I had applied to her tightness that prevented her pain to rise high enough to cloud her pleasure.

Under the combined assault, it wasn't surprising that her determination to keep her voice down hadn't survived for long. Her moans rise unbidden, surprisingly melodic now that she deserted her attempts to stay silent. I was curious of the expression I would find in her eyes, but chose to continue my focus on her neck instead, determined to fill her with pleasure until her concerns drowned in a sea of euphoria.

The treatment lasted for several minutes before I pulled back from her neck, though I continued impaling her mercilessly. This time, when I met with her eyes, she made no effort to close them, her pleasure easy to read. "So, Marianne, what's your opinion on the true version of my massage technique? Much better, right?"

In response to my question, Marianne did something I would have assumed to be impossible in her current state. She blushed cutely, so much that it tempted me to lean forward and catch her lips in a sudden burst of hunger. Her lips joined the dance in enthusiasm, her tongue readily accepting mine in response, answering my question much better than her words could.

[+500 Experience}

[Achievement: Unusual Usurpation. Manage to trigger a crush in a lady under unusual circumstances. +500 Experience, +2 Charisma]

The last achievement managed to put a smile on my face. When I managed to convince her to this moment through underhanded seduction, I was expecting to establish a love-hate relationship based only on physical needs from her part. Her crush was an unexpected surprise, but by no means unwelcome. On the contrary, it gave me another hook to convince her for more.

I changed position once more as my own pleasure started to become too high to contain. I pulled away from the kiss, and grabbed her hands for extra leverage before starting to slam into her in a renewed speed, each connection creating another naughty clap that filled the room. Her tits flailed wildly with each repeat, the way her butt was wobbling was enough to break the resistance of a less experienced man.

But the most important part was the expression of ecstasy on her face, her reason lost, stealing

any recollection about her current location, or the significance of the events that brought her to this particular point.

The climax hit her as I started filling her tight hole with my seed, triggering a climax from her side as well. She gasped and moaned, trembling like an out-of-control earthquake, looking as delicious as a freshly-baked birthday cake...

[+2500 Experience]

Continuing further was a tempting idea, but after the emotional and physical ordeal she had gone through, Marianne looked just a dash away collapsing. Instead, I decided to lay next to her to leverage her recently generated crush. In her daze, she said nothing when she found my arms around her, embracing her with surprising gentleness. Though I was surprised when she leaned forward, initiating a kiss on her own volition for the first time.

I said nothing as I felt the softness of her chest against mine, the gentle kiss we shared reminiscent of the ending of a romance tale. I could feel my manhood awakening once more at the sensation, but this time, I decided to act patient. I wanted the moment to be clear on Marianne's mind, that she was the initiator.

It took a while for her rationality to catch up. Her hand had been wandering over my chiseled torso, enjoying the contours, when it slipped too low and wrapped around my shaft. Even then, only after she delivered several enthusiastic tugs she remembered the full extent of the situation.

The yelp that escaped her mouth was cutest to date. "I need to go," she stammered in panic even as she dashed towards her clothes, trying to put her corset in panic, only to fail due to her trembling hands.

"Why don't you come here so I can help," I said with a smirk. She looked at me in shock, like I had spoken the most absurd thing I could. "Really, that's what you feel self-conscious about after everything," I added, and she dipped her head. But her resurfaced shyness didn't prevent her from walking to me, one hand between her legs to hide her treasure; a move that would have made more sense if my seed hadn't been dripping out of her other hole.

She sat in front of me, and despite the temptation of pushing her down for another round, I kept my fingers on the hooks of her corset, slowly linking them. I didn't miss the opportunity to sensually caress her skin, of course, something that she hadn't missed. I even grabbed the shirt I ripped earlier, and repaired it magically to a workable degree.

[-7 Mana]

But when she reached for her ripped panties, I was quicker to grab them, and slid them into my pocket before she could say anything. "My payment for the services rendered," I said with a smirk. She said nothing, and just continued to dress in a blush on her face, well-aware of my gaze watching her every movement.

She said nothing while she finished her preparations, but turned back after putting her hand on the doorknob. "This was a one-time thing, there'll be no repeat!" she said in the sharpest tone she could manage, which would have been marginally convincing if she hadn't run out of the room with a distinct stumble in her steps.

The repeat was inevitable. The only question was how long she would be able to last...

-----

[Level: 11 Experience: 61975 / 66000

Strength: 15 Charisma: 17

Precision: 11 Perception: 11

Agility: 12 Manipulation: 17

Speed: 11 Intelligence: 12

Endurance: 10 Wisdom: 18

HP: 649 / 649 Mana: 763 / 935 ]

## SKILLS

[Expert Arcana [50/75]

Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Advanced Biomancy [44/50]

Advanced Melee [29/50]

Basic Speech [25/25] ]

## Chapter Twenty-Three

I was tempted to sleep in the storage room that was still filled with the smell of sin and sex, but I had another blonde beauty that was waiting for my attention. Luckily, the meeting was arranged for late afternoon, which gave enough time to clean and dress into something more appropriate for a mysterious stranger, as well as stealing a better sword from the armory. It wasn't enchanted, but it had a sturdier construction, and allowed me to channel my arcana abilities much easier, and I needed that if I were to impress Helga today with my display. And while there, I stole a bunch of throwing knives as well. There was no harm in having some extra equipment.

I wished that I could have stolen Marcus' sword after killing the asshole, but going around with that kind of evidence wasn't the smartest thing to do, even for a precious enchanted sword.

Soon, I was walking towards the third -and the most dangerous- training forest, dressed in grays and blacks of a warrior. Ranger's getup would have been even more appropriate, but I didn't want to dress too similar to my Orlin disguise for Helga. The patrols around the forest were marginally more difficult to slip through due to state of alarm, but not enough to actually catch me.

After the patrols, it didn't take long for me to find Helga, who stayed very close to the entrance, afraid of facing the monsters inside alone. It was justified. This section was mostly filled with class two and three creatures, but occasional class four and fives weren't unheard of. Nothing as dangerous as the pack of elemental hyenas that attacked Aviada and me, but dangerous nevertheless. And with Helga's research-focused development, even class three's were a threat against her under the right conditions, not to mention her stamina wouldn't allow a long engagement.

I gestured her from the distance, followed by a small flare spell, the exact shape, and tone described in the letter, and she started walking towards me. Even from the distance, I could see her fingers tightening around her staff, cluing me about her doubts, but to her credit, determination shone on her face.

I slipped deeper into the forest as she followed me, trying to get out of the line of sight of the patrols, but staying close enough to allow her to follow. "Helga," I said with a cheerful wave that was rather mismatched with the general mood, but she took it in the stride, and waved back. Maybe she appreciated my gifts even more than I estimated.

"Hello..." she said before stopping in sudden realization.

“You can call me Caesar,” I answered, not feeling concerned at giving my own name. With both Aviada and Marianne on the know, my identity was going to be revealed one way or another, so informing Helga about it wasn’t a big risk; especially not with all the secrets I had on her.

She nodded in appreciation before looking around in trepidation. “Are you sure that this is the best area for training. What if we get attacked by a herd.”

Her concern was not entirely unjustified. After all, this forest was dangerous not only because of the stronger monsters it contained, but also due to a limited number of students risking to farm here, occasionally allowing the build-up of a dangerous amount of creatures, such as packs of Dire Wolves, which was already dangerous with their class four status. “Don’t worry, I can handle it,” I said with a dismissive wave, choosing to punctuate my sentence by using one of my throwing knives into a bush about a hundred meters ahead, where a dire wolf was hidden, waiting for an opportunity.

Helga gasped at the sudden burst of action, which wasn’t entirely beneficial. Unlike the rabbits and foxes, Dire Wolf didn’t fear sudden confrontation, and dashed in an explosive rush, which met with an unfortunate end as I took its legs with a slash of my sword, arcane energy crackling around its edges. “Milady,” I said with a mocking bow as I pointed at the helpless creature, which was almost as big as me, like it was a cute gift.

[+1 Melee]

It was another point to her credit when she delivered the final blow to the creature’s throat using the small blade on top of her staff rather than wasting her magic. Then, her gaze turned to me, disbelief mixing with hope as she gazed me. It wasn’t hard to decipher her shock. Taking down a class four creature wasn’t an amazing achievement, but it couldn’t be said for immobilizing it with just a slash without actually killing. That required a level of power and finesse that was hard to find in a student.

“That was...” she murmured, disbelieving. I had no doubt that she thought my level should be in the twenties, considering she had seen me display impressive abilities in melee combat, magical abilities, and research. Level twenty was rare, and most of them either took an important role in their families, or chose a cushy job in one of the large cities. If they were lucky, they could even get a guard post for the royal family. Someone close to that point that was willing to help an outcast like her was a miracle from her perspective.

And while I was not a level twenty -and couldn’t exactly compare against them in their selected areas due to my generalist status even with my stats- Helga didn’t know that. She lacked the

combat experience to discern the details of my situation. And thanks to my extraordinary stats, I could put a decent fight against someone around level fifteen in a fight regardless of the type of combat thanks to my larger bag of tricks, which made her estimation not too inaccurate. “So, have you thought about the problem I outlined in my letter?” I asked her.

“Y-yes,” she stammered in shock, not expecting to have that conversation in the most dangerous spot in the school. But nevertheless, she started explaining rapidly, clearly not wanting to anger her new benefactor. “I was thinking that the spell matrix can be stabilized through...” And with that, we started an interesting raid, killing monsters and discussing complicated magical theory at the same time.

[Melee +6]

[Arcana +11]

[-523 Mana]

[Achievement: Charm through Charms. Make great strides in seducing a brainy lady through great magical aptitude. +500 Experience, +2 Intelligence]

Our expedition took almost three hours, and several dozens deceased creatures. When I finally called it to end, the sun was about to set. I was tired, because I was rather generous in mana expenditure, using it to try some of the theories we came up with Helga, but it wasn't wasteful. How could it be when I had managed to develop a more dangerous variant of the mana bolt with just a couple hours of discussion, one that would have penetrated through the magical hide of a shadow wolf without depleting half of my mana.

I didn't want to risk a repeat of the shadow wolf incident with an almost empty tank. Moreover, Helga was even more exhausted. She didn't fight directly, but she also didn't have my irrationally high physical stats, and spell practice drained her mana as well. But despite everything, there was a huge smile on her face. “So, did you level up?” I asked while we returned, ignoring the social taboo around the question. Inquiring about people's status was one of the bigger taboo's, one that hadn't been processed lightly.

“Not yet, but I'm very close. I have gained almost eight hundred experience points in a day,” she answered with a euphoric smile, dismissing my social blunder without a thought. I shook my head, once again appreciating the unbelievable advantage provided by my unique status. For me, a thousand points was a slow day. For anyone else, a small miracle. “Just four more days, and I should level up,” she added, giving me a clue about her current level progress. But despite

her enthusiasm, I wasn't really happy with her progress. I needed her to be stronger, because I needed the spells she would develop, spells that would fit perfectly for my unique combat style.

I didn't doubt that there was a challenge waiting for me in the future, and I needed to be prepared for it.

But while walking back, I realized that lady luck had other plans for me. When the familiar sound of the rush of dire wolves reached into my ears, I gestured Helga to take a defensive position while I stood in front of her, a sparkling mana bolt in my left hand, a glowing throwing knife on my right. I panicked, because I could identify at least five dire wolves attacking us.

When they dashed into the opening we were in, I realized my assessment was mistaken. It wasn't five dire wolves, rather, it was four dire wolves, and one dire wolf alpha, which hulked almost double the size of the others, its eyes shining with an unusual experience. Effectively, it was at least class six, maybe even seven...

Luckily, I had gone through worse challenges when I was weaker. "Distract the alpha for a moment," I ordered Helga.

"How?" she asked panickedly even as I dashed forward.

"Send something shiny towards it!" I shouted exasperatedly even as I met with the first wolf after throwing my knife and pulling my sword, who, surprisingly, was prepared for my display of speed. On my other hand, I still held my spell, ready to go. I felt the gaze of the alpha on me as it dashed towards as well, ignoring Helga completely, like it knew I was the real threat. Combined with the surprised adaptability of the other wolves, I suspected we had been observed during our hunt... "Wily bastard," I murmured in annoyance. The monsters capable of tactics was the last thing I needed.

"Let's see how adaptive you are, you bastard," I murmured even as I changed the shape of the spell on my hands, and converted it into an area-effect slowing spell, something I just managed to create thanks to Helga's clever ideas.

[-40 Mana]

Seeing the expression of surprise on the eyes of the Alpha was a delight, but not as much as when Helga's spell connected with the bastard, covering it with a thick layer of energy, immobilizing it momentarily. With a glance I could see that it was a weak one, barely last a couple of seconds, but that was enough. The formation of wolves was based on its presence, and with it immobilized, it allowed me to cut through rest in just a second, leaving two dead,



two too wounded to move.

I was already behind the Alpha when it was ready to move, cutting the hamstrings of its hind legs with just a slash. I smirked, it was amusing that he had died to the favorite tactic of the wolves. "Not bad. Let's see whether we can double it the next time," I said, making her chin drop in shock. "The rest is yours, milady," I said exaggeratedly with a smirk, enjoying the way panic melted off Helga's face, just realizing that the danger she had thought to be deadly just ended in a moment.

[Achievement: Martial Might. Save a damsel through an overwhelming display of power and initiative. +500 Experience, +1 Speed, +1 Precision]

[Melee +2]

She tried to say something, but words failed her repeatedly. She took a deep breath and walked towards the wounded creatures, finishing them with a stab of her staff. "That was ... incredible..." she murmured when she looked at me once more, a familiar blush on her face.

I said nothing, but closed on her, far too close to be innocent, my breath landing on her ruby lips, which opened reflexively. I leaned forward like I was about to steal a kiss, only to stop at the last second. "Why don't you go ahead pass through the guards, and meet me with the storage room we had met the last time in an hour," I said, and before she could answer, already pulled back.

The expression of shock on her face, while she watched me disappear, was utterly delicious.

-----

When I arrived at the storage room a couple of minutes more than an hour later, Helga was already there, waiting for me with a nervous expression on her face. "You're here," she gasped, her nervousness instantly replaced by elation the moment she noticed my presence. Someone was enthusiastic, I noted with a smirk.

While she tried to calm her excitement, I examined her. One detail was very clear. She used the break to refresh herself, and done that very successfully. Her hair was still damp, and her face alight -but still more than her usual amount- makeup, highlighting her beauty to a level it easily surpassed the most girls. It was smart of her not to use that normally, as her position at the school was too fragile to actually take such a risk.

But the more interesting change was her clothes. Her robe was open, revealing that

underneath, she was wearing a blouse and a skirt, both much tighter than her usual selection. Even better, the top two buttons lay unlinked, giving me a delicious hint of cleavage. She seemed ready and enthusiastic about being seduced.

Though, I wasn't surprised. The civilian equivalent of our situation was a minor noble suddenly piling a maid with several precious gifts and great attention, with an implied mistress position to elevate her well out of her class. For Helga, supporting her leveling and research simultaneously was everything she needed, everything that had been denied in the school, and everything that she couldn't attain back home; so naturally, she was feeling grateful. Combine that with my charisma, my rather impressive physical state, and the fact that I had valiantly saved her from a dangerous ambush just an hour ago... Well, it would be surprising if it would take more than a word to make her panties drop...

Normally, I was planning to go for a quick seduction, but funnily enough, seeing her so enthusiastic changed my mind. I decided to play with her a bit. Luckily, I was prepared.

"I had an interesting idea about managing area effects of the volatile fields," I said even as I pulled a small blanket from my bag and spread it on the floor, gesturing her to sit. Her shocked disappointment was amusing. I sat down, continuing to talk about various implications of managing alternating magical currents. She answered my inquiries perfectly, but failed to hide her disappointment.

I shook my head despondently. I had expected her to try better to seduce me, but apparently, her self-confidence was too weak after the struggle she had gone through. "Wine?" I asked, cutting our discussion on the magical theory to pull a rather impressive vintage of wine and a pair of glasses, both pilfered from the kitchen.

"I wouldn't say no to a sip," she answered, and I made sure to smile suggestively as I poured her a glass, which, in turn, allowed her to lean forward excessively, giving a deep view of her delicious cleavage. After she pulled back, I waved my hand, and a plate of cheese pulled itself out from the bag, following my magic, until it landed between us. I could have done it the same easily for the wine as well, but it required a personal touch.

"So, I think we were discussing the resonance effect between unequal constructs," I said, picking up the discussion where we left off. Helga was much more enthusiastic as she started answering once more, her answers garnished with a lot of unnecessary arm movements, which helped her breasts to dance alluringly. A particularly heated move even managed to pop another button of her blouse, enough to conclusively prove the absence of a bra — not that I needed a proof after watching the free dance of her breasts for the last several minutes.

[+100 Experience] 50% Penalty

The disappointment I felt from the rather excessive experience penalty didn't last for long as she lifted herself forward as she reached for the cheese plate, unnecessarily as she could have easily reached for it, but the reason was clarified when she decided to use the movement as an excuse to sit closer, desire clear in her eyes.

Well, who I was to reject such a beauty...

-----

[Level: 11 Experience: 63075 / 66000

Strength: 15 Charisma: 17

Precision: 12 Perception: 11

Agility: 12 Manipulation: 17

Speed: 12 Intelligence: 14

Endurance: 10 Wisdom: 18

HP: 671 / 671 Mana: 345 / 957 ]

#### SKILLS

Expert Arcana [61/75]

Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Advanced Biomancy [44/50]

Advanced Melee [37/50]

Basic Speech [25/25]

## Chapter Twenty-Four

When Helga slid closer to me, I decided to reward her courage by meeting halfway. The discussion on the complicated nature of the magic continued, but I lowered my voice a bit, and using a huskier tone, one that worked just as intended if her nipples trying to poke through her shirt was any indicator.

I refilled her glass, then picked a piece of cheese, and gently placed between her lips, and she bit sensuously, followed by a soft moan. "Are you tired?" I asked, and for a moment, she looked afraid that her hints were misunderstood, but it lasted only until I slid even closer to her, and placed my hands on her shoulders, rubbing gently.

"A - a bit," she stammered after realizing what I was cluing towards, and leaned to my chest with a sigh while I started to rub her shoulders. The next moan that she let out was in no way exaggerated. It was not much of a surprise. After all, I managed to completely break Marianne through my skilled fingers, and Helga was already prepared to jump my bones.

A couple of minutes later, I removed her robe, which she let without the slightest hint of resistance. I noticed her hands landing on her own thighs, which, incidentally, caused her already short skirt to ride upward further, the sight of her toned thighs enough to make my mouth water. I let my hands drift down through her sides until they landed on her delicious thighs. "You seem restless, do your legs hurt," I asked, and she nodded enthusiastically, not trusting herself to talk.

I just chuckled as my fingers danced on her thighs, slowly moving towards the inner area while climbing upwards bit by bit, tortuously slow. Her excitement, once clear as a day, started to darken with frustration. She sent a glance upward, only to meet with my smug smirk, telling her that I was very much aware of what I had been doing. I was curious just how long she would be able to resist the temptation...

The answer turned out to be not too long. When my fingers reached the edge of her panties, each caress driving it further but still studiously avoiding her core, Helga let out a guttural moan, and I found myself being pushed on the floor, Helga firmly sitting on my shaft. "That's enough playing, you bastard," she exclaimed even as she moved back and forth, enjoying a dry ride.

I had been planning to play with her a bit more, but then I was distracted by an announcement.

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 1%]

[+200 Experience] 50% Penalty

The announcement managed to blindside me. Luckily, Helga was busy rowing back and forth above my shaft, her eyes closed to maximize her sensations to actually pay any attention to me, giving me time to process what had happened.

There was no doubt that the announcement was about Helga, the timing ruled out any other possibility. But I was mystified by the reason. After all, it wasn't the first time I was being with Helga, and I had gone much further with other girls as well, especially Marianne, who hadn't shown such a sign. And while I helped Helga, I also helped Aviada, to the point of saving her life...

But I hadn't done anything sexual in the aftermath.

Maybe that was it, that I needed to both help the girl in a profound way, and also take its rewards. It was a good guess, but in the end, it was still a guess. I needed more experimentation to test its accuracy. Luckily, Aviada was a perfect candidate for that particular experimentation.

Then, a particularly tickling moan reached to my ears, and I decided that theorizing about the new feature wasn't as important as tending the sexy blonde that was doing her best to grind my pants into nothingness. I placed my hands on her stomach, easily sliding under her blouse before starting to climb forward, revealing the beautiful smoothness of her stomach in the process.

Helga opened her eyes when my fingers started to caress the underside of her spectacular breasts, but they were filled with a deep need, a burning passion. Initially, I was planning to take it slow, but such a naked display of desire deserved a reward. Since my hands were already positioned appropriately, all I needed was to pull gently, and my enhanced strength worked wonders in completely ruining her blouse, leaving her half-naked.

A shocked yelp escaped her mouth, which I deliciously punished by a gentle slap to her breast, their impressive size dancing deliciously. She moaned in appreciation after the shock, not showing the slightest concern for her state of nakedness. Then, a mischievous expression popped on her face as she pressed her hands to my chest, her grinding picking up speed further.

And it worked wonderfully. My pants turned into a tight prison, begging to be released. An expression of joy was on her face, though it was equally strained by pleasure. I wasn't the only one that was starting to feel the brunt of the extended session of foreplay, and it would hurt my

pride if I surrender before her.

With that in mind, I slid my hands a bit further, my fingers already laced with an innovative mixture of transformed Biomancy and Arcana mana, a tricky construct that I created based on Helga's ideas, and pressed them against Helga's nipples.

[+2 Biomancy]

[+3 Arcana]

[-30 Mana]

[+300 Experience] 50% Penalty

[Achievement: Innovative Involvement. Leverage a brand-new technique to the noblest purpose of providing pleasure. +1000 Experience, +2 Intelligence, +2 Charisma]

Thanks to the system, I knew that the technique was exceedingly effective, resulting in two separate skill increases and a very profitable achievement in addition to its usual experience reward. But nevertheless, Helga's pleasure-filled face was a nice addition as well, confirming my success.

"That's amazing," she moaned helplessly as her grinding turned out to be even more heated, searching for a release that wouldn't come; because that was another function of the small trick I had developed. She would not climax unless I broke the magical barrier I had constructed, or the pleasure reached a mind-breaking degree. And she realized that detail a moment later when her unbounded grinding failed to achieve the desired result, and she checked my face to confirm the results. "Okay, you magnificent bastard, you win!" she said, declaring surrender, though any sign of defeat was soon erased by hunger as she reached for my zipper.

A brief struggle later, my shaft was standing proudly, ready for any challenge. "Make sure to prepare it thoroughly before using," I mockingly reminded her.

I had been expecting a counter-statement from her, but my shaft proved to be too fascinating for her to pay attention to anything else. Apparently, my recent boost in charisma worked even better than I had expected, and she was stuck watching my shaft in fascination. That hypnotizing effect only lasted for a moment, but even then, her eyes were rather glazed as she leaned forward to capture my girth between her lips.

And the moment her lips touched my shaft, her lips started dancing up and down, treating it like ice cream in the middle of the desert, hurrying to finish before it melted under the sun. She moved up and down, doing her best to swallow my length — though she only managed to take a portion despite her best efforts.

[+500 Experience] 50% Penalty

Watching her pouty lips dancing over my shaft was good entertainment, especially when the free dance of her dangling breasts were added to the equation, so I continued to lay without a movement, letting her do all the work. It was a nice change of pace, as other times I was doing my best to maintain whatever scheme I had been trying to achieve while also trying to ensure the target was adequately aroused to miss the details. After everything, laying on my back to enjoy the treatment had been a nice change of pace.

And Helga proved that she had no issues in doing all the work when she stopped the delicious treatment of her lips and sat on my midsection once more, stopping only to get rid of her panties. Her skirt was still on, but after she folded the hem a couple of times, it resembled a belt more than a skirt, showing the amazing sight of her slit devouring my shaft bit by bit. It wasn't entirely trivial for her to swallow the whole length even if she was incredibly slippery, my girth challenging her elasticity to the maximum. She bit her lips, the pleasure and pain fighting against each other as she lowered her hips, but in the end, she was triumphant.

Only then she sent me a victorious smile as she placed her hands on my chest, her hips grinding me even more furiously than her earlier dry-humping, the gyration of her hips nothing less than poetry. "Faster," I ordered, and she followed my direction without even blinking, her movements blurring with pleasure.

Since she was doing such a good job, I decided to reward her. With a flick to her nipple, I had dispelled part of the spell that was keeping her from climaxing, immediately followed by a silencing ward, not trusting the ancient walls to handle the explosion of sound.

And it turned out to be the correct choice, because when Helga opened her mouth, the resulting sound made me doubt that whether it was just a cry, or it was actually a sound-based attack spell. It left my ears ringing, while Helga collapsed to my chest after she spent the last of the energy she could spare to cry, the rest of her attention firmly on containing the aftermath of her explosive orgasm.

[+ 925 Experience] 50% Penalty

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 5%]

Level UP!

[Select one of the following skills: Expert Melee, Expert Biomancy, Basic Ranged]

Seeing another level was always a delight. And after a brief consideration, I picked to increase my close combat skills. Both Biomancy and Ranged was tempting, but I was supposed to meet with Aviada tonight at midnight, and I needed skills to suitably impress her. While my strength and other physical stats had suitably improved since our last meeting, an extra edge wouldn't be amiss.

"That ... was ... everything ... I imagined ... to ... be," Helga managed to whisper after lost her fight to be able to stand upright, and collapsed against my chest. I chuckled before leaning forward and capturing her lips, my shaft still inside her, ready for the second round.

[Level Difference of at least 50%! No Experience]

Unlike the previous notification, this one wasn't particularly welcome. I had been expecting something in those lines, but I was hoping for another reduction rather than a total denial.

Technically, due to lack of any additional experience, the smart thing would be to stop there, and continue only after I ensured Helga leveled up once more, but that decision was markedly hard to take when the aforementioned body lay above me, her lower lips still tightly grasping my shaft with the full intention to milk me until I was completely dry.

The decision made, I wrapped my arms around her waist before rolling, and she ended up underneath me, earning an enthusiastic giggle. Continuing to slide inside her until she passed from excess pleasure was the simplest thing to do, but I wanted to do something more entertaining. I grabbed the wine bottle, and slowly drizzled it over her amazing breasts, before leaning forward and slowly licking, sucking, and otherwise enjoying the vast expanse of her flavored breasts. Others might claim it to be a waste of good wine, but for me, that was the best way to empty a bottle.

When I repeated the trick for the second time, my hips started to move as well, slowly and sensuously, contrasting her earlier frantic crawling, but despite its slow pace, turning out to be more pleasurable for both of us. Her hands reached my back, her fingers digging deep into my shoulders, but with her limited strength, barely causing any pain against my boundless vitality. Still, the sensation was clear enough, which I enjoyed.



“Cum inside me, Caesar,” Helga moaned and since I wasn’t a rude bastard -or more accurately, wasn’t a rude bastard under these exact circumstances- I sped up, and her moans sped up along with it. I pushed, I licked, and I bit, and moments later, I started spraying inside her, accompanied by another string of cries that made my silencing wards work overtime.

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 15%]

Still, when I collapsed next to her, our tongues gently dancing around each other, I was satisfied. With our enjoyment peaking, neither of us wanted to talk, so we let our bodies to talk in an extended post-coital session. But soon, the time of separation was there. She was too exhausted to continue -a drawback of her magic focused build- while I had other things to do, so after a brief discussion, we decided to separate for the night, agreeing to meet tomorrow morning for another leveling session.

-----

But for me, the night was just starting. After a brief shower, I was dressed in my combat outfit once more, with the sword in hand. I wanted to increase by close combat abilities, and I wanted to increase them significantly before the meeting with Aviada. With that in mind, once again I went to the most dangerous training forest -though I was tempted to just walk outside to test my limits. It was unlikely that I would meet anything more dangerous than the Shadow Wolf around the school, and I was much stronger than the last encounter, strong enough that I could take a couple of them without taking a wound.

But in the end, I decided to leave that particular challenge until I gained a couple more levels. Instead, I cast my protection spells and slipped into the Third Forest, the most dangerous training ground in the school. Without a companion to protect, I was free to turn into a shadow, stalking even the most dangerous predators the forest contained. Dire wolves, elemental hawks, demonic foxes, even occasional dragon spawn younglings... All fell underneath my blade, helpless to do anything more than flail in panic.

When I walked out of the forest three hours later, I was exhausted and drained, but victorious.

[-438 Mana]

[+8 Arcana]

[+4 Biomancy]

[+26 Melee]

I couldn't help but smile at my gains. After three hours, my magical aptitude had increased, but it was nothing compared to just how much my physical abilities improved. The blade in hand felt like it was a part of my limbs, every swing optimized to create the maximum effect, their casual look hiding their deadly nature.

I was ready to meet with Aviada...

-----

[Level: 12 Experience: 66000 / 78000

Strength: 15 Charisma: 19

Precision: 12 Perception: 11

Agility: 12 Manipulation: 17

Speed: 12 Intelligence: 16

Endurance: 10 Wisdom: 18

HP: 732 / 732 Mana: 234 / 972 ]

#### SKILLS

[Expert Arcana [72/75]

Expert Melee [63/75]

Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Advanced Biomancy [50/50]

Basic Speech [25/25] ]

## Chapter Twenty-Five

Caught in the excitement of testing my enhanced abilities, I failed to properly manage my time, so I failed to find time to change my clothes before meeting Aviada. I wasn't too worried though, as Aviada wasn't the kind of girl that would be turned off by a bit of monster blood, or care about the cuts from an extended battle.

Sneaking through the guards of the second forest hadn't posed any challenge since, as usual, they were much more interested in movements in the forest rather than students that were trying to sneak in; since it was a pointless activity for the most. A minute later, I arrived at the promised location of the meeting, a small, obscure waterfall that most people avoided, because a lot of monsters tended to visit for a drink of water, meaning, there was no guarantee about the number of creatures that would be present. But I wasn't afraid of even the most dangerous creature in the second forest. Also, I had confidence in Aviada's skills to at least retreat without significant loss if she faced truly overwhelming odds, especially with the help of her impressive magical sword.

"You're late," said a familiar voice even as I saw a familiar figure charging forward, her sword ready to deliver a deadly blow, but the wide smile on her face was enough to tell me that it was just a friendly greeting. I turned and swung my arm, my sword already in hand, just in time to intercept Aviada's impressive swing, magic crackling around my weapon to prevent damage from her formidable sword. Her eyes widened in shock as rather than pushing me back, her sword bounced.

"Hello, beautiful," I said as I counter-attacked with an obvious blow just to create some distance.

"How," she murmured in shock even as she pulled back, which was understandable, because the only thing that allowed me to resist her during our last encounter was my superior mobility, deflecting and dodging. Now, I was able to push her back through sheer power.

"Let's just say I had a very fortunate encounter, with a nifty achievement as a result," I said, basically blaming the sudden boost to a single extraordinary achievement, which was much more believable than getting a few levels and several achievements since our last encounter. "So, do you dare to help me test my new strength, or would you like to do something easier," I smirked, happy to see challenge creating a flame in her eyes, her raven hair circling her face beautifully.

"Oh, I can handle whatever you can dish," she answered before swinging her sword once more,

and then things devolved into a delicious duel, where she tried trick after trick, only to fail repeatedly. After all, it wasn't just my stats that had increased significantly since our last encounter. My melee capabilities had also gone through a significant transformation, so, in the end, I was able to handle her attacks through skill rather than brawn.

Defending myself was a monotonous task, allowing me to turn my attention to her spectacular body. She was starting to show the first signs of exhaustion, sweaty, out of breath, with a couple of shallow cuts I delivered as a warning when she tried particularly dangerous maneuvers. But her condition wasn't the thing I focused on. No, that distinction belonged to the way she dressed. She wore a cotton tunic that didn't bare even a hint of cleavage, but that wasn't important, not when it was a size too small, its elasticity allowing her to display her voluptuous contours, her spectacular body getting more and more visible through her sweat. Unfortunately, her pants weren't as fun, making me rather enthusiastic about peeling them off.

But soon, my attention was pulled to her face once more. The expression of concentration on her face was understandable because she was trying to get the best of the learning opportunity, but admirable at the same time because a lot of people wallow in jealousy against such a rapid development rather than taking advantage of the situation. I approved, though not as much as the other emotion I managed to catch on her face.

A thick layer of arousal.

Her getting excited while fighting was not a surprise, after all, our last playful spar where she was more than happy about me using a blade to peel of her clothes was evidence enough. But even when she was almost naked, she didn't have such a thick layer of arousal on her face. A sudden suspicion appeared in my mind, and I increased the intensity of my assault, taking the initiative rather than allowing her to attack at her own pace, killing her assaults the moment of inception.

And her arousal increased with my dominance. Apparently, the respect she had toward martial strength was more primal than I expected.

I smirked with desire, as that particular detail quickened my plans significantly. "I think that's enough for the warm-up," I said lazily even as I swung the sword with my full power, opening her guard completely, the perfect opportunity to deliver a killing blow, but chose to take a step back.

"Warm-up..." she echoed in shock, a part of her outrageous because she was obviously doing her best, but her arousal increased even further just by the suggestion that I wasn't using my

full power.

“You know what,” I said as I suddenly pushed my sword into the ground, and picked up a piece of wood instead. “Maybe this will be fairer.”

“You’re playing with fire,” she growled in a way one might mistake for outrage. It wouldn’t be completely inaccurate, as she was actually insulted at the suggestion that I could handle her without a proper weapon, but the desire was hidden underneath, promising me everything if I could actually back my bragging.

“Then let’s see if I’m good enough to extinguish that fire,” I said with a smirk, before continuing with a more serious expression. “You just need to say I surrender, and I’ll stop. Clear?” I added, giving her an intentional out, with the full awareness that her pride wouldn’t allow her to utter those words for anything that I had in mind.

“Come at-” she started, but I didn’t give her an opportunity to finish her words, charging forward. Even when caught by surprise, she managed to raise her sword to parry. Just like that, I lost a part of my weapon, but a blow wasn’t my intention in any case. I grabbed her shirt instead, trying to turn the battle into a close-range struggle that she wouldn’t be able to leverage her sword efficiently. She swung her sword, forcing me to pull back. I did so, but I wasn’t dismayed, because a large patch of her shirt stayed in my hand, leaving her arm and shoulder bare, with the slightest hint of cleavage.

[+100 Experience] 50% Penalty!

[+1 Melee]

The proof of her low level was not the most welcome detail, but not a surprise either, not when I was able to dominate her with such apparent ease. When she decided to attack, I abandoned the implications of her low level, and focused my aggressive defense instead. I ducked under her sword before dashing forward, close enough that I was able to slap her bottom explosively, enough to make her gasp. “You’re dead!” she exclaimed, but paradoxically, respect and arousal colored her tone rather than anger.

“If you think so, apprentice,” I countered before dodging another assault, and taking tearing another piece of fabric in the process, this time rewarded by an unobstructed view of her flat bell. Then, we fell into a routine, she attacked, I deflected or dodged -occasionally acquiring a new stick when the previous one had fallen into pieces. It was hard to maintain its durability even with the liberal magic usage. A random piece of wood wasn’t the best magical conduit.

Still, even with the substandard equipment, I was still smiling brightly ten minutes into the spar while my opponent's attacks were getting more and more furious, a demeanor contrasted greatly by the way excitement filled her face, ignoring her nakedness. And what nakedness it was! Her top was gone for all effective purposes, the few remaining scraps failing to cover her spectacular breasts as they tumbled with her every assault. Her pants were in a better condition, but only relatively. They were still ripped enough to give a full view of her underwear, a little black sexy piece that contrasted greatly with the rest of her practical outfit. Apparently, I wasn't the only one with expectations about the later part of the night.

[+600 Experience] 50% Penalty!

[-45 Mana]

But it was enough for a game, I decided, and when I dodged her assault the next time, I grabbed her wrist instead of trying to rip her clothes, twisting her wrist to force her to drop her sword. She tried to resist despite her pained cry, looking at me balefully, but the important thing was her arousal hadn't dimmed, even by a sliver. I squeezed harder, enough to threaten a break, and finally she dropped her sword, but instantly followed up with a punch, trying to turn it into an unarmed brawl.

I let her wrist go, because just with a punch, I could see that her skills didn't include unarmed abilities unlike my generic melee skill. I didn't even bother to throw a punch, just landed a playful squeeze on her breast before slapping her attack away. Her kick resulted in further loss of fabric from her pants, and then she followed up with a body-slam in an attempt to turn our brawl into a grappling match, where she could use her strength as an equalizer.

I let her succeed. Her eyes widened in shock as our bodies collided, but not as much as when she found herself on the ground, with her arms locked behind her back, her legs immobilized by the strategic placement of my leg. I slowly leaned forward, pressing my shaft against her ass, which lacked protection other than the scraps of her pants, and the deficient cover of her panties. "Are you going to surrender?" I whispered into her ear throatily.

[+2 Melee]

"Never," she bellowed as she struggled, but it wasn't a desperate struggle to get free, but an attempt to rub herself against the presence of my shaft pressing against her bottom. She was truly aroused.

"Really," I whispered even as I used a spell to remove my clothes without letting her go. When I

leaned on her once more, it was my naked shaft that pressed against her ass, her panties a poor tool to insulate against it. "How about now!"

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 1%]

While the presence of the notification had surprised me, making me even more curious about its reason and possible implications, it was hard to focus on that particular detail while Aviada was loudly declaring her intention to fight until the delicious end. "I can handle everything you can dish out," she exclaimed.

"Everything?" I countered, using a throaty whisper, enough to make her shiver. I started removing the remaining pieces of her pants, ripping them off with an agonizing calmness. Whenever the sound of the tearing fabric reached her ear, she shivered, lasting until only her panties remained on her body. Her little lacy panties, too thin to hide her juicy arousal. I grabbed the edge of it, and her back arched in preparation, her bottom rising to give me even better access. But I just chuckled, and let my fingers move up instead, tracing alongside her spine leisurely. "Still not surrendering?" I asked.

"Never," she said, trying to replicate her earlier determination, but it was an imperfect copy with desire filling her tone.

"I wonder how long you will be able to last," I repeated, one of my hands still firmly locking her hands, while the other slowly moved over her skin, leaving only shivers behind, while aiming for her spectacular breasts, busy dangling naked. She did nothing other than moaning obediently when my fingers sank into her breasts mercilessly with a sudden change of pace, pleasure her only response as I mauled her flesh aggressively. But when I pulled my hand away without a warning and returned to my gentle caresses, her gasp of outrage was a thing of legends.

"You're playing with fire," she warned even as she tried to push her hips back, trying to feel my shaft between her cheeks. I let her succeed for a moment, and her hips started to dance furiously, trying to push herself into an orgasm. I pulled back after a minute, just as she was starting to get closer to an orgasm.

"Such a naughty girl," I said while pulling back, my free hand sliding through her raven hair with a surprisingly gentle caress, contrasting greatly with her increasing struggle. When I delivered another spank as a warning, she only moaned with a desire for more. "Any thoughts about surrendering yet?" I asked again, reminding her that she had only one option to receive what she desired.

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 3%]

[+700 Experience] 50% Penalty!

“Not a chance in hell,” she exclaimed, but even if I lacked the ability to detect her wavering commitment, the system notifications would be enough to save me from that particular mistake. She was on the edge of surrender, her pride rapidly losing importance. The reason for it was clear. Not only I had saved her life three times, but also I had also proved to her that even in her selected field of expertise, I was far superior. And to top it all off, I showed that I was more than willing to help her get stronger as well, another attractive offer as she clearly lacked a support structure of her own.

I could just rip her panties and have her, and the only thing I would receive would have been a moan of pleasure, but I wanted more. I want her to surrender herself to me, so I extended the unique torture she was suffering under, her unmet orgasm taking an increasingly bigger toll as the time passed. I caressed, licked, and occasionally bit her sensitive spots, until she started to rely on words less and less, showing her intentions through gasps, moans, and desperate attempts of rubbing our bodies together.

“Come on, sweetie, is it really that difficult to surrender,” I murmured gently even as I finally grabbed the edge of her panties, and peeled them off with torturous slowness, finally leaving her folds naked. I brought my fingers to her wetness, finally touching her most sensitive spot, but her moans came unbidden, her heart filled with the remainders of desire and arousal. Her voice was deliciously tempting as she yearned for an explosion, but I just continued gently caressing while she tried to push back, doing her best to take in my erect shaft, which I occasionally dragged over her naked ass just to tease her.

Her enjoyment was evident in her delicious moan under my touch. She clearly wanted my presence as much as I wanted to hide my shaft in her body. And after the small game I had set up, I needed her surrender before moving forward. That was why I dragged my shaft against her entrance, just enough to wet the crown between her lips, but not pushing forward. She suddenly threw herself back, trying to skewer herself, but I was much more agile than her, and pulled back just in time.

“You lack the strength to push through my grip, you need to get stronger,” I said even as I spanked her bottom, watching the ripples with great interest, curious how she would react when her biggest advantage was assessed and found wanting. “Let’s see if we can train it.” And just like that, a new game started where I still kept her pinned while teasing her entrance, challenging her to push back. Ultimately, it was a delicious play I managed to enjoy only



because I had an earlier encounter with Helga, taking the edge off the extended play. Aviada struggled, trying to achieve victory, but her attempts fell short, and I watched the counter for [Companion Acquisition] climbing up point by point.

[+1000 Experience] 50% Penalty!

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 25% - First Stage Completed +5000 Exp]

[+2 Melee]

“Excellent, a new achievement!” she moaned with pure joy, her frustration replaced with pride immediately as she renewed her struggle with a refreshed attitude. The reason for her mood increase was clear, because I could feel she had just received an impressive boost.

It didn’t take a genius to realize she had a strength-based achievement, one that put her strength quite a bit over mine. At least three points, maybe even four, I reasoned, because even from her disadvantageous position, she was on the verge of getting free, forcing me to apply an impressive range of tricks to keep her pinned. She thrashed, cursed, and moaned, but in the end, she ended up pinned on the ground, spread-eagle, with me directly on top of her, a very volatile position that made me doubt my ability to keep her pinned.

Then the system came to my rescue.

[Achievement: Struggling Strength. Win a sexy grapple match despite lacking pure power. +500 Experience, +2 Strength]

[+500 Experience] 50% Penalty!

Once again, she struggled, but her joy was soon replaced by resignation when her attempts were foiled again and again. But even as the joy of victory disappeared, arousal and desire remained. “I surrender,” she whispered in sweet defeat. She wasn’t able to say anything else, because my lips were over hers.

I was victorious. Now, all I needed was to enjoy the spoils of war...

-----

[Level: 12 Experience: 74400 / 78000

Strength: 17 Charisma: 19

Precision: 12 Perception: 11

Agility: 12 Manipulation: 17

Speed: 12 Intelligence: 16

Endurance: 10 Wisdom: 18

HP: 756 / 756 Mana: 173 / 972 ]

### SKILLS

[Expert Arcana [72/75]

Expert Melee [68/75]

Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Advanced Biomancy [50/50]

Basic Speech [25/25] ]

## Chapter Twenty-Six

My shaft was doing its best to rival enchanted steel in its hardness while I examined the frustrated beauty trapped underneath. I wished that I had the ability to paint, because the mixture of emotions on her face was a sight to behold. There was resignation, anger, frustration, acceptance, and joy. Most importantly, above all, there was a burning need that left her nothing more than a toy to desire. "Tell me what you want," I whispered throatily, still enjoying her surrender.

Her anger was a sight to behold. "I want you inside me, you bastard. And if you delay it any further, I promise that-" she said until her voice was suddenly cut off. The reason, the sudden presence of my shaft inside her, breaking through her barrier with one stiff move. My eyes widened in shock a bit, as I hadn't been expecting her to be a virgin, not with her enthusiastic begging, but smiled with satisfaction, an expression she missed while her eyes stayed shut, trying to process the experience.

[+1000 Experience] 50% Penalty!

The grip of her walls was as tight as my hands around her wrists that pinned her on the ground. For another girl, I might have delayed the proceedings a bit, but her glare told me that any attempt to coddle her would have been met with a painful retaliation. So, I pushed forward sharply, earning a moan in response. It was a sharp moan, one that echoed in the forest, but both of us were too far gone to care about the consequences.

"Fuck me harder, you bastard," she exclaimed, and like any gentleman, I picked up speed, invading her insides.

"Do you like it, you slut," I said even as I let one of her hands go in favor of landing a slap on her dangling tits, one that earned a clear moan from her. However, despite her clear enjoyment, it almost turned into a big mistake, because her arm came swinging, and only my reflexes saved me from a punch that promised to be exceedingly powerful. "What the hell, you crazy bitch?" I said, but even as I said so, I was aware that I didn't have any right to complain, as rather than pulling back, I started to impale her even deeper.

"You didn't think I would just obediently allow you to have your way with me, right?" she said with a joyful smirk, her sentence interrupted twice by her moans. Despite the pain my intensified invasion clearly caused in her recently-virgin entrance, a fierce joy was the only thing I could see in her eyes.

“You are crazy,” I said, but even as I said that, I could feel my heartbeat picking up speed. It was impossible to deny the joy of pushing down such an amazing display of sexiness, each push creating another delicious contortion of pleasure even as she struggled. And the fact that even the smallest slip would result in a painful retaliation made the situation even more difficult, like I was riding an angry dragon, risking destruction with the smallest misstep.

And I liked it... It was an excellent change of pace from all the times I had shared with Helga and Marianne. Both were enjoyable, no doubt, but their obedience was starting to get monotonous. After experiencing Aviada’s rough ride, I was sure that I would appreciate Helga’s sincere lovemaking or Marianne’s obedient enjoyment a lot more.

But that momentary distraction proved to be a mistake, as I failed to react in a timely manner, when Aviada raised her head enough to reach my shoulder.

[-5 HP]

“You bit me!” I shouted, my loudness more about my shock than pain. Her biting was not a surprise, but I wasn’t expecting it to be hard enough to actually draw blood. Talk about violent sex.

“That should teach you not to get distracted,” she said, her expression the closest I had seen to pouting, though her bloodied lips added a violent edge to it.

“If that’s how you want to play,” I said as I leaned forward, my teeth clamping around her breast hard enough to leave a mark, earning a corresponding moan in response. And since she was clearly enjoying that part of the treatment, I started a barely-restrained assault on her body, biting and spanking even as I had done my best to ruin her entrance under my boundless pounding. Such a strategy wasn’t without a cost, of course, as whenever I let her hands go, she managed to extract a price, be it a painful scratch or even the occasional punch. But under my uninterrupted assault, her pleasure steadily built up, until the dam broke without a warning, and she turned into a shivering, moaning mess.

[+750 Experience] 50% Penalty!

Any other girl, I would have let her enjoy her first orgasm for a bit before starting the next round, but with Aviada’s usual attitude, pushing into the next stage was both safer and more fun. Pulling out for a moment, I grabbed her shoulder before flipping her into a position that had her chest was pressing against the ground. She gasped in shock when she realized what I was trying to do and tried to twist out, but her momentary delay gave me time to pull her arms

to her back painfully, and grab them together, allowing me to keep her under control by just using one hand. I could have used my belt or a conjured rope to keep her occupied, but using my power and nothing else gave a clearer message.

“I’ll kill you,” she moaned when I started moving once more, my merciless pounding triggering her exhausted nerves once more. But despite her complaints, her enjoyment was clear, a chain of moans leaving her lips while I used my free hand to rain a formidable downpour of spansks, each harder than the last, coloring her bottom crimson, occasionally moving to her breasts for a painful squeeze. But the real joy started when I grabbed her hair, forcing her head back, giving me the perfect angle to invade her insides.

The sight of her sweaty body, glowing under the moonlight, her magnificent tits dangling freely, her tight ass turned crimson under my rough treatment... She was a luscious vision, and when she tightened around me a few minutes later in another orgasm, it managed to push me close to an explosion as well. “Damn, I’m cumming,” I moaned.

“Not inside!” she exclaimed, her panic clear even as she started to tremble with her orgasm.

Unfortunately for her, she was the one that turned it into a struggle of dominance, and I had no intention of allowing her to pull back. “Honey, you were the one that turned this into a battle. So unless you beg me mercy and admit to your weakness, the game goes on.” The mention of weakness was enough to stall her complaints for a moment, a stubborn expression appearing on her face. And a momentary stall was all I needed, because the next second, I exploded, filling her insides with my seed, intensifying her moan even further.

[+1000 Experience] 50% Penalty!

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 35%]

This time, I had no problems with letting her go, and she collapsed, barely able to turn enough that she was laying on her back, her chest rising repeatedly with her frantic breathing, adding another level of poetry to her vision. She looked enchanting with my marks all over her body, trying to process the rush of pleasure I just gave her to. Tempted, I leaned forward to capture her lips in a soft, lingering kiss.

Her expression of shock was simply too cute. She stayed passive under the soft caresses of my lips, the sudden intimacy catching her flat-footed more than my other actions. A fleeting, vulnerable expression appeared on her face, a cute one even though I would never dare to say that out loud. I had a feeling that she would react violently to such a claim. I let my hands drift

over her body, this time, my touch fleeting and gentle as my fingers danced along her curves. Her lips started to respond, slowly and hesitantly at first, but soon, her enthusiasm passed even mine, our tongues in an enthusiastic battle.

Then, her movements slowly changed, obviously planning for something. I was curious enough to act oblivious, and kind enough to act shocked when she pinned my arms to the side while she climbed over me in a mirror of the first position. "It's payback time, you bastard," she threatened, but unfortunately for her, my sight was sharp enough to catch her intensifying blush. I made sure to put up a token struggle while she smirked, trying to seem threatening, but only coming across as excited and aroused. Then, before I could say anything, she lowered herself to my shaft, engulfing me with her presence once more, and started to ride me wildly.

I did nothing even when her grip around my wrists weakened under the rush of pleasure, giving me the opportunity to escape. Why should I, when the sensation of being ridden filled me with pleasure, while giving Aviada the win she desperately needed? It was clear that she wanted the struggle, and even though she knew I was stronger, she still wanted to be strong enough to get the occasional win.

Maybe I should bring her to my leveling trips. With her addition and my recent power-up -not to mention the level I was about to receive- we would be strong enough to form a hunting party, potentially with much stronger rewards. But that was a discussion point for another time, I decided, when I saw her face contorted with pleasure, indicating that she was already building up to another orgasm. And since my earlier surrender was sufficient for a freebie, I chose that moment to slip out of her grip. My legs wrapped around her while I hugged her. I rolled, and she was trapped between my body and the ground.

I didn't bother to immobilize her arms, her fingers digging into my back to add a dash of pain to my pleasure. After all, not only did I have HP to spare, but I also had the healing spells to cure myself if she went too far. Indulging her was a small sacrifice while I pinned her on the ground under my weight, drilling her mercilessly... The position lasted for around twenty minutes, and ended predictably, with my seed filling her once more.

[+1000 Experience] 50% Penalty!

Level UP!

[Select one of the following skills: Master Melee, Basic Ranged, Basic Tactics]

I was tempted to get tactics with my upcoming expedition, but I was acutely aware that our

team would be extremely small, and I would be the pillar. The individual capability would have been much more useful, so I chose to enhance my melee capabilities. And with that momentary distraction gone, I leaned forward once more.

“Again?” she murmured dazedly.

“Don’t you want to see who has the better stamina,” I said, and the mention of competition was enough to awaken her from her daze, our lips connecting with an unmatched passion. It was sunrise when we finally stumbled out of the forest, though the only reason Aviada was able to walk was my healing spells. I was the victor of our little endurance challenge, something she found hard to be dissatisfied with after an endless number of orgasms she had experienced on the way.

[+5000 Experience] 50% Penalty!

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 45%]

[Achievement: Endless Endurance. Prove the superiority of your endurance against a worthy rival, and through a worthwhile competition. +1000 Experience, +3 Endurance]

“So, that was something,” she murmured sleepily after we sneaked around the guards and closed into the building with Aviada’s room.

“It definitely was,” I approved enthusiastically even as I let my hand drift down to the small of her back, happy to see that touch was all I needed even after several rounds of rough, sweaty sex. The rewards I gained were impressive, but it was nothing compared to the pleasure I earned in the process.

“When are we going to meet again?” she asked even though she had a blush on her face.

“How about tomorrow evening,” I said, and she nodded enthusiastically. “Actually, I’m planning to make a small expedition to outside tomorrow morning, to see what I could hunt, would you be interested?” I added, acting like I just thought of that.

“Of course,” she answered, and after one last kiss, she walked away, the sway of her hips enough to tempt me for another round if I already hadn’t been exhausted to the limit.

-----

I had thought that after spending the whole night with Aviada, leaving only an hour to nap

before I had to dress in my robes and start working at the library would have left me exhausted, but on the contrary, I was bursting with energy. Maybe it was about my new level, or maybe I was underestimating the impact of a three-point increase in my endurance. Regardless of the reason, it didn't change the fact that after a bit of drudgery work, I was feeling randy again. Not enough to make me drop everything and search for Helga or Aviada, but enough to create a low-key annoyance.

Which was why when I saw Marianne walking toward the obscure part of the library, the decision to follow her was easy to make. I made sure to stay hidden, and soon, we were in a relatively obscure part of the library that held some obscure texts on healing, peripheral stuff that was rarely used, but still useful to someone trying to push for the mastery in the area of healing. Since she was in front of the shelves rather than walking around to catch my attention, it was obvious she was in the library for research purposes rather than to fool around, but that didn't stop me from closing in unnoticed, until I was close enough for my breath to caress her skin.

"Can I help you?" I whispered throatily, and she jerked in panic, turning her back, her lips ready for a shout she forced herself to swallow at the last moment when she noticed my identity.

"What the hell, Gaius," she asked, her chest moving violently under her out of control breathing as she tried to keep her breathing controlled.

She was even worse at handling shock than I presumed, a poor ability in a Melius, even for a healer, as ambushes by creatures weren't completely unheard of in the field, and such a delay might result in a total slaughter. I took a note to fix the issue later on, but for now I just needed to distract her a bit. "You're spooked," I said even as I pressed my hand to her chest, her heart thumping under my touch. And if that gave me an opportunity to cup her breast, it was completely incidental. "Take a deep breath," I said even as I moved my hand a bit, enjoying the sensation of her rather spectacular breasts.

She looked like she was about to complain, but a glare from my end was enough to make her change her mind, proving that she was getting more obedient. She followed my directions for a minute before her breathing was back under control, and as panic slowly drained from her face, my hand started to wander around her chest, exploring her breasts over her robe. "Um, I'm better now," she said hesitantly, pointing at my hand. Her meaning was clear.

Naturally, I ignored her wordless request, softly squeezing her breast instead, adding a small touch of magic to intensify her sensations. "So, what are you searching for?" I said, repeating my earlier question even as I explored her body, ignoring her rising panic.



[+50 Experience] 50% Penalty!

I was barely able to hold back a frown at the notification. I had been hoping her to be an even higher level, which, unfortunately wasn't the case. I didn't know whether Aviada or Marianne had a higher level, but even under the best of circumstances, it was clear that I wouldn't be able to reach level twenty without leveling them further -or finding a new assistant. "Gaius, what if-" she tried to start, trying to warn me about the risks, but I interrupted that by squeezing her breast hard, and she had to stop to prevent a moan from escaping. My earlier discoveries about her sensitive spots were coming in handy.

"I asked you a question, sweetie," I said even as I took a step forward. She tried to retreat, but pinned between my body and the shelf, my arms were enough to cut off her escape route. I was close enough for my breath to caress her lips. She licked her lips nervously, but it only made them more delicious. I leaned forward, and she tilted her head readily, but I waited without touching, and going as far as to pull back when she tried to close in, maintaining our sensual distance.

Soon, she realized that she had no option but to play along. "I was looking for alternative ways to establish healing fields," she explained. "I feel like my current method is not working as well as I hoped."

"Which method are you using?" I asked.

"I'm using a variant of the double-matrix reduction, but for some reason, my spells are destabilizing in a few minutes," she explained, more to follow my order rather than believing I could help her. After all, what she mentioned was an advanced topic that belonged to the healing field. Of course, she didn't know that I had a decent biomancy knowledge.

I just chuckled and waved my hand, and two books pulled themselves from the shelves and started floating in front of her. "I believe these two should help you abandon such inelegant methods," I said with a wide smirk, enjoying the expression of shock on her face. "Now, about the reward..." I added, and before she could say anything, my lips closed over hers, enjoying the touch, my hands caressing her body adventurously.

Then, my sixth sense went haywire even worse than the time I had been attacked by the shadow wolf, but it wasn't the sense of an impending assault. It felt more like the silence before the storm, a certain pressure that would doubtlessly ruin me in one wrong move. I pulled away from Marianne immediately. "Go to the corner and hide behind the shelves," I whispered to her, my voice had never been more serious. She looked like she was about to argue, but another

angry glare silenced her.

Marianne dashed away, and just in time, because not just a second later, the head librarian appeared around the corner in her usual calm demeanor on the surface, only my rather impressive wisdom allowing me to see that things weren't as straightforward. Never in my life I was so glad to pick advanced subterfuge, because even under her casual gaze, I felt that my mask was being assaulted. Luckily, I had the necessary acting ability to cover it.

"Boy, follow me," she said before continuing forward, not even bothering to check whether I was following. Why would she, when she ruled the library with an iron fist, so much that even rest of the faculty hadn't dared to intrude her domain? It was unthinkable for a lowly assistant to actually dare to ignore her order.

I followed, doing my best to maintain my mule persona, curiosity rising in me despite fear. It was the first excuse I had to interact with her, and I was curious about what kind of secrets I would be able to unearth...

-----

[Level: 13 Experience: 84200 / 91000

Strength: 17 Charisma: 19

Precision: 12 Perception: 11

Agility: 12 Manipulation: 17

Speed: 12 Intelligence: 16

Endurance: 13 Wisdom: 18

HP: 858 / 858 Mana: 658 / 1053 ]

#### SKILLS

[Master Melee [68/100]

Expert Arcana [72/75]

Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Advanced Biomancy [50/50]

Basic Speech [25/25]

## Chapter Twenty-Seven

After signaling Marianne to stay away, I started following the head librarian, my full attention focused on maintaining my mule persona. Every step, every stumble, even the blank expression on my face had to be perfect, just in case her gaze fell on me for a fleeting moment. After all, she was dangerous enough to change the flow of a battle with just her presence, whether it was against the monsters or humans. Even under the most conservative estimate, she was well-above level twenty, and in reality, nobody knew just how strong she was.

I didn't know what would happen if she discovered my true nature, but I wasn't feeling lucky enough to test it, so I followed her obediently deeper into the library. Unfortunately, it was a long walk, and without anything to distract me, I found myself watching the way her body strained her bulky clothing to understand her body type. She wasn't the busty type, that much was obvious from the lack of a bulkiness around her chest. Similarly her hips were narrow, suggesting that she had a lithe body underneath. Considering that she wasn't very tall either, it wasn't hard to guess that without her mysterious clothing, she would have found it hard to put on an intimidating display. Of course, that wouldn't change the fact that she could rain fireballs with a twist of her wrist, making the observation relatively worthless.

Then, we arrived at a closed gate, and my heartbeat picked up speed, and a soft gasp escaped my mouth despite my best effort. The reason was clear. She was standing in front of the locked entrance of the restricted section, the room that housed the most valuable and most dangerous pieces of writing in the library. I had never ever thought of attempting to enter, because it was protected by layers of wards, making such an attempt no different than assisted suicide.

But now, things were different. I carefully watched the shape of her magic, straining myself to commit the complicated flows into my memory -a difficult achievement even with my unbelievable stats. Still, it was an unbelievable opportunity, one that would have been impossible to receive if she hadn't written me off as inconsequential. Yet another thing my abyssal reputation proved useful for. I stayed focused on the ebbs and flows of the key she was constructing while the wards around the vault deactivated one by one, and soon, the door opened. "Stay here," she ordered as she disappeared inside.

I would have preferred to follow her inside. Failing that, I tried to get a feel of her magic to understand whether there were other traps inside, but failed to detect any. Meaning, either the vault didn't have other wards, or it had the effect of hiding magic used inside while the door was closed. Still, the ability to open the outer shell was a rewarding enough, especially since I just needed to wait around a bit for it.

It took almost two hours for the head librarian to step out once more, and she pushed a cart filled with an impressive amount of books out. She glanced at my direction before starting to walk once again, leaving the cart behind. I quickly grabbed it and started to follow her, noting that she was considerably more exhausted, making it clear that there were further wards inside, much more difficult ones even. But that was a problem for another day.

I followed her through less-used parts of the library, then we arrived at another door, this one her own private residence, which she once again used her magic to unlock. It was considerably easier than the earlier vault door, so I memorized it easily as well. I had been expecting her to order me to stop, which was why I was surprised when she gestured me to follow her inside.

I found myself in a sparsely furnished living room. Surprisingly so, even, considering her reputation and the position she held. She had a large table piled with books, and an even larger bookcase piled with books, but a portion of it completely empty. Other than that, the only thing she had in there was an uncomfortable-looking wooden chair. Her home was as strict and soulless as she was acting outside, apparently.

My observations were cut short by her order. "Sort the books on the bookcase," she said, then, once again without saying anything, walked to the other room. I would have liked to use the opportunity to browse the books she brought, but they were sealed magically. It was easy to break, but applying them again in the same manner would be time-consuming. A time that I currently lacked. I could only read their titles.

It was an interesting mixture. Most of the titles, I wasn't even able to read, as they used an unfamiliar alphabet. The ones I was able to read, however, included a surprising number of books about ancient history. And, the rest of the shelf was filled with books on legends and myths, making it quite a mystery. Unfortunately, I was not in a position to explore that particular mystery.

Still, I didn't want my journey to be completely useless, and despite her power, her dismissive attitude was starting to annoy me. So, I decided to use a little trick. When she pushed the door close, I created a minuscule magical disturbance, hard to detect without looking for it, but sufficient enough to keep the door from closing. An almost filled expert arcana was surely useful. Then, I cast another spell, this time a small, almost transparent piece of floating crystal, while a linked mirror appeared in my hand, allowing me to watch what she was doing.

She was facing the other way, but it wasn't the reason my eyes were widened. No, it was because her hands were on her robe, slowly unlocking her buttons. I slowly placed the books on the shelf, not daring to use any magic for the job while watching her with my full attention. I

was surprised when she pulled her hair free from an oppressing bind, and her raven locks flowed on her shoulders. But it wasn't as interesting as when she started to push her robe down, revealing a pair of flawless and fragile alabaster shoulders, and when it moved down further, a naked back was added to the mix. My eyes widened with shock, as I hadn't been expecting her to be half-naked under her bulky robes.

[+100 Experience]

The other surprise was just how lithe and elegant her body was. If I didn't know her identity, I would have never guessed her to be the head librarian. It was hard to match her towering identity with her sweet body. When her robe moved even lower, it revealed her tight bottom, clad in her panties, which, unfortunately, was the white and boring kind. I was about to let the crystal disperse when I noticed her fingers reaching for the edge of her panties. I decided to maintain the spell despite its risk, a decision that was rewarded almost instantly when she pushed her panties down, revealing her cute bottom, and with a fleeting sight of her entrance, beautiful enough to wish me that I was strong enough to ravage her without fearing the consequences.

"Soon," I murmured to myself.

Since my luck had yet to disappoint me today, I decided to push further, and watched as she started to walk toward the other door in her bedroom, giving me a full-frontal view of her beauty. Her face was yet another surprise. She had a small, cute face even without makeup, one that should have belonged to a cute flower girl on the corner of the street rather than a scary mage that made everyone tremble under the threat of her bad mood. I could see why she was always wearing that hood and using magic to darken her expression. It was hard to take this cute face seriously. Of course, her small yet shapely breasts and thin waist deserved a mention of their own, completing the little fragile girl image.

It was impossible to stop once she entered the other room, not bothering to close the door, the sound of flowing water reaching my ears. I let the crystal float to her bathroom, and met with the beautiful sight of her bubble covered body, her impromptu dress melting under the flow of water. Soon, she had nothing but crystal-clear water droplets to cover her body, and since I had already finished my task, I decided to get a bit of reward, and put my hand in my trousers, playing with my erection.

[+500 Experience]

[Achievement: Dancing with Death. Stretch a hidden situation to its limit with the full

knowledge of the cost of failure. +1000 Experience, +2 Perception, +2 Agility]

Unfortunately, her shower stopped before I could attain my release, so, with great disappointment, I released the spell and fixed my pants, and waited for her to appear.

On that, I received another surprise, as I hadn't been expecting her to walk into the living room naked. Oh, she had an illusion on, but it was impossible to slip such a thing by a master of subterfuge like myself. And with that awareness, denying the illusion and seeing her naked body was trivial for me. Just like that, my heartbeat rose to a peak. After all, not every day did the legendary librarian stand in front of me, stark naked and bent over as she examined the bookcase, tempting me with damnation.

"Everything is in order, you can leave," she said, and I immediately turned and left the room, not trusting myself not to react in a way that would reveal myself if I continued to be subjected to that heavenly sight anymore.

When I walked out, there was a determination in my steps, and I even used several spells to find my target easily. Soon, I was standing a shelf away from Helga, and a floating note reached to her. Her eyes widened with shock, but I didn't waste time watching, just walking in determined steps as I reached the storage room I described in the note, casting several wards in succession while waiting for her to appear. Anti-detection, silencing, locking, even climate-control. Helga had a worried expression on her face when she stepped in. She opened her mouth to ask, but before the first word could leave her lips, mine was already on hers, devouring her lips hungrily.

[Level Difference of at least 50%! No Experience]

She froze under the assault for a moment, but it didn't take long for her lips to join the dance, her hands starting to caress my muscles, creating a pleasant, soothing sensation. Any other time, I would have let her continue, happy to see her taking initiative, but I was simply too aroused after watching the librarian's unintentional show. A part of my mind acknowledged that it was the effect of her high charisma, only flowing free rather than leveraged for intimidation purposes; and the adrenaline from the fear of getting caught didn't help my state of mind any.

However, regardless of its partially supernatural reasons, I was extremely horny, so I needed to solve it. I grabbed Helga's robe and pulled, her buttons flying around. Before she could even let out a gasp, her blouse and underwear received the same treatment, no different than paper under my great strength. "My clothes," she gasped in shock even as I grabbed her hips, and forced her to turn. She found herself against the wall, her bosom pressing the cold stone walls.

“Don’t worry, I’ll buy you better stuff,” I answered even as I pulled the robe off her, leaving her half-naked, with only her long skirt to cover her legs. A grievous issue that needed to be fixed immediately, I decided, and pulled her skirt up, gathering it around her waist, expecting to reveal her panties, which was why I was pleasantly surprised when I saw they were missing. “Naughty girl,” I said even as I slapped her bottom, her booty rippling sensually, breaking the last hold of rationality over my mind.

“For you,” she gasped even while I was busy removing my pants, which was all the invitation I needed before plunging myself into her depths, her strained cry of pleasure mixing with my groan of appreciation, and I started slamming into her mercilessly. “It hurts,” she managed to gasp between her cries, warning me to go slower. However, I was caught in a daze, and knew that slowing down was not an option for me. Luckily, I had other options. I flared my mana, not bothering to be conservative as I flooded her body with biomancy-based healing energies, deadening her sense of pain while curing the damage my merciless assault was creating. An extremely wasteful approach, but not without its benefits. And I had mana to spare.

[-50 Mana]

“Better?” I asked even as I sped my assault even further, the sound of flesh hitting flesh reaching a deafening point.

“Are you using-” she started, but interrupted by a moan when I started mauling her tits mercilessly. “Are you using your healing magic to deaden the impact? How?” she managed to slur, showing a great display of willpower.

“It’s not that difficult,” I answered, deciding to indulge her in a sudden hint of amusement. I was impressed that she was still able to think about the intricacies of magic while being stuffed mercilessly. And maybe focusing on a different thing would help me to combat the sense of arousal I was feeling, which was rather scary. “Actually, I’m basing the flow on one of your theories for arcana, but changing the energy flows...” I started, and launched a detailed explanation of theory even as I continued to drill her mercilessly.

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 16%]

The notification managed to surprise me, because it only appeared after I started explaining to her about magic. Another clue, I realized, though it didn’t match the previous time. Then, I wasn’t helping her with magical theory...

But that time, I had just finished helping her level up! “It’s so simple,” I murmured in shock.



“What’s so simple?” she answered, or more accurately, she managed to slur certain parts of that sentence while I managed to piece together the rest. Her pleasure had risen to a point to prevent her from speaking coherently.

“Just reached an epiphany, give me a moment,” I answered, punctuating my sentence with a spank. She just moaned in lieu of an answer, leaving me free to focus my thoughts while I pumped her towards an orgasm. I realized that the companion process was about proving myself to them based on their perception, though as usual, I needed to seal it with a sexual process. It was pure physical domination for Aviada, and exemplar magical theory for Helga. Also, I couldn’t discount the fact that I saved Aviada from her fiancée, and helped Helga to level up, therefore removing their biggest problems. Maybe it was a combination of both. I needed to help them, and impress them... It certainly explained why I hadn’t received anything for Marianne despite the time we spent together.

With the next target of experimentation selected, I turned my attention to Helga, who was showing the signs of an impending explosive orgasm. I grabbed her hair, pulling her into a searing kiss, which triggered her orgasm immediately. I didn’t delay it, because she deserved a reward. Not only was she very helpful to get rid of the effects I had been suffering under, but she also unknowingly allowed me to mostly solve the issue of the companion process.

I pulled out of her, and she collapsed on the floor, her trembling legs unable to hold her weight. She was barely able to twist so that she was resting with her back against the wall, trying to control her trembles. As another part of her reward, I gave her a minute to calm down before ordering her to open her mouth. She did so immediately, and I invaded her throat, no less merciless than my earlier invasion. I let the healing magic fill her body once more. However, even as I invaded her I was explaining the flow of magic and theory behind it with great detail, amused by her struggle to decide what to focus on, the pleasure she was feeling, or the intellectual opportunity in front of her.

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 19%]

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 22%]

[+3 Arcana]

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 25% - First Stage Completed +5000 Exp]

When the first stage was completed, her eyes widened with shock. After Aviada, I had a good idea of what she had just experienced. “Did you just receive an achievement?” I asked smugly,

and her shock increased even further. I pulled out for a moment, letting her speak.

“How?” she murmured.

“It’s a dangerous secret,” I said even as I filled her mouth once more. “I’m trusting you with it, and soon, I’ll explain it, but don’t even mention it to anyone else,” I warned her, and she managed to nod despite her busy mouth. I wasn’t worried about it. Her look of fanaticism was hard to fake, not to mention I had the system’s approval about her increasing loyalty. With that aspect shelved satisfactorily, I continued ramming her throat until I filled her mouth with my seed, which she swallowed with great fervor.

I decided to sit down next to her, letting her rest against my chest in a rare moment of pure intimacy. She sighed in satisfaction. “By the way, rest well tonight. Tomorrow morning, we’re going on an expedition outside to increase your leveling speed further. Let’s see whether we can let you gain two levels in a week.”

Someone else would have claimed that I was mad for even daring to go out for hunting with less than a full regiment, not to mention my claim that I could help her level up with a speed that would rival a bonafide hero. It was proof of the impression I had on her when she, rather than arguing, just nodded with a smile and climbed on my lap, slowly riding me toward the climax. We stayed in the room for almost two hours, our bodies melding together in a variety of positions, mixing tender and fast, managing to squeeze several high-level theory discussions to the mix.

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 45%]

[-356 Mana]

In the end, even with the generous application of healing energy, Helga was completely spent. Naturally, she lacked Aviada’s stamina, and magic was an imperfect replacement. Still, a huge smile was on her lips as she stumbled to her room, naked under her robe. I followed her until she reached her room of course, not wanting her to meet with a dangerous situation in her distracted state. Only when she was securely in her room did I walk away, but not to my room.

I wanted to receive my reward for helping Marianne in the library...

-----

[Level: 13 Experience: 90800 / 91000]

Strength: 17 Charisma: 19

Precision: 12 Perception: 13

Agility: 14 Manipulation: 17

Speed: 12 Intelligence: 16

Endurance: 13 Wisdom: 18

HP: 884 / 884 Mana: 274 / 1079 ]

#### SKILLS

[Master Melee [68/100]

Expert Arcana [75/75]

Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Advanced Biomancy [50/50]

Basic Speech [25/25] ]

## Chapter Twenty-Eight

One of the advantages of my earlier maid disguise was the great knowledge it provided me about the surroundings of the noble quarters, including where maids and other servants would be around at this time. With that knowledge, I didn't even bother to disguise myself, and just used a simple spell that allowed me to meld into the shadows, avoiding the casual attention of the visitors. With that, it didn't take long for me to arrive at Marianne's door. Unlocking it was trivial with my great magical abilities, and soon, I stepped inside, unnoticed by the occupants.

The occupants were busy with rather salacious activities if their heated moans were any indicator. And a smile appeared on my face as I registered the familiarity of their voices. One of them was naturally Marianne, which was to be expected. It was the identity of the other one that put a smile on my face, Cornelia. It had been a while since I had come across her. It was perfect timing, as I was not afraid of her anymore with my recent leveling. Just a couple hundred points would push me to the next level, and I was very enthusiastic about testing the limits of the situation.

Their voices -more moans and cries- were coming from the bedroom, so I decided to take a peek. A real one, not though the mirror trick I used against the head librarian. With a deep breath, I started wrapping the magic around myself, and soon, an advanced version of the shadow cloak was around me, good enough to hide me from the eyes of two distracted mages as long as I stuck to the corners of the room. Still, I was glad that I spent an hour meditating before visiting here, allowing me to recover a decent chunk of my mana. I was strong enough to defend myself if I revealed myself with a sudden mistake.

I carefully opened the door, ready to slam a shield to prevent a surprise attack, but the sight I met told me that it was not a concern. Cornelia and Marianne were on the bed, Marianne on all fours, and Cornelia behind her, both of them facing the other way, which made my infiltration trivially easy. I slid to a corner, under the shadow of a wardrobe, and started watching the amazing show. The situation was highly different than the previous time. For once, Cornelia had a strap-on tied around her waist, ramming against Marianne's tight hole, spanking Marianne's bottom repeatedly. Her attitude was closer to the time I had watched her torturing Helga than her usual demeanor with Marianne. She was clearly enjoying the opportunity to push forward, unaware that the road she was taking was created by the others.

However, Marianne's expression was even more interesting. She was enjoying the situation, but it was a muted enjoyment, nothing even close to the mind-blowing joy she had been enjoying under my attention. I smirked proudly, happy with the impact I had created. Then, I received a

very surprising notification.

[+500 Experience]

Level UP!

[Select one of the following skills: Basic Fire, Basic Elemental, Basic Meditation]

I wasn't surprised by the new level, or the fact that I gained experience. No, I was shocked, because there was no penalty to my experience gain. I was surprised, as I wasn't expecting Cornelia to be an even higher level than me. Still, I wasn't afraid, as no matter what, as long as she wasn't above level twenty -which she obviously wasn't- I didn't have anything to worry about. The overwhelming advantage of my stats combined with my varied skill set made sure that at worst, I could retreat easily. More likely, I could easily defeat her before she could cast a high-level spell. Her flame specialization was dangerous, but slow to implement.

With that done, I focused on my new level, and after a brief consideration, picked basic elemental skill. Flame specialization offered higher damage, but specialization worked much better for my circumstances. And meditation was rather redundant, as thanks to my melee abilities, my mana expenditure was much lower compared to other mages, and my mana pool likely triple the size of anyone on the same level. High stats across the board was really useful.

With that decided, I was about to show myself when I noticed a conspicuous bundle of letters among Cornelia's discarded clothes. The same bundle of letters I had seen her keep in the magically-sealed safe in her room during my visit. I smirked. Since she was kind enough to bare her secrets in such an obvious place, who I was to reject the opportunity. Telekinesis saw that they floated to my hand, and I started reading the letters.

And to multitask, I conjured a little flame between my fingers, making it dance, soon joined by a piece of earth and a droplet of water, all wrapped with a layer of magically-charged air. It was a ludicrous display of magic that should have been impossible for anyone with just a basic skill, but a combination of my arcana ability, my stats, and the theory discussions I had with Helga, allowed me to show a capability quite a bit above expected. Even better, since I was doing it next to Cornelia -a higher-level mage that would doubtlessly attack me if noticed- it was showing extremely rapid improvement. Just ten minutes later, my skill was already full, not to mention the experience gain from watching two beauties cutting loose.

[+2000 Experience]

[+25 Elemental]

[-14 Mana]

Meanwhile, I managed to skim through the bundle of letters, and learned quite a few interesting details. They were all in cipher, but against my wisdom and intelligence, it didn't survive long, especially since she had made the mistake of basing it to an obscure arcana pattern. The first nugget of interest was the fact that Cornelia apparently hit the level cap, which she was desperately trying to find a solution to, but her searches, as expected, turned up no result. Such a thing was either impossible, or it was possible but hidden as the most important secret of an organization, effectively impossible to discover. Of course, Cornelia was aware of it as well, therefore, her real focus was to find a way to allow her to continue earning achievements despite her level cap, or failing that, trying to find clues about items and artifacts that might boost her abilities. She was simply desperate to increase her personal power.

The reason for her desperation was clarified by the other half of the letters. Thanks to her earlier fight with her caretaker, I had already known about the power struggle in her House, but I hadn't expected it to be too serious. It was a series of correspondence with a loyal spy back at House Antony, each letter grimmer than the last, informing Cornelia about her allies disappearing or pulling their support. She still had considerable support, but the trend was worrying. Apparently, her uncle was playing for keeps.

It wasn't hard to guess that her uncle was playing it safe mostly because of Cornelia's stellar increase, afraid of making a mortal enemy, instead of trying to lock her into a junior position so that even when she took the reigns of the house, she would be dependent to him. But if he had known about her hitting the level cap before even reaching level twenty...

Of course, while it was bad news for Cornelia, the same couldn't be said from my perspective. On the contrary, her vulnerable position gave me the opportunity to move in, and support her. Companion process was a long shot, but even without that, I was powerful enough to easily rival her, and unlike her, I was yet to reach my prime. And more importantly, she had no idea about how strong I could be.

I could have taken no action, but interrupting seemed a better idea considering the rest of my plan. I first established a ward that would keep anyone from feeling the magical surges unless the spells were overcharged. The establishment of such a ward was impossible to hide from people inside it, so I didn't even bother, and started clapping the moment they jumped in panic, searching for the intruder.

It didn't take long for them to find me since I also canceled the shadow cloak. "Gaius?!" Marianne managed to murmur even as she was frozen in shock once more. She really needed

to learn how to handle shock better.

Cornelia, on the other hand, reacted much more predictably even as she sent a shocked glance at Marianne for recognizing the intruder. Her response came in the form of an impressively hot firebolt, her sweaty body's shine gaining an ethereal quality under the sudden flash of redness. Combined with her crimson hair, she looked like a goddess of war.

Therefore, it was amusing to see her confident expression crumble when I waved my hand, and a small sheet of water appeared on the path of the firebolt, extinguishing it easily, partly because of the elemental mismatch, and partly because I subtly reinforced it with an arcana matrix. It was unnecessarily expensive, spending twenty mana where I could have just used four, but the sudden turn was enough to make Cornelia freeze, which was what I needed. From her perspective, I was a strong water expert, a rather dangerous match against her, especially in closed space and a bath next door giving me unlimited material. "Who are you?" Cornelia asked as she raised her arms defensively, flames burning in her palms. And thanks to her lack of clothes, and earlier sexual activities, I was awarded with a chunk of bonus experience.

[-20 Mana]

[+1000 Experience]

I took a step forward, using my subterfuge skill to seem utterly relaxed and confident even though a defensive spell was ready to flicker into existence instantly. "I'm Gaius, as Marianne kindly informed you," I said smugly as I closed in the distance. "But you might know me as the mule," I added, watching as a completely different shock invading her face. Before she could say anything, I cut in. "I know, how can it be, weren't you supposed to be an idiot, and other such nonsense. The easiest explanation is that everything you know about me is a lie, and I have my own objectives that needed to fulfill by playing along, and now that those are complete, I'm free to act. How's that for a summary?"

"Very clear," Cornelia managed to answer, managing to recover a semblance of control during my explanation. But that clarity reminded her of a very important detail. She was still completely naked, and a glistening strapon was tied to her waist. She pulled the covers on herself, ignoring Marianne's circumstances as she still tried to control her shock. "So, why are you here?"

"Well, I was here to visit Marianne, to ask payment for my earlier assistance," I said bluntly, not hesitating for a second before implicating Marianne. Marianne's gaze danced between Cornelia and me helplessly, but found only amusement at mine, and anger at Cornelia's. No

doubt that Cornelia was thinking Marianne betrayed her, which was perfect for my needs, allowing me to interject myself between them as Marianne's protector. "But since I had learned about your circumstances, I decided to offer my help."

"Marianne-" Cornelia exclaimed, her anger flaring as she came to the wrong conclusion, her flaming hands turning to her bedmate, but once again, I was prepared, and a column of water flew from the bathroom, covering both while also turning the bed into a soaked mess -which I could use for follow-up spells.

"Stop, it wasn't her," I explained even as Marianne jumped off the bed, fear in her eyes as she dashed towards me, ignoring her nakedness, or the way her generous bosom tumbled with each hurried step. She hid behind me, her shivering little to do with her wet state. "You were the one silly enough to bring a full complement of notes of your little rebellion," I countered.

"Impossible, they are coded with a-" she tried to say, but I cut her off by creating a floating sample of the exact diagram that she used to hide her letters.

"Yeah, it took me a minute to solve the cipher. You might think about finding a better one," I said, reinforcing my image even further. I took a step forward, quite happy to see that Cornelia, the flaming witch that everyone was afraid of, slid back, reflexively pulling the cover up like a little child trying to hide from the big bag monster. It would be lying to say I didn't find her fear exhilarating.

However, rather than continuing to walk, I pulled the chair closer and -just to rub salt into the wound- wrapped my arm around Marianne's waist, pulling her on my lap. She whimpered, but her arm still wrapped around my torso tightly for assurance. After seeing Cornelia's anger, she subconsciously shifted sides already. I just needed to reinforce it. From the sudden tightening on her face, I could see that Cornelia realized that she fucked up and sent an apologizing glance at Marianne, which she ignored in favor of snuggling into my chest. The disappointment was clear on Cornelia's face, not to mention jealousy as she watched her girlfriend snuggle in my lap despite her nakedness.

[+500 Experience]

"Your concern about my choice of cipher is noted," Cornelia murmured, trying to seem confident and regal, but it was a hard image to pull off when she was still drenched after my latest assault, and wrapped with an equally drenched bed cover. "However, I'm sure it's not the only comment you have after reading my most important secrets."



“Of course not,” I said even as I moved my hand, grabbing Marianne’s breast. She didn’t like my brazen act of molesting her girlfriend without paying even the slightest concern for her opinion, but other than a flicker of flame between her fingers, she managed to control her anger. “I was actually thinking about helping you?”

[+500 Experience]

“Why would you do that?” she said dismissively. “You have read everything. I have no hope of victory against my uncle, and you can get an easy reward by just writing a letter.” She let out a dismissive chuckle as she pulled the sheet tighter. “It’s obvious that I can’t stop you.”

I had to admit, for someone thinking that her fate was in tethers, she was surprisingly resilient, far better than I would have given her credit for. That impression, more than anything, made me change my plans for her ultimate fate, though I was still going to tame her before elevating her. “Well, that’s true, but you need to ask yourself. What would I gain if I brought the news to your uncle? A few thousand gold, a minor title, or a magical weapon if he was feeling extremely generous.” Her expression changed as I dismissed the possibility of those rewards easily, as they were enough that even most of her noble peers wouldn’t dare to turn their nose at them, especially if they could gain it with little effort. Even just the positive impression from a ruling lord would be enough for them to sell Cornelia out. But I had other plans.

“And what do you expect me to give you?” she said coldly.

“That can be discussed later,” I said with a dismissive wave even though my other hand had long disappeared between Marianne’s legs, caressing her wet folds. “I don’t expect you to commit to anything before I prove my ability to deliver.”

[+1000 Experience]

“And what can you deliver?” she countered, trying to sound dismissive to get a semblance of control, but it was impossible for her to hide the sudden bloom of hope underneath.

I smirked even as I continued to finger Marianne, who failed to keep her moans under control. Deep, throaty moans that Cornelia failed to earn despite her best efforts just minutes ago. “I think I should keep that part as a surprise for now,” I said even as I subtly cast a spell. It was a simple one that opened my zipper and pulled down my pants, and Marianne’s moans intensified when she felt the presence of my shaft trapped under her naked butt. “However, I can give you a hint. I could have easily taken control of my family and relaxed as the ruling lord with my power, but I have spent the last several years undercover in the biggest library of the world,” I

said, once again ignoring the fact that the library's supposed the second-largest status according to the system. "Now, imagine what I might have, and why I'm confident enough to help you."

"Do you have-" Cornelia started, only to be silenced when I raised my hand in warning.

"We will discuss it later," I said, then shifted my hands to Marianne's bottom, and lifted her up. Then, without a warning, I pulled her down, taking her virginity without a warning.

[+3000 Experience]

[Achievement: Daring Defilement. Brazenly snatch the most valuable treasure of a noble lady in front of her significant other with a higher level. +2000 Experience, +5 Charisma]

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 1%]

I smirked, enjoying the sudden silence that filled the room, both girls shocked by my action. Cornelia's eyes were burning with obvious anger, but the rewards I dangled in front of her was just good enough to prevent her from acting. Marianne was just bad at managing surprises, so she simply followed my lead and started grinding her hips despite her dazed expression. Marianne's companion process was a nice surprise, probably triggered by Cornelia's sudden betrayal and my protection, and the impression further solidified by my decisive victory.

Just to drive the situation even further, I unleashed the full impact of my charisma to the surface, but geared toward subtle intimidation. Thanks to the addition of my last achievement, my charisma had reached a devastating level, maybe even to a point of matching the display the head librarian had displayed.

As a result, Cornelia stiffened, her anger replaced with a healthy dose of fear instead. "I better go," she murmured and quickly dressed, trying not to look at her freshly-spoiled ex-girlfriend and the rather impressive shaft that was in the process of ruining her, but it was hard for her to avoid it when my charisma worked like a magnet, pulling her gaze to the epicenter.

"Sure, I'll visit you in your room tomorrow evening, and we can talk in detail," I said casually, like invading her living space was nothing more than a trivial chore. Just as she was about to leave, I added one parting shot, just to drive the fact that I conquered her girlfriend in her presence. After all, it was good to finally take revenge for her almost killing me.

"Also, feel free to join us whenever you feel lonely. I'm sure Marianne wouldn't mind your presence."

-----  
[Level: 14 Experience: 101300 / 105000

Strength: 17 Charisma: 24

Precision: 12 Perception: 13

Agility: 14 Manipulation: 17

Speed: 12 Intelligence: 16

Endurance: 13 Wisdom: 18

HP: 952 / 952 Mana: 864 / 1232 ]

#### SKILLS

[Master Melee [68/100]

Expert Arcana [75/75]

Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Advanced Biomancy [50/50]

Basic Speech [25/25]

Basic Elemental [25/25] ]

## Chapter Twenty-Nine

Watching the plethora of emotions dancing across Marianne's face as Cornelia left was amusing, though her dazed expression was understandable. After all, just a few minutes ago, she had been walked in on during a very intimate moment, the one that walked in was the one she was cheating on her girlfriend with, then a fight broke out where her famously-intimidating girlfriend had lost with her most important secrets revealed, Marianne got blamed with almost deadly consequences so threatening that she had to seek sanctuary with the intruder, then said intruder stole her virginity without a warning...

Truly, her confusion was understandable, so I decided to take it a bit slow at first. I pulled out of her. She stood dazedly until I slowly led her to the fluffy carpet soft enough to substitute for a bed -as her bed was ruined due to the water attack from earlier- and directed her to lay on her back, her deliciously plump body present for my attention. I hovered above her, an unusually gentle smile on my lips as my shaft probed her entrance once more. "Don't worry, you're mine from now on, and I protect what's mine," I whispered.

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 2%]

[+200 Experience] 50% Penalty!

I watched as my words took the intended effect, which wasn't entirely shocking. From the beginning, it was obvious that Marianne was more of a follower than a leader, with a clear role in her relationship with Cornelia. Watching her leave defeated without even daring to retaliate even when she watched Marianne's most precious location being taken left its impact on her. Combined with the endless joy our physical relationship had provided her, it wasn't entirely shocking that she started to latch onto me. And I had every intention of leveraging the shift in attitude.

"Tell me what you want," I whispered into her ear with the intimacy of a lover even as my shaft pressed against her entrance, but didn't push forward. The blush that spread across her face was utterly delicious, but she was too shy to actually push forward, so I decided to give her a taste. I pushed forward, just enough for the crown to disappear in her entrance, which made her shiver in anticipation, which was quickly replaced with disappointment. "I can't help you if you don't tell me what you want," I whispered once more, following my words with a gentle kiss on her lips.

She was even more dazed when I pulled back from the kiss, her arms wrapping around my back to pull me back into the kiss. I let her succeed, restarting our slow but delicious kiss, but when

she tried to push her hips forward, I was careful to pull back. I wanted her verbal admission before the next step.

She whimpered.

“Come on Marianne,” I whispered even as I caressed her hair with surprising gentleness. “We both know what you want. You just need to admit it.” She was still silent. “Your shyness is the only thing that’s between you and an endless wave of pleasure.”

My little game lasted several minutes, where I caressed, kissed, and teased her until her arousal finally reached the point of overpowering her fear and shyness. “I want you ... inside me,” she murmured, her voice fading into nothingness.

“Sorry, couldn’t hear you,” I said with a wide smile, though I made sure to place a fleeting kiss on her lips to soften the impact. “Can you repeat that louder?”

This time, my words managed to awaken a reaction in Marianne. “I want you inside me, you bastard,” she growled with a shocking display of passion. Before I could do anything, her legs wrapped around my waist, and using her grip as leverage, she pushed my shaft far into her depths .

[+500 Experience] 50% Penalty!

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 3%]

Amused by her sudden initiative, I was preparing to let her lead our horizontal dance, but the fire behind her eyes sputtered and died just as easily as it arrived, leaving only her shyness behind. A pity, I thought even as I pushed forward, filling her insides deeply, enough to make her yelp in shock. It was becoming exceedingly clear that Marianne was going to be a very passive lover for the near future and an overnight improvement was an impossibility, so I decided to enjoy the experience instead. I could always teach her to be more proactive in the future.

With that thought in mind, I leaned forward and captured her lips once more, but this time, the effect was much stronger because my hips were moving back and forth, filling her insides repeatedly. Seeing her enjoyment, I waited a bit for her to get used to the level of pleasure before adding my hands into the mix, and not even a few minutes later, she was shuddering under a stiff orgasm.

[+750 Experience] 50% Penalty!

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 5%]

I pulled out as the orgasm hit her, because I could see that after all the shocks, exhaustion was catching up with her. Of course, I had no intention of suffering from a full mast all night. Luckily, her amazing body gave me a few options. I placed my shaft between her impressive breasts, then started moving back and forth with the full intention of enjoying her jugs.

Marianne tried to avoid my gaze, but I had no intention of allowing that. I wanted her to fully process what was going on. "Keep your eyes on me, sweetie," I said, the order behind my words clear despite my soft tone.

"It's ... shameful," Marianne murmured, still keeping her eyes away. I flicked one of her nipples warningly, and with a pained gasp, her eyes met mine instantly.

"Really, you think that this is more shameful than the time I took your anal virginity during a massage, or what happened mere minutes ago?" I said as I picked up speed, enjoying her growing blush and shock as much as I enjoyed the way her hefty bosom wrapped around my shaft, giving me an entirely new pleasure, especially when I managed to modify a simple water spell into a lubricant, leveraging my new elemental abilities to a maximum.

"Um, no," she murmured resignedly, her blush thickening to the point of drowning her, but underneath, her joy and desire were clear. Despite what was on the surface, she was one kinky woman.

"Good," I murmured as I picked up speed, not resisting the rise of pleasure. Soon, I was ready to explode. "Open your mouth, and try not to spill any!" I said.

"Why?" she murmured, but she suddenly understood my aim when the crown pressed against her lips. "No-" she tried to say, but I just used it as an opportunity to slide into her mouth, and as a nice bonus, preventing her argument.

"Don't forget to swallow it all," I said even as I started filling her mouth with my seed, watching an expression of outrage spread on her face. It was amusing to see her anger triggered, even though it didn't survive when I glanced at her with an amusement that was backed with the full might of my charisma. Her outrage evaporated in a second, leaving an obedient toy doing her best to gather my seed in her mouth -and failing rather spectacularly. And since she was failing, I pulled back and used the rest of the burst to cover her breasts. In a sense, it was yet another sign of my ownership.

[+500 Experience] 50% Penalty!

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 6%]

“I’m sorry,” she murmured cutely, so much so that a chuckle escaped my lips despite my best efforts to look stern. The sight of a noble lady, her lips stained with my cum, apologizing for failing to swallow all of it was just too much. It was shocking just how far I came in just a few days.

“Don’t worry about it,” I said as I laid down next to her on the floor, enjoying the comfort of the fluffy carpet. It was much better than my bed! Luckily, after today, I had a better bed to sleep in. I gently pulled her to my chest, allowing her to listen to my heartbeat while I caressed her shoulder. And it wasn’t just to strengthen my hold over her. I actually enjoyed sharing the moment of intimacy with her.

Soon, Marianne’s breathing slowed down, her eyelids getting too heavy for her to keep them open. Soon, she was sleeping against my chest. I could have left her there, but I didn’t have anything else to do until morning, and her sexy bosom was definitely the superior blanket. With that, I closed my eyes, drifting off to sleep...

-----

[+250 Experience] 50% Penalty!

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 8%]

It was the notification that forced me out of my comfortable sleep, though it didn’t take long to notice the reason. I could feel the surprising -and very welcome- sensation of a pair of lips wrapped around my shaft, moving in a determined -and a bit mechanical- pace. The identity of my morning wake up service provider was obvious, but even then, I was still surprised to see Marianne leaning forward between my legs, her dark blonde hair sprawled forward to block the view of her face. A rare display of initiative from her, and an extremely welcome one.

She was too focused on her task to pay attention to me, and I was sufficiently entertained by her courage, so I let it continue. Her lips danced up and down over my shaft, determined to push me into a climax. To reward her initiative -and sate my curiosity about just how far she would push without any external source- I decided to continue acting like I was asleep, and I even decided not to fight the sensation when it was time to explode.

The next few minutes passed while her head danced up and down, focusing exclusively on the upper side, lacking the experience or courage to take it deeper into her throat. She still had too much to learn. She occasionally licked the side or wrapped her tongue around my girth,

showing an instinct for experimentation that she hadn't displayed during our previous encounters. Maybe thinking that she was lacking observers allowed her to act free from her supposed role, or maybe last night's activities finally managed to break through her shell.

Regardless of the reason, I was happy with the service I was receiving, so I continued to feign sleep whenever she raised her head letting her work in comfortably. A simple illusion spell showed my eyelids as closed, allowing me to watch her every move, even when she turned to face me. And it proved useful when she decided to have a change of pace and brought her impressive tits into the deal, their warm caress enveloping the bottom of my shaft, while her lips still continued to work on the top.

Minutes passed while she worked without breaking her determination, until she got her reward, my seed started to fill her mouth. Once again, she failed to swallow it all, the rest spilling on her breasts, creating a rather interesting view in the process.

[+500 Experience] 50% Penalty!

I started clapping softly, and she jerked back, her stained lips stiffening in shock. Shame invaded her face soon after. "Come on, sweetie, you don't have anything to be ashamed of, it was an amazing show," I said as I righted myself, and presented my hand to her.

"It was?" she murmured, once again struggling to process the sudden change of her circumstances.

Instead of just nodding, I leaned forward to gently kiss her cheek before murmuring another compliment. Only then, I stood up, displaying my naked glory to her eyes, which she watched fascinatingly. Admittedly, it was a nice view. "I need to leave, as I have a full schedule of tasks to complete today," I said, watching her expression suddenly fall. "But I have just enough time for a shower," I added as I presented my hand to her, which she grabbed immediately with a giggle. I gently pulled her up before starting to walk toward the bathroom, still holding her hand. She stayed close enough that our bodies were rubbing together every step we took. I was glad for the unforced familiarity she was displaying, though it reinforced the fact that the companion process was a result of the increased intimacy.

I held the bathroom door open, gesturing for her to step inside in an exaggerated manner, like I was a guard greeting a princess to a high-class ball. "Please go ahead, princess," I said, replicating the mannerism of an ideal guard perfectly. Subterfuge had surprisingly many fun applications as well. She giggled cutely, which was replaced by a needy moan when I used the opportunity to change mannerism and slapped her bottom suggestively. "A traitor in my palace



lusting after my virtue!" she gasped in similarly exaggerated acting, though much less realistic, and dashed forward.

"Your fate is inevitable, princess," I answered, following her. I caught her just in front of the tub, which, unfortunately, was still empty. Luckily, my mana was already full from the amazing rest I had, and I was looking for an opportunity to test my extended elemental capabilities. I waved my hand, and a huge wave of water was pulled from the reservoir, its cost barely in the double digits. A flash of fire natured mana ensured the water was sufficiently warm, and I stepped into the water. "Since you have been captured by the rebels, it's your role to serve me in my bath," I said as I turned my back to her.

"As my new lord commands," she answered, but unlike the last time, her acting was much more sincere.

[+100 Experience] 50% Penalty!

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 12%]

Apparently, it managed to trigger a real sentiment from her. And the system approved. A surprising but very welcome development. I closed my eyes, enjoying the way her hands caressed my body with surprising gentleness. She managed to learn some tricks after all the massages she had received. I kept my eyes closed as her soapy hands danced over my back, removing knots and dirt in an equal manner. After finishing my back, she started washing my hair, her service already surpassing the little roleplay we had, and moving into a servant's role.

[+200 Experience] 50% Penalty!

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 14%]

I said nothing, happy with the development. Who would have turned down a willing high-born maid, especially one so sexy? "It's done, my lord," she murmured obediently after finishing my back.

"Good, now, come wash my front," I said. She tried to reach in from the outside, but I gestured for her to step into the water with me. She was rather excited as she stepped in the water, barely able to maintain her fake demure expression under the rush of excitement. She tried to stay away, but I grabbed her hips and pulled her down, skewering her deeply, earning a gasp in return. She continued to wash my front while her hips twisted on my lap, filling my heart with desire.

She took her time washing my front, an enjoyable feeling from my end as well. Therefore, it was understandable that all too late I realized I was about to be late for my meeting. I could have still caught them if I stopped at that moment and rushed to the meeting spot, but that was an impossible decision to make when I was buried deep in Marianne, and enjoying her treatment. Additionally, leaving her like that would have been a thoughtless move.

However, I didn't have time to waste. "I'm about to be late for my meeting," I informed her.

"Okay," she murmured, but her expression fell immediately. That expression survived only for a moment, because the next one, after I wrapped my arms around her waist and stood up, keeping her impaled on my shaft. It was surprisingly difficult to balance myself in a slippery tub with a flailing girl on my lap, but agility was useful in many situations other than direct combat. I stepped out and walked toward the towels, each step pushing my shaft deeper into her. A little biomancy trick to enhance her pleasure, and when I arrived next to towels, she was already shuddering under a wave of orgasm, giving me the perfect opportunity to leave her without being too late.

[+500 Experience] 50% Penalty!

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 15%]

Of course, when she pressed her hands against the walls to balance herself on her trembling legs, her plump bottom was facing toward me, hitting me with a fresh temptation. Another biomancy trick made sure that her backdoor was lubricated and cleaned. A push later, I was in her tight grip, waves of pleasure filling both of us. "Gaius!" she moaned, not bothering to keep her voice down.

A slap making her skin ripple was her answer. And she must have liked the answer, because she replied with an even louder moan, enough to suppress the deafening sound of flesh hitting flesh. She was squeezed between the wall and my merciless assault, moaning louder with each push, helpless to resist against my merciless assault. The situation lasted several minutes longer than I had been planning for, but once gripped by Marianne's tight hold, I found it hard to leave just because Aviada and Helga might be annoyed a bit. They were big girls, they could handle waiting a few minutes without a major crisis.

The cry that escaped from her lips mixed with my grunt as I released myself into her, triggering another climax from her as well, which fortunately triggered another power-up from my end, which had been a nice surprise. I had just leveled up last night, and since I had been too busy I hadn't tracked the experience benefits of stealing Marianne in front of Cornelia.

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 16%]

[+750 Experience] 50% Penalty!

Level UP!

[Select one of the following skills: Expert Biomancy, Advanced Elemental, Basic Meditation]

Biomancy was tempting, but I was going for an expedition, and additional magical damage wouldn't have been amiss. And the pure damage potential of elemental was simply leagues above both biomancy and arcana, especially considering the area-effect abilities.

With the skill selection complete, I carried Marianne to her bed in a bridal hold, gently tucking her into bed. She had just woken up, but the chain orgasms she suffered worked quite well to exhaust her despite that. I placed a gentle kiss on her lips.

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 18%]

A three-point increase for a gentle kiss was a nice surprise, I decided as I quickly dressed. I still needed to meet with Aviada and Helga, after all...

-----

[Level: 15 Experience: 105050 / 120000

Strength: 17 Charisma: 24

Precision: 12 Perception: 13

Agility: 14 Manipulation: 17

Speed: 12 Intelligence: 16

Endurance: 13 Wisdom: 18

HP: 1020 / 1020 Mana: 1264 / 1320 ]

SKILLS

Master Melee [68/100]

Expert Arcana [75/75]

Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Advanced Biomancy [50/50]

Advanced Elemental [25/50]

Basic Speech [25/25]

# Chapter Thirty

After finishing my preparations, including packing the food, dropping in to my secret stash to take my weapons, and preparing a fake medical notice for the library to explain my extended absence took several minutes, sneaking out of the school bounds while avoiding the guards consumed another few. After that, I dashed away at a pace that would have exhausted anyone without my impressive physical capabilities.

At first, the road was crowded, intersecting with many different patrols, and several other groups of students and the occasional lone wolf, all geared to the brim, most with at least one magical item strong enough for me to pick up from a distance. Surely, it was nice to be rich. I doubted my family could have afforded to gear me with a comparable item even if it wasn't for my supposed disabled status.

But several minutes later, something happened that distracted me from the situation at hand immediately. I stepped out of the range of the ancient wards and defensive enchantments that covered the school.

It was a weird sensation to be deprived of them completely, I realized, a nervous smile appearing on my face despite my best efforts. I lived under those impressive wards since my magical awareness first developed. Even the special training forests I trained in were under those wards, just partially deactivated to give students space to train. But they were ever present still, ready to snap in place if real danger arose.

For a while, I stood still, feeling my surroundings without the imposing presence of the wards, trying to understand the difference. Magic was much easier to detect for one, to a point that most of the tricks that I pulled back in the school would have been impossible to achieve outside with my limited capabilities.

With a sigh, I continued running at the same grueling pace, but kept one of my hands close to my sword at all times. The roads weren't without protection, but it was markedly different from the ancient wards, at best enough to delay a moderately strong attacker for a minute before collapsing.

It was also the reason why the occasional group of travelers looked at me with a mixture of shock and fascination. They all traveled in crowded groups, even occasional large caravans with crowded guard regiments. The fact that I was willing to travel alone was a statement itself just as much as my fresh look despite my aggressive pace of movement, which implied significant stats. Luckily, we were close to Silver Spires, so it wasn't noteworthy enough to raise an alarm.

After all, there were a lot of students over level ten in Silver Spires.

Several more minutes later I started to slow down, finally nearing the hidden glade I had assigned as a meeting location for both Aviada and Helga. I hadn't seen the location before, of course, as my previous condition wasn't exactly conducive for free exploration, but posing as a servant after I first discovered my powers was helpful in more ways than one, allowing me to pick up a lot of minor secrets. The location of the glade, where a few students were using as a semi-secret gathering location whenever they had a mission, was one of those secrets.

I was greeted by angry shouts as I got closer, and was about to rush forward until I could discern the lack of urgency behind them, and more importantly, realized that those belonged only to Aviada and Helga. With a sigh, I slowed down, trying to understand the reason for their argument before interjecting.

"... at least I'm not a meathead that believes that waving a metal club around is the solution for every problem," I heard Helga yelling in anger.

"Yeah, and living your life surrounded by dusty tomes is any better," came Aviada's reply just as quick.

"Of course it is, though it's not surprising in a barbarian's failing to notice that everything in our society works thanks to the magicians and their discoveries."

I couldn't help but sigh again when I realized the cause of the argument. Yes, the only reason I arranged them to arrive before I did was to see how they reacted to each other's presence without my involvement -though due to Marianne distracting me, I was even later than I had first planned- but finding them in a childish fight about the validity of their selected discipline was a bit surprising. At least, it wasn't as bad as it could have been.

I thought about interjecting myself into the situation, but then decided to check the situation first from an arcane mirror. They were standing far away from each other, their body language signifying no immediate breakout of action, so I decided to stand back and watch them, curious about how things would develop. Their childish bickering about the merits of their own specialization lasted for several more minutes until it ultimately faded into listless jabs.

I was preparing to walk toward them when Helga stage-whispered. "... at least I don't have to dress like a whore to get attention." And just like that, the embers of the argument were inflamed once more.

Aviada laughed in derision even as she dragged her hand over the sides of her body,

accentuating her curves. “Honey, it’s not shameful to tease others about what you have,” she said before grabbing her sword momentarily, her smirk getting a predatory twist, “especially if you can easily prevent people from touching.” I had to admit, Aviada had a point there, as her clothes were tastefully chosen, a tight pair of pants that looked elastic enough to allow a complete range of motion, and a leather top just as tight, but with a few top buttons released. Her armor was limited to her shins and her forearms to protect her extremities against faster creatures without limiting her movements. Her lack of armor was a good choice, because non-magical armor was effectively useless against any creature above class six. And as a bonus, it enhanced her sharp sexiness, which meshed perfectly with her personality.

Helga was no less beautiful in her own softer, curvier way, but in this situation, her modest manner of dressing worked against her. Unlike Aviada, she was wearing a loose set of robes made of pockets and satchels, and as shapely as a potato sack. She had reasons for dressing like that of course, mostly relating to her relative inability to protect herself, and more importantly, her lack of clout to get away if she actually resorted to doing so. Under those circumstances, the less attention she drew to her figure, the better.

Of course, oblivious from her sudden spike of anger, the logical reasoning behind her mode of the dress did little to blunt the impact of Aviada’s words. “Unlike you, I don’t need to impress any wandering eye with my body just to have a chance,” Helga answered slowly despite her rage. “He’s discerning enough to appreciate a timely reveal, unlike whatever pathetic brute you’re trying to string along by pushing your breasts on his face,” Helga answered.

“You wish you had these to push in your little nerdy boy toy’s face,” Aviada countered as she cupped her breasts, once again showing off her boisterous personality. Helga laughed, which was justifiable considering the pair she was hiding underneath her robes. I hid a couple of minutes more, curious how the discussion would develop, but the girls stayed stuck on sniping me, unaware that they were talking about the same person. I shook my head in amusement.

It was going to be interesting once I revealed myself.

“Finally,” shouted both girls at the same time when I stepped into the small hidden glade, both of their faces filled with relief as they stepped toward me with determined steps, only to come to a sudden stop as they realized that they weren’t the only one that was walking forward. “What!” they exclaimed at the same time.

“Hi, girls, sorry to keep you waiting, but I had a last-minute emergency,” I said with a smirk, uncaring of the sudden glares I was receiving. After pushing the situation to this point, I needed to own the situation thoroughly to succeed in my plan of introducing them to each other. “But

it's good to see you getting along well," I added even as I continued to walk.

The girls looked at each other in shock, but it was slowly replaced by the realization, which then left its place for anger. In a moment of a sudden feminine alliance, both girls turned to me, Aviada slowly pulling her sword while Helga raised her hands, glowing brightly. "Do you want to explain?" Aviada spoke calmly, though since she was waving her huge sword threateningly, the effect was somehow different.

"Explain what?" I said with a smile even as I walked toward them, ignoring their sudden fury. It was a tricky situation, but I was just as relaxed inside as I was displaying outside, because I had a plan before inviting them here together, and their reaction was well within my calculations. In the end, neither of them was seduced through my sweet words or lofty promises; they still had no true idea about my identity. Despite that, we were thoroughly acquainted with each other, thanks to my impressive martial abilities in Aviada's case, and my mental alacrity in Helga's case. Though my willingness to help them in extremely dangerous situations didn't hurt my seduction attempts.

I just needed to impress them with those abilities once more.

Initially, I had a very complicated fight choreography to ensure the girls wouldn't be able to bring their full power to the fight, which, at the time of making the plan, was still required to give the impression of effortless domination. However, last night's unexpected gains removed the need for those plans. First of all, I managed to gain two whole levels, with a fresh new branch of magic as a result. Also, I gained five points of charisma, which would be helpful in supporting my arguments. The pure power it would add to my spells was just a bonus.

"You need a lesson," Aviada spat out even as she charged forward, waving her sword swiftly.

I smiled. "You want to spar to warm up before we leave to hunt," I said even as I pulled out my sword, deflecting her attack with a swing that might have been mistaken for a casual move by someone that was inexperienced, but it required impeccable timing to deflect Aviada's superior weapon backed by her deadly strength. Though, it wasn't as strong as it could be, meaning Aviada was just trying to scare me -or just impress me through her seriousness considering her personality- rather than trying to kill me. I took a step forward, far faster than Aviada expected, and slapped her bottom.

[Level Difference of at least 50%! No Experience]

The notification was unfortunate, but on the plus side, it highlighted the absolute difference of



strength between us. But before I could enjoy my suppression, I felt a tickle in the back of my mind, warning me about an oncoming spell. I didn't bother to look at it, just waved my hand to force a thick wall of earth out of the ground, and heard the distinct sound of an arcane bolt fizzling out, mixed with Helga's gasp. I took a step back from Aviada, ducking under her wild swing, which was much faster than the previous one, and spoke. "You girls want to have a spar together, huh? That works for me."

I took a few steps back while the girls looked at me with a thoughtful expression, their earlier anger melted away after my show. Their sudden change of heart wasn't surprising. In the end, in a world filled with monsters, there was nothing more attractive than power, and I had just displayed overwhelming ability simultaneously in their preferred area of expertise. Thanks to my rapid rise of power, I was good enough to contend against the top students of each branch, and with my full range of abilities in play, I was willing to bet that I could defeat the weaker half of the professors even. Also, with twenty-four points in charisma, I exuded a rather impressive aura, which didn't hurt.

The girls stood still for a moment, their eyes locked as they examined each other. While my impressive range of abilities didn't include mind-reading, I didn't need it to understand that they were trying to assess each other to see whether the other would leave after the reveal, solving the problem neatly. But from their increasing frowns, they slowly realized neither of them had the intention of removing their hat from the ring.

I decided to interject when I saw Aviada raising her sword, this time pointing towards Helga. "Let's start the spar," I said as I flicked a small stone at Aviada, which bounced off of her head. She looked at me with a frown. I made sure to look intimidating, signaling to her that hurting Helga was not a preferred way of solving the issue. "Come on girls, I'm waiting," I said.

Aviada didn't need more prompting and rushed towards my side, this time her movements backed by her full lethality. Unfortunately for her, by now, even her best was not enough to get anything more than a semi-serious interest from my side. But despite that, I made sure to smile at her with my seduction mode turned on, making sure that Helga saw it as well. Helga started peppering me with arcane bolts, forcing me to use my other hand to conjure shields to defend against her, splitting my attention.

Their teamwork was atrocious, of course. Aviada disregarded Helga's assault, and Helga was too focused on scoring hits of her own to use her magic in terms of utility, which would have blocked my options to deal with Aviada, turning her into a true threat. I was tempted to step closer to Aviada, tricking Helga into scoring some friendly-fire, but their relationship was bad enough before adding a wild variable. Instead, I started attacking Helga with my own magic,

sending waves made of elemental wind, individually weak, but quick enough to force her to take a step. After repeating it a couple of times, she realized my point, and copied my assault with arcane energy, limiting my range of movement, which in turn gave Aviada a strong advantage. There was still a gap between us, but without a free movement area to display my superior mobility, I actually had to try to keep her at bay.

Her sword was no joke.

The spar was fun, and if we weren't supposed to spend the rest of the day hunting dangerous animals in a dangerous location, I would have extended the spar until the girls collapsed in exhaustion. Unfortunately, leveling them up was more important than teaching them about coordinated combat. So, without a warning, I intensified my assault and sent several chains of earth at Helga. She was late in noticing them, and ended tangled up on the ground, where a few more chains pinned her in place. And without her assault, I was once again free to display my superior mobility. I stepped inside Aviada's guard, easily blocking her last-minute kneeling attempt to wrap my hands around her wrists, forcing her to drop the sword with a twist. After that, before she could adapt to the sudden change of combat, I pinned her in a hold impossible for her to escape from without dislocating her arm.

[+1 Melee]

[+3 Elemental]

[-5 HP]

[-47 Mana]

"It was a nice spar," I said even as I tightened my hold over her, which allowed me to free one of my hands. I first waved that hand to cast another earth spell, which created a moving platform under Helga to bring her closer, still bound in chains. While Helga closed in, I grabbed Aviada's hair and pulled back hard enough to force a gasp out of her, which I muffled in short order with a heated kiss, just to drive in my dominance further.

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 47%]

When Helga arrived at my side, I pulled out a rope from my small bag and tied Aviada's hands behind her, still careful to avoid using magic on her. When I dispelled the chains on Helga, I was expecting her to struggle against the kiss, or at least play hard to get, so the searing kiss she initiated was a surprise. A welcome one, though it was only partially about the pleasure itself, which was clear from the victorious glare Helga sent to Aviada.

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 46%]

[Achievement: Subdue the Storm. Decisively deter the following argument for your own benefit after being caught. +2000 Experience, +2 Agility, +2 Manipulation]

Helga's progress was nice, but not as nice as receiving yet another achievement, pushing my stats even higher. At this point, my stat point development reached to an unheard of before point, well past unbelievable and approaching ridiculous. Not that I was complaining. In a world where everything was trying to kill humans, extra power was never something to be scuffed at.

"So, girls," I said even as I freed Aviada from her ropes with a knife throw. "Are you ready for our adventure..."

-----

[Level: 15 Experience: 107050 / 120000

Strength: 17 Charisma: 24

Precision: 12 Perception: 13

Agility: 16 Manipulation: 19

Speed: 12 Intelligence: 16

Endurance: 13 Wisdom: 18

HP: 1050 / 1050 Mana: 1167 / 1350 ]

## SKILLS

[Master Melee [69/100]

Expert Arcana [75/75]

Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Advanced Biomancy [50/50]

Advanced Elemental [28/50]

Basic Speech [25/25] ]

# Chapter Thirty-One

“Are we all ready to go,” I asked even as I gave my hand to Aviada to help her stand up, but she chose to ignore it in favor of standing up herself. Despite her overt display of dissatisfaction, it was clear that she was impressed with my confident display. My earlier martial display was enough to keep her in the run. From the frown that appeared on her face when her gaze slid to Helga, I could see that she wasn’t happy with me having multiple partners, but she was willing to play along.

Helga’s situation wasn’t too different, a bit worse, even. Unlike Aviada, proving my combat superiority hadn’t been enough to remove all of her immediate concerns, but since she was still with us, the promise of leveling assistance was clearly enough to keep her in place. And that was enough, because it gave me the whole day to work on them.

Both girls nodded after a bit of delay, and we started to walk deeper into the wilderness, the wards protecting the area weakening with each step. It was risky to step outside the protection of the wards, of course, but the danger was the whole point of our trip.

“Can you pass me your sword?” I asked Aviada without even bothering to look at her as I felt the wards weakening even more. It was a strategic request, as while I trusted myself enough to handle most of the dangers around, especially since the school tried to hunt any creature above level ten as much as possible. It was impossible to exterminate them even in the limited area surrounding the school, but still, it made a good area to hunt in a small group. For most of the other areas, anything smaller than a full squad would have been treated as total insanity, but around the school, it was just extremely risky.

She growled a bit instead of replying. “Sword,” I repeated, this time turning just enough to catch her gaze. It was a slightly belligerent approach, but at this point, I had a good understanding of Aviada’s personality, and being kind all the time would have damaged our relationship even more. After all, she was a girl that surrendered her virginity only through a physical struggle despite her clear desire.

“Why don’t you try taking it yourself,” Aviada answered with a smirk. “Do you think you can handle it?”

I kept eye contact as I brought my hand toward the hilt of her sword, acting like I took the bait. Her smirk widened just as my fingers were about to brush the ornate hilt of her sword. There was no doubt that a magical sword like that had a lot of protective enchantments that prevented it from being used without its owner’s permission. The effect was likely something

more humiliating than deadly since Aviada was willing to use the enchantment as a prank, but considering her rather vicious personality, it was hard to rule out extreme pain from the likely effects.

She seemed certain that her simplistic prank was successful, which was why she failed to react in time when I grabbed her shoulder instead and pushed her against a stone. She hit it with a nice thud, though the pain of it didn't even register to her. "Nice try," I murmured into her ear, a move that turned the situation into a tight embrace. "Too bad that you are too obvious with your intentions."

"So, what of it?" Aviada whispered back just as satisfied. "You still need my sword, and I'm not inclined to allow you to use it without a bit of pain." I pulled back enough to stand face to face, keeping my expression clear. "What are you going to do about it, torture me?" she added mockingly.

"No, no... That would be too much," I said in an exaggerated calmness. "Regardless, you seem to need a lesson to adjust your behavior." Before she could say anything, I waved my hand, and four thick manacles pushed out of the stone, wrapping around her extremities, pinning her in place before she could react. I made sure to make them extra strong, enough to keep them in place even if Aviada received another boost like the last time. She was close to reaching fifty percent in the companion system, which I suspected to be another point of explosion.

[-23 Mana]

She was caught flatfooted, not expecting me to use magic against her. "That's cheating," she gasped in shock and dissatisfaction.

"And using the protective enchantments of your sword in our little game isn't?" I countered, and then watched in satisfaction as her expression went alight with realization, followed by a blush. I continued with an amused calmness. "Since you are the first one to break our little rule, there is no harm in using a dash of magic to teach you your place, right?"

She nodded automatically before she could catch herself, which, upon realization, made her blush even more. "So, what are you going to do, torture me?" she spat out challengingly, though she seemed excited at the possibility.

"Of course not," I answered, dismissing the prospect with a careless wave of my hand. "I have other things in mind..." I turned to Helga, and made eye contact. "Could you come here, sweetheart," I said, and Helga followed the order despite the doubt on her face. I caressed my

hand over Aviada's skin once more, and put a spell up of my own devising, one that was a curious mixture of arcana and biomancy. Aviada failed to notice its initial presence since she was distracted with jealousy as Helga walked closer, unhappy with the sudden third party intrusion to our little game. Her jealousy rose even further when I pulled Helga into a sudden embrace and stole her lips with a kiss, though when I pulled back, Aviada wasn't the only one that was looking annoyed. Helga clearly didn't appreciate being used as a tool to annoy someone else.

I pressed my finger on Helga's lips to prevent her outburst even as I turned to Aviada once more. "Feel free to beg for mercy when you've changed your mind about giving me permission," I said, then held Helga's hand and walked to the other side of the stone, just out of Aviada's line of sight while ensuring she would be able to hear everything. Helga followed, but dragged her feet to display her dissatisfaction.

She spoke only after we reached the other side of the stone, and was thoughtful enough to cast a spell to block Aviada from hearing our discussion. "If you think I'm going to be your toy just so you can-" she started, but I pressed my finger to her lips, cutting her off once more.

"Do you want to see a brand new spell that uses multiple branches of magical theories," I said, not bothering to hide the victorious smirk. She looked annoyed, but this time, I knew it was aimed at herself rather than me. The reason, the nod that followed showing her interest. After all, it was far from the worst indignity she suffered on the path of magic. "Watch carefully," I said even as I raised my hands, and started to build the main part of the spell whose receiver part already placed on Aviada, biomancy and arcana energies melting together in a complicated pattern. "I use the arcana to decode the sensations of the target and for transfer, and biomancy is perfect for replication..."

[-45 Mana]

The spell wasn't exactly cheap even with my large mana pool, but the way Helga's expression brightened as she examined the complexity was enough reward, not that I was unhappy with the resulting notification.

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 47%]

"The way the main spell matrix is bridged to its connecting parts is just fascinating..." Helga murmured before launching a complicated analysis of the structure, once again showing the sharpness of her mind. Just by listening to her for a few seconds, I already came up with a solution to certain aspects that stumped me before. However, while working together to

improve the structure of the spell was tempting, I had more important things to work on, so I leaned forward, cutting her words off with a searing kiss, using the closeness to merge the spell with her.

[Level Difference of at least 50%! No Experience]

Helga just gasped in pleasure, not doing anything to counter the spell from affecting her. Why would she, when she knew that it had no impact on her side? Aviada, on the other hand, gasped in shock at the sensation of a kiss was felt on her lips despite not having anyone around. "Caesar," she called out in anger.

I waved my hand to dispel the silencing spell and answered. "Yes, honey, do you need anything?" Even as I answered, my hands were wandering over Helga's body hungrily, caressing Helga's body aggressively.

"You're playing a dangerous game!" she exclaimed, but it was an empty threat. After all, she was firmly locked in place with nowhere to go.

"You can just admit defeat, and I'll let you go," I reminded her. "You just need to say that you're too weak to handle a simple magic trick."

Aviada's gasp of shock was almost as arousing as Helga's sudden expression of arousal. Not surprising, considering the discussion of superiority between magic and martial abilities had been the biggest source of argument between them discounting me. Always opportunistic, I used Helga's prideful distraction to untie her robes, which she failed to react to until a stiff breeze made her shiver. "We're out in the open," she murmured in shock.

"Yes, we are," I answered, but my fingers continued their holy task of divesting her from her bulky robe before repeating the task with her blouse, removing both of them smoothly despite Helga's attempts to ensure otherwise, leaving just a skirt and a bra on her body. When her bra came into view, a smile appeared on my face, because it was wildly different from the bulky ugliness she had been wearing the last time. It was still made from the same fabric, and its edges were a bit uneven to show that the work was probably done by her hand, not that it was even remotely as important as the generous amount of cleavage that appeared as a result, barely held back by the structurally-compromised bra.

"But anyone can come and see us," Helga gasped in shock, but I was familiar with her expression enough to catch the excitement underneath. I tried to reach her back, but she pressed it against the rock, cutting off my way to remove her bra. That would not do, I decided,



so even as I leaned to press my lips to her neck for distraction, my hand slid under her skirt, and pushed her panties aside. Helga's gasp of shock arrived just as my fingers got the first taste of her wetness, which was immediately followed by a gasp of arousal as my fingers started violating her core. She still tried to complain, of course, but conveniently, my lips were located in the perfect spot, making the task of silencing her simple and enjoyable at the same time.

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 48%]

Under the combined assault of my lips and my hands, it didn't take long for Helga to abandon her attempts to play coy and wrap her arms around my body in a passionate hug instead, clearly enjoying the feeling of my muscles over her half-naked body, forgetting that by moving forward, she once again exposed the hook of her bra for me, which I unlocked with a flick of my fingers before trailing down her spine, enjoying her shiver.

All the while, occasional gasps were coming from the other side of the rock, marking Aviada's weakening capabilities to keep her reactions suppressed, but I just took a note of it before focusing back on Helga. Aviada still needed some time before she reached the point I wanted.

Helga let out a gasp when I pulled away from her lips as well, but unlike Aviada's, it was a sharp, loud one that was filled with need and desire. Such cries no doubt damaged Aviada's will even more, not letting her forget the source of the erotic sensation that was invading her body.

Her enthusiastic assistance deserved a reward, so I started moving down, covering the trail with kisses. I took a small break around her chest, of course, enjoying her generous bosom through pressing my lips against her teats aggressively. I would have liked to add my hands to the treatment. Unfortunately, both of them were busy, one with patrolling the sensitive points around her knob, the other was furiously removing the complicated knots of her skirt so that the area was prepared before my arrival.

Soon, her skirt met with the ground, and I was about to take this as the signal to restart my journey when I felt her hands on the back of my head, pushing me even tighter against her bosom. "Keep sucking," she shouted. She clearly tried to make it an order, but made a beginner mistake, hoping to compensate for the lack of authority with a louder voice. Also, I wouldn't be surprised if she was being extra loud just to annoy Aviada.

I was unable to answer because I was silenced, not that I was unhappy with the method she chose to do so. Any excuse to get a taste of her delicious breasts was welcome. Of course, just because my lips were busy with her bosom didn't mean the rest of my body stopped in their tasks. My hand that was previously busy getting rid of her skirt grabbed the edge of her panties

instead, intending to pull them down.

My hungry touch aiming to divest her of the last piece of her clothes reminded Helga of the fact that we were in an open field where anyone could stumble into. She grabbed the other side of her panties panickedly, but by doing so, she had forgot one important fact. In her efforts to make her underwear sexier, she had cut a lot of fabric from them, weakening it greatly. So, when she tried to pull it from the other side, it ended with her panties tearing into two pieces, the sound of ripping echoing in the opening.

Her shy yelp was amusing, but as her arms weakened, I decided to use the opportunity to travel down until I was down to her slit. Only then, did I pull away the hand that was continuously circling above her entrance to keep pushing her closer to orgasm. Just before I dived down to her slit, I raised my gaze up, catching the sudden shyness that colored her face.

At that moment, I wanted to push Helga on the ground and take her mercilessly until she climaxed again and again. Unfortunately, doing so would have ruined the punishment Aviada was going through. I didn't want her to climax. Instead, I wanted her to suffer on the edge for a while without the relief of a climax.

A shiver went through Helga's body as I leaned forward, which made her thighs jiggle attractively. I waited until my breath fell on her shivering lips before turning my head slightly and leaving a lingering kiss on her inner thigh, finishing with a soft nibble. Her legs trembled in anticipation, threatening her balance enough that she had to lean against the rock to keep herself upright, the same rock that had Aviada chained on the other side...

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 49%]

Her pleasure was not hard to read, but approval from the system was always welcome, especially when that approval also informed me that Helga was about to cross the likely point for the second milestone, making me curious about its benefits, both to me and to Helga. Wanting to push further, my tongue started to brush Helga's sensitive spot with increased intensity, enjoying her moans as she drove closer to her climax, but then a second set of cries joined her moans, reminding me of our remote companion.

"So, Aviada, are you ready to submit?" I asked.

"Never," she answered in a raspy cry, showing her mind was occupied by the impending climax. A little frown appeared on my face as I waved my hand, and the main structure of the spell appeared in my sight. Continuing to service Helga while manipulating the spell was difficult, but

not impossible. My left hand took the spot that was emptied by my lips and continued Helga's treatment, while my right hand was busy modifying the spell. Occasionally, I shifted my attention to Helga's face, enjoying the way pleasure battled with fascination as she watched the number of modifications I was making to the spell.

Under the circumstances, it was only a matter of time until Helga exploded with a climax, which happened a minute later, just as I completed the changes to the spell's structure.

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 50% - Second Stage Completed +10000 Exp]

[New Perk: Mana Regeneration]

[Companion Acquisition: Relationship not sufficient for the third stage]

A wave of joy covered her body as she climaxed, but I was experienced enough with her orgasm face enough to understand it wasn't just that. "I'm guessing you received a boost to your charisma," I asked in a whisper.

"How?" Helga managed to mutter in shock.

I didn't know whether she was asking about the achievement she had just received, or how I knew she received it the moment she did, but before she could clarify, another shout reached our ears.

"What the hell!" Aviada shouted. "Why did it suddenly stop, I was just about to..." she continued before coming to a sudden stop. I smirked, happy to see that the modification of the spell worked just as intended.

"We'll talk about the achievement in more detail later," I told Helga. She nodded, still too distracted by her climax and her achievement as I grabbed her hand and dragged her along while I moved towards the other side of the rock... I was curious how Aviada had reacted to my little trick, and whether Helga would realize that she was still naked...

-----

[Level: 15 Experience: 117050 / 120000

Strength: 17 Charisma: 24

Precision: 12 Perception: 13

Agility: 16    Manipulation: 19

Speed: 12    Intelligence: 16

Endurance: 13    Wisdom: 18

HP: 1050 / 1050    Mana: 1141 / 1350    ]

#### SKILLS

[Master Melee [69/100]

Expert Arcana [75/75]

Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Advanced Biomancy [50/50]

Advanced Elemental [28/50]

Basic Speech [25/25]    ]

#### PERKS

Mana Regeneration

## Chapter Thirty-Two

I couldn't help but to feel excited as I walked around the rock and stepped into Aviada's line of sight with a naked Helga behind me, who managed to miss the fact that she was still naked while still trying to process her last orgasm. Aviada's face was a work of art, still carrying hints of the pleasure that invaded her body, but the frustration was clear on her face.

"Bastard," she growled the moment she noticed me, but despite her disrespect and anger, I was familiar with her enough to see her respect underneath. My forceful attitude was clearly working wonders on her. Things changed a bit when Aviada's gaze turned to Helga, beset with jealousy. "And the whore is here as well," she said with an angry smirk, trying to vent her frustrations on her instead.

Helga stiffened at the insult, her shoulders slouched in a habit born from endless bullying. The insult was dissatisfying enough, as I worked too hard on Helga's self-confidence to appreciate it being undermined once more, but the insult reminded Helga about her nakedness, and she wrapped her arm around her chest in an effort to hide her amazing breasts, still carrying the marks of my hungry treatment. She would have dashed away if it wasn't for my hand around her wrist.

I let her hide behind me even as I took a step forward, a disapproving expression on my face. "That wasn't nice," I said, but my tone wasn't angry. I tried to replicate the tone of a nice but disappointed teacher. Seeing Aviada's anger flare, I smirked inwardly. I used that tone, because, for all its lack of obvious display of power, it came with an implied superiority. Aviada, despite her spectacular defeat, still saw the situation between us as on the same tier, so she didn't appreciate the assumption.

"So what if it wasn't nice," Aviada spat with renewed anger. "What are you going to do about it!"

Aviada was a sharp woman just like a sword. However, just like a sword, her mind worked straight and on right angles, so it took less than a second for me to decipher why she turned her anger from Helga to me. She was trying to goad me into taking a direct action in anger, which would put me in the same position as her. Instead of giving her what she wanted, I sighed deeply. "I'm disappointed, Aviada. I would have expected you to act more mature, but it seems that you haven't learned your lesson yet. It seems that I need to punish you more.

She smirked at the mention of punishment, watching me in anticipation as I waved my hand, and a chair formed out of the ground, giving me a comfortable seat. Aviada looked confused

until I flexed my magic and her chains suddenly lengthened. Not expecting to lose her support, she failed to resist as she fell forward, and found herself on my lap. “No,” she said in dread as I pulled her pants down, but I disregarded her complaint to land a spank on her bottom. Her shocked cry was a melody to my ears.

“How,” she murmured in shock. It was understandable, considering her level, I shouldn’t be able to hurt her unless I hit her hard enough to actually inflict damage, and my lazy spank was far from doing that. However, what she didn’t count on was my biomancy skill, modifying her pain resistance temporarily. Aviada lacked the magical ability to notice, but from the soft hum she made, it was clear that it didn’t slip Helga’s attention.

I ignored the question and spanked her bottom once more, enjoying the blush that was spreading to her naked bottom. Aviada spewed an endless string of threats, each more visceral than the last, but I ignored them in favor of covering her bottom with endless spanks. Five at first, then ten... Soon it reached thirty with no hint of stopping just like Aviada’s insults, but unlike her insults, my spanks didn’t lose the power behind them. On the contrary, each hurt more than the last as Helga examined the spell carefully, occasionally whispering her findings into my ear and allowing me to make changes to increase its effectiveness even further.

She was truly a genius. Converting her to my side was a true coup. She stood behind me, leaning forward to press her breasts against my neck, as if to remind me that she wasn’t just a genius but a true display of sexiness, which was enhanced by her recent charisma boost. From the impressive radiance she displayed, I guessed that she received three points to her charisma, maybe even more.

Unfortunately, I had other things to finish before I could taste her new state. With a renewed enthusiasm, I landed several more spanks on Aviada’s bottom, whose insults and arguments were fading rather rapidly after the last modification. “How long are you going to continue?” she murmured.

“Until I feel that you’ve learned your lesson,” I said even as I landed yet another slap to her crimson bottom. “So, for a start, definitely not while you continue to insult me.”

“Sorry,” Aviada murmured from her squeezed teeth, and when my hand landed on her ass once more, she stayed silent.

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 48%]

I found it interesting that the companion tracker chose that moment to move forward, but it,

more than anything, showed that Aviada was getting off from being dominated. The sudden wetness of her core the moment she apologized was another piece of evidence to support that. Curious, I thought. "Excellent, ten more and we're done," I said as she shuffled on my lap, but said nothing.

I silently counted ten more spanks, but rather than stopping, I continued. "Hey, you promised only ten!" Aviada exclaimed when I was around fifteenth.

"Yes, but how do I know whether we reached ten?" I said in an exaggerated tone even as I slapped her bottom once more.

She squeezed her teeth so hard that it was audible, but still, when my hand landed on her bottom once more, her mouth parted open. "One," she said obediently. I smirked as I slapped her bottom, but this time, instead of pulling it back immediately, I let my fingers momentarily dip into her wetness to reward her obedience, which returned me a tremble in her tone as she counted the second spank. My fingers slipped down, the duration increasing with each spank, so when we reached the end, Aviada was panting in arousal. "Ten," she said with a sigh, followed by a moan as my fingers danced on her entrance.

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 49%]

Aviada continued to lay on my lap obediently, enjoying my caresses while I used biomancy to cure her bottom and dispelling the pain sensitivity spell at the same time. In that moment of laziness, I couldn't help but think about the implications of the companion system, progressing only in certain situations. With Aviada, there was almost always a domination aspect on the line. Curious, I decided to test that.

With a flick of my wrist, the chains that were holding Aviada's arms and legs disappeared, but before she could react, I grabbed her arms, locking them behind her just like I had done before, easily maintaining the grip despite her struggling, much weaker than she was capable of. Even if she had used her full strength -which was higher than mine- I would be able to maintain it thanks to my leverage. I lifted her to slide under her, and took a position behind her, her bottom rising instantly.

My other hand was empty, but it was easier to cast a spell to free my shaft from the confines of my pants while using my hand to caress her entrance. However, my gaze slipped to Helga, who was looking at me with a frown, and no small amount of jealousy. I caught her gaze, and gestured for her to sit, giving a reassuring smile when her expression gained a questioning quality.

She wasn't entirely reassured, but she still followed my order to take a seat. Meanwhile, I pushed my hips forward, pressing my shaft against Aviada's entrance. "You handled your punishment well, and it's time for a reward," I said, chuckling softly when she pushed her hips back enthusiastically. I didn't let her succeed, pulling my hips back once the crown dipped deeper into her wetness, giving her a small taste to whet her appetite. "Don't be impatient," I added, punctuated by a spank to her bottom. "There's just one thing left to do. You need to apologize to Helga for insulting her earlier. It wasn't fair for you to call her names."

Aviada twisted her neck to catch my gaze, her astonished look replicated by Helga, who was frozen in her seat. Despite their questioning gaze, I just shrugged and stayed silent, waiting for Aviada to speak, which didn't take long. "If you think I'll apologize to that little slut-" she started, only to receive a stiff spank to her bottom, which, without the pain enhancement spell, caused an ignoble amount of pain, only the past memories keeping her silent. Which was okay, because the spank was nothing more than to cover for the two spells I applied to her. One to clean and lubricate her backdoor for my invasion, and another for her punishment.

"Either that, or I'll punish you for real," I said even as my empty hand moved up and grabbed her hair.

"Do your worst," Aviada spat out with a satisfied smirk, with the full confidence that she would enjoy the punishment as much as I would.

That was where she was wrong, but it wouldn't be apparent at the beginning, at least to her. Helga had a sufficient magical aptitude to understand the aim of the second spell, so she just smirked victoriously as I leaned forward, pushing the tip of my shaft into her puckered hole. Despite the lubrication, her bottom wrapped around my shaft tightly, an effect that was enhanced further by her endless exercising. Her ass was perfection itself, and the prospect of ruining it gave me a fascinating pleasure.

I attacked her hole mercilessly, impaling repeatedly without waiting for her to adapt, which would have been a disaster to someone weaker, but a high HP pool had usefulness above and beyond killing monsters. Aviada cried, but it wasn't filled with pain but pleasure instead, my reckless assault pushing her closer to her climax bit by bit, but my and Helga's smirks got wider the closer Aviada came to a climax, who was too distracted by her own pleasure to notice it...

A minute later, the reason for it became apparent for her as well. Aviada moaned loudly, her back curling in a beautiful arc in preparation of an explosive orgasm, only to stop confusedly even as I continued to slam her tight hole — which wasn't as tight anymore. "Is there a problem, Aviada," I said even as I tightened my grip on her wrists, which proved to be a good



idea because she started struggling a moment later, which proved to be ultimately fruitless.

“I’ll kill you!” she answered, her angry cry mixing with the sound of flesh hitting flesh. “I’ll make you pay!”

“Come on, sweetie,” I said even as I increased the pace of my assault, which caused the build-up of another climax thanks to her already charged body, but rather than mollifying her, it only made her struggle harder because of the ending of the process familiar. Helga was watching the situation silently, but from the way she was rubbing her legs together, she was clearly enjoying the sight. Not surprising, considering after all those times she had to suffer under her smug noble peers, it was exhilarating for her to be the observer for once.

I decided her attitude deserved a reward. Casting the spell to transfer the sensation between two people was a complicated affair, impossible to do while I was struggling to pin Aviada motionless while also pushing her toward another climax. Reversing an already existing spell, however, was much more trivial. I waved my hand, and Helga’s eyes popped open and a moan of shock was ripped from her mouth. She understood what I was trying to do, of course, but my instantaneous casting didn’t give her a chance to react before the ghost of my anal assault started invading her body.

Helga moaned loudly, enough to break Aviada’s annoyance, who understood that Helga was experiencing the same phenomenon she had gone through minutes ago. Their moans mixed together as they raced towards orgasm, but unlike Helga’s, Aviada’s were tinged with frustration, which was justified, because when Helga’s buildup exploded into an explosive climax, Aviada’s silently disappeared once more, leaving only frustration behind.

I doubted Helga’s explosive squirting covering her face helped.

What surprised me was the notification that appeared.

[Mana regeneration perk activated. Duration, 8 hours]

The sudden boost in my mana regeneration surprised me in the best of ways. The reason for it was obvious, considering it only happened after I reached fifty percent in Helga’s companion progress, and it triggered only when she climaxed. But the reason for it wasn’t as important as the effect itself. Seeing my mana steadily climbing up was a benefit impossible to overstate, giving me the solution for the biggest mage problem. Combine that with my already huge mana capacity, and my melee abilities to reduce consumption rate, it gave me unparalleled survivability on the field.

The unexpected bonus gave me a renewed desire even though I was yet to discover the exact conditions of triggering the perk, or what a perk was. The name was obvious, but I had never heard a mention of them on the books I had read, or any of the doctors that tended to me when I was young had never mentioned something like that either. Regardless, it was another tool in my growing arsenal, even though it came with certain obligations like protecting the source of it.

Like hanging around a sexy and voluptuous blonde who was as smart as she was sexy was a great chore.

I decided to focus on that particular finding later on and shifted my focus back to the disobedient brunette who was doing her best to keep herself from moaning—and failing horribly. We had to repeat the cycle of orgasm denial twice more before Aviada opened her mouth for anything other than insults or frustrated moans. “I’m ... sorry,” she whispered, impossible to hear without my enhanced senses.

“Can you repeat that louder?” I asked casually even as I picked up the pace, pushing her toward yet another orgasm, which was getting easier and easier as her frustration built up.

“I’m sorry,” she repeated petulantly, which put a smirk on my face and astonishment on Helga’s, who was clearly enjoying the superior position she had, though the several orgasms she had experienced was definitely not hurting.

“Not a bad start, but after all the time it took, I’m not going to accept it without you proving your sincerity.” She turned to me with a questioning gaze. “Helga, open your legs,” I ordered even as I pushed Aviada’s head in further, my painful grip on her hair coming handy.

Helga followed my command, failing to hide her excitement at the idea. However, Aviada was a completely different issue. “Never,” she spat out as she struggled to get back.

“Well, your call,” I said even as I picked up speed, steadily pushing her toward another vanishing climax. She turned to me, her eyes filled with a begging expression, but I continued explaining, the amusement in my expression contrasting greatly with my exaggerated clinical tone. “You brought it on yourself by trying to mess with me close to such dangerous territory,” I said, neatly ignoring the fact that my so-called punishment was much more distracting than her little prank.

She managed to maintain eye contact as her orgasm drove nearer, her disobedience melting with each second until there was nothing more than a simple flicker in her eyes. But despite her

best effort, she wasn't able to hide the enjoyment she was getting from my total domination. After all, she believed in strength, and what she was experiencing was the purest reflection of it.

Without saying anything else, she turned around and her head disappeared between Helga's legs, whose expression brightened in shock and desire. It was nice, but not as nice as the notification I had just received.

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 50% - Second Stage Completed +10000 Exp]

[New Perk: Mana Regeneration]

[Achievement: Tough Teacher. Be firm in educating a wayward companion. +1000 Experience, +2 Wisdom]

Level UP!

[Select one of the following skills: Expert Biomancy, Expert Elemental, Advanced Speech]

Gaining another boost to my power was always welcome. As much as having a better aptitude on healing spells or better speech ability would have come useful, I was about to launch a long hunting trip, making elemental the best choice. The fact that it would increase my hand against Cornelia during my evening meeting was only a bonus.

But leveling up wasn't the greatest benefit of the activity. No, that honor belonged to Aviada's companion progress. The fact that it was completed after forcibly bending Aviada to my will told me a lot about her personality. Still, instead of spending time trying to assess the implications of that particular discovery, I turned my attention to the spell that was preventing Aviada from reaching completion, and dispelled it with a wave of my hand. A few pushes later, Aviada started trembling with an intensity I had never seen before, threatening to send her to the land of unconsciousness. Thankfully, her endurance was high enough to maintain her consciousness under the rush.

[Mana regeneration perk activated. Count 2. Duration, 8 hours]

The confirmation about the perk system was a nice benefit, and that the effect was stacking was the amazing bonus that came with it. It meant that I could experiment with my elemental abilities freely during the hunt without thinking about saving mana for a dangerous situation, because with the bonus, it would only take thirty minutes for my mana pool to refresh completely, a great improvement to several hours of meditation or sleep like it would normally

take.

I pulled out of Aviada and let her collapse on the ground. She needed to catch her breath before we could start hunting. With a sudden instinct, I reached out and pulled Aviada's sword from its sheath, stiffening myself for the impact, but it didn't come. Yet another evidence of my total domination.

I pushed the sword in the nearby rock, impressed by the effortless manner it disappeared before turning my attention to Helga. Since Aviada was going to need several minutes to gather herself, why shouldn't I entertain myself in the meanwhile...

-----

[Level: 16 Experience: 128050 / 136000

Strength: 17 Charisma: 24

Precision: 12 Perception: 13

Agility: 16 Manipulation: 19

Speed: 12 Intelligence: 16

Endurance: 13 Wisdom: 20

HP: 1120 / 1120 Mana: 1345 / 1472 ]

## SKILLS

[Master Melee [69/100]

Expert Arcana [75/75]

Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Advanced Biomancy [50/50]

Expert Elemental [28/75]

Basic Speech [25/25]

PERKS

Mana Regeneration

## Chapter Thirty-Three

Half an hour after Aviada's punishment, our little group was once again fully dressed and was about to finally step out of the cover of the wards that protected the main trade routes and their immediate surroundings. We walked silently, discounting my cheerful whistling holding an upbeat tone. Meanwhile, girls were busy trying to rein in their blushes, their eyes firmly on the ground.

Not a surprising reaction after our impromptu threesome.

Teasing them on the subject was tempting, but unfortunately, I had a more important task, getting used to Aviada's magical sword. I held it tightly, occasionally slashing a nearby tree or stone, watching the target slashed neatly into two pieces. I realized that the last time I had used, I failed to appreciate the true magnificence of the sword, only my enhanced melee skill and increased magical abilities allowing me to understand its true value. No wonder those assholes tried to assassinate her for it.

Luckily, I had a much better way of staking my ownership.

"Are we ready, girls?" I asked when I saw a huge dire wolf dashing toward us, marking the start of the combat. It was merely a class four creature, not even enough to alarm, but its presence showed that we finally stepped into the wildlands, an area most wouldn't wander without at least a full squad of experienced soldiers. It would take only a slash of my sword to kill it, but I chose to wave my hand instead, and a spike suddenly pushed out of the ground far faster than it could react, nailing it in the stomach.

[+2 Elemental]

[-14 Mana]

"Let's move," I said when the girls looked at me questioningly. I understood their rationale, as using magic was rather wasteful from their perspective. However, not only they had no idea about the true size of my mana pool, but also my extreme rate of regeneration thanks to the perks I had gained through the companion system. When I ignored their wordless concern, the girls didn't push for more. Aviada because she didn't know much about magic and assumed it was normal for a high-level mage, while Helga was too cagey to raise her concerns in the hearing range of someone else, even that someone was Aviada.

"Aren't you going to kill it?" Aviada said questioningly when she saw me walking away from the

creature, who was experiencing my extreme leveling method for the first time.

“Nope, last hits are for you girls,” I answered with a shrug, earning a shocked glance from Aviada. After all, no matter the situation, the experience was a precious commodity to people that were yet to finish their development. Otherwise, why would Aviada spend her nights killing an endless number of level zero creatures just for scraps? “But take turns,” I added at the last moment. When the next creature appeared, Aviada was about to dash forward when I gestured her to wait. “You and Helga are going to stay in defensive just in case something I can’t handle appears,” I reminded her, a direction she followed only after I conjured a small chain of earth, reminding her the last time she chose to disregard my orders.

Just as I predicted, the presence of the wolf had marked the beginning of an intense skirmish. More creatures appeared, usually below class five, but occasionally close to class ten, but regardless, they took only one move, be it a slash of my borrowed sword, or another elemental trick. It was a tough two hours, enough to leave anyone else below level twenty panting in exhaustion, but I was a unique case.

[+11 Elemental]

[+3 Melee]

[-2450 Mana]

It was nice to see my skills increasing rapidly. Of course, spending almost double of my mana pool would have been an extravagant waste if it wasn’t for my enhanced regeneration, allowing me to keep my mana pool almost completely full despite the constant rain of assault. I was planning to continue, when I came across a small cliff. It was about fifty meters tall, and it gave a rather impressive view of the area. “Let’s take a breather,” I said as I started climbing the small path upward.

“Is this a good idea?” Aviada asked. “Won’t we get bogged down if they notice us here,” she added.

“Of course, that’s the idea,” I answered with a smirk, and the moment I arrived at the top, I used my newly developed elemental skills to modify the cliff generously, enough to turn it into a small fort with thick walls and several arcana runes already carved ready to be powered. Another flex of mana, and they were ready to anchor the wards.

[+1 Elemental]

[-240 Mana]

“I want you girls to stay in defensive. Helga, start carving additional wards in case we have a breach. Aviada, you are responsible for watching the sky and the cliff, just in case a creature manages to slip the wards.” It wasn’t a likely outcome, but it wasn’t impossible either. Both girls nodded, and they started moving rapidly, though even my latest disciplining session was unable to prevent them from snarking at each other. I let it continue, believing it was better for them to get it out of their systems rather than keeping it away from my attention.

I left them alone in their task and stood in the center of the raised defensive formation, effectively acting like bait. It was a raised platform, because it would allow me to push the wounded creatures on the nearby pit that I had created. I looked around to make sure that everything was in order before casting a lure spell, enough to tempt the surrounding creatures from a mile. It was a dangerous move, but the danger also gave me the chance to maximize my abilities quickly. I wanted to be on top shape before the meeting with Cornelia, as it had the potential of ruining a lot of things.

Still, even though it was a quick decision, I wasn’t unhappy about revealing my status to Cornelia. Currently, she was the only girl strong enough to give me a few more levels while also being vulnerable enough to keep my secrets. The infighting in her family was much more important than revealing my hidden prowess. Still, deflowering Marianne in front of her was something that would make her angry. I would feel much safer if I could maximize my elemental abilities.

Soon, a rumble caught my attention, forcing my mind back to the present rather than the evening’s meeting. I could see a horde of undead, consisting of skeletons and zombies of varying strength, dashing forward, large enough to threaten a small town. Still, my smile widened even as I swung my sword, taking the lower half one of them while letting it topple back, tangling with the others, a kick sending an armored one back. The first one was barely class three while the second one was almost class nine, meaning I had to be really careful. Still, I expected the class nine one to be damaged quite a bit by the fall and opened my mouth to ask Aviada to push forward to get the experience.

[+1 Melee]

My words died in my lips when I noticed several weak zombies positioning themselves underneath the large one, reducing the damage it took while risking to destroy themselves. That level of coordination was extraordinary, with some dangerous implications for our side. I was suddenly glad of the excessive fortification I had prepared. “Aviada, I want you to stay



behind me and kill the ones I let pass. Helga, after finishing the defensive array, wait, but be ready to cast a strong defensive shield.” Cooperation between undead meant someone was controlling them, and I didn’t want to be caught flatfooted in case one of them attacked suddenly.

Luckily, I had improved my elemental casting abilities significantly during the last two days, turning an impossible battle into a farming opportunity. “Let’s see how dead fares against the inferno,” I shouted while waving my left hand, my right busy swinging the sword to take the legs of a class seven zombie, which then rolled helplessly toward Aviada. I didn’t pay attention to what was happening behind, trusting her to handle an injured monster rather easily. Instead, I focused on tying the firestorm into one of the wards I had created earlier, ensuring that it would keep up as long as it had sufficient mana, then dumped a generous amount behind it. A deadly firestorm appeared in the middle of the horde, immediately roasting the weaker ones while slowing down the stronger ones.

[+3 Elemental]

[-320 Mana]

“Amazing,” I heard Aviada murmur, so I turned back for a split second to wink at her, which made her blush rather sharply. However, as much as I would have liked to flirt with my sexy swordswoman while killing the zombies, a sudden flash of darkness took precedence. I saw a dark bolt traveling toward our encampment, crackling with dangerous energy that made me feel sick even in the distance.

It was necrotic energy!

I couldn’t help but curse my luck even as I jumped off the cliff, positioning myself between the fort and the energy. “Aviada, hold the fort,” I ordered even as I pushed my mana on the sword, forcing it to burn brightly with wild lightning, enhanced with a touch of life energy thanks to my biomancy abilities. I took that risk, because while building the fortifications, I hadn’t expected it to stand against a combined assault from the necromancers. Considering there was a generous bounty on each necromancer, I didn’t expect to find one of them so close to the school.

I shouted even as my sword slashed three times, its speed no less than the lightning itself, managing to disrupt most of the energy. I couldn’t help but feel proud at the move, fitting to be a part of the legends itself.

[+2 Elemental]

[+3 Melee]

[-83 Mana]

Only a small piece of dark energy escaped my assault and collided with my body. But even that was enough to burn as I had never felt before, draining a significant amount of vitality. Though I was lucky to be competent at biomancy, as a wave of life energy rose immediately to neutralize the necrotic power trying to penetrate my body. Without that, I doubted that I would be alive.

[-274 HP]

[-123 Mana]

I ignored the gasp of the girls in favor of dashing forward the trio of figures that revealed themselves while casting their deadly spell, whose panic was clear even when they were hidden behind their robes. I let out a laugh even as I dashed forward at full speed. These necromancers overplayed their hands in an effort to quickly end the battle, and I was more than willing to punish their arrogance before they could cast another spell.

“Keep him away,” called the necromancer in the middle panickedly even as his hands dug deep into his pouch, clearly searching for something. The other two waved their staffs and a fresh horde of dead shambled forward, trying to cut my path.

It was a sound tactic. Too bad it wouldn't work against me. I was fast enough to avoid the slow but strong ones, and several wind bullets were enough to destroy the fragile ranged units behind. Every swing of my borrowed sword was enough to cut a swathe through the weaker skeletons and zombies, their presence not enough to slow me down.

The one in the middle, who was clearly the leader, realized the problem as well and took a step back while pulling a pearl from his bag as large as his fist. It didn't take a genius to realize it was not a trinket, simply because he was trying to pull it while facing the risk of death. “Arise,” he called as he threw it in the midpoint between me and them. A thick layer of necrotic energy escaped it, and the pearl started to unfold into a winged skeleton that was growing very quickly.

“A fucking dragon!” I called in shock and quickened my pace even further. I had no idea who those guys were, or how they managed to convert a dragon into their undead servant, but I knew that if that dragon managed to cut my path, I wouldn't last long against three necromancers and it.

It was time to be creative.

I used my arcana abilities to cast two spells simultaneously, one to give me temporary invisibility, barely enough to last a moment, while other spell created an illusion. Then, I pumped that illusion with life energy, and sent it against the dragon. The dragon dispelled it with a swing of its claw, but it was all I needed to pass it and stood against the necromancers.

[-45 Mana]

Necromancers were too slow to reach anything other than a widening of their eyes as I appeared in front of them. My first swing took the head of two of them, while the third one stumbled back in fear. "Wait, I can-" he started, but another swing ensured that he had no chance to continue his words. And since they were necromancers, I did the prudent thing and sent a wave of flame to engulf their bodies, even though it would destroy any clue about their presence.

With a skeletal dragon behind me, I didn't feel like taking risks.

My instincts blared, and I threw myself forward and rolled, a sharp claw missing me by an inch. I turned after the roll, and barely managed to deflect another attack with my sword. The skeletal dragon must be at least class fifteen, maybe even closer to level twenty, which normally required a large squad of level fifteen warriors and mages. Even with my stats, I wouldn't be defeat in a direct confrontation.

Luckily, without a necromancer to lead it, it wasn't really smart, and I had a lot of tricks to keep it back. "Girls, keep your positions and destroy the rest of the horde," I ordered when I saw Helga back to back with Aviada, with both of them trying to abandon their well-defended position. They were good, but not enough to cut through a broken horde of undead even if they were wounded badly thanks to the ongoing firestorm, especially with the necromancers that were leading them were dead.

I could see their reluctance from a distance, but luckily, they followed my order, and stayed on the defensive while destroying the skeletons. I stayed focused on the bone skeletal dragon, using the full range of my melee and elemental tricks to slowly damage its limbs, while biomancy and arcana working wonders to keep it distracted. It took almost an hour for the girls to destroy the horde, while I spent almost two thousand mana to keep the dragon away from me, three of its limbs and one of its wings finally destroyed. I could have killed it, but I preferred to keep it bay not to waste the huge experience it represented, not to mention battling such a dangerous creature for an hour allowed me to maximize my skills, which was only possible thanks to my enhanced mana regeneration.

[+24 Melee]

[+28 Elemental]

[-1951 Mana]

When the girls finished with the horde, they could be mistaken for zombies in their exhaustion, stumbling forward. Amusingly, Aviada wrapped an arm on Helga, helping her walk despite her own exhaustion. It seemed that our little battle had worked wonders to resolve the animosity between them. Nothing like an extended battle against shambling undead to see the value of other skill sets.

Seeing them near, I broke the last limb with a mighty swing, leaving the skeletal dragon to collapse helplessly, waiting for the last hits. "So, girls," I said as I turned to them, presenting the sword for them to grab. "Who wants to do the honors. First come first serve."

Aviada was in a better condition, so she grabbed the sword first. But then, she surprised us by presenting it to Helga. "I was the one that killed most of the horde while you supported me, and I leveled up already. You deserve this."

Helga looked at her in shock, but Aviada just nodded encouragingly. Helga grabbed the sword, but in her exhausted state, failed to lift it until I used my biomancy to refresh her stamina. It took three swings for her to crack the dragon's skull, while her horrible lack of skill made Aviada wince. "I'm going to teach you how to wield it," she murmured, but Helga was too distracted by something only she could see to actually pay attention to us.

The reason turned clear when she murmured in shock. "Two levels at once," she murmured in shock, making Aviada look at me shocked. Aviada was smart enough to estimate Helga's level, putting the creature very close to class twenty. She was shocked, the fact that I was able to play with such a formidable creature for an hour forcing her to revise her estimations upward once more.

[Achievement: Epic Encounter. Defend your girls tenaciously against a deadly foe well-above your skills. +5000 Experience, +1 All]

I couldn't help but smile when I saw the achievement, though it was hard to argue it was undeserved. Three necromancers, backed by a dragon and a horde of undead was enough to make a small city restless, and I managed to defeat it alone with the help of two underleveled assistants. It was an achievement worthy of legends.

Too bad nobody would know. If my activities today were discovered, the faculty would do their best to control me, afraid of my potential and desiring my power. However, despite the fact that it would ruin everything in the current state of my plans, it wasn't what I was afraid of most. A small group of necromancers would have never come closer to the school without a good reason, and moreover, raising a skeletal dragon was clearly far beyond their abilities. I wasn't willing to bet on my survival if their backer learned about my intervention. Still, it was a pity that I had to destroy the bodies of the necromancers, along with all the clues about their source.

While the girls took a breather, I used my elemental abilities to burn the bodies of zombies and skeletons, including the dragon, then systematically dismantled the wards and the defensive walls. Luckily, the crystal that had been used to power the dragon was still in good condition, so I pocketed it. It was the most valuable loot I had ever acquired, and could be used for many purposes from powering wards to craft weapons.

On the way back, we had a long discussion on the importance of keeping the battle a complete secret just in case the mysterious leader of those necromancers had the ability to spy in the school. A dangerously likely possibility, as evidenced by the ease I had while exploring the school and taming the ladies.

We soon arrived at the school. It was a pity that girls were too exhausted for a celebratory orgy.

Luckily, I had another visit prepared.

---

[Level: 16 Experience: 133050 / 136000

Strength: 18 Charisma: 25

Precision: 13 Perception: 14

Agility: 17 Manipulation: 20

Speed: 13 Intelligence: 17

Endurance: 14 Wisdom: 21

HP: 1200 / 1200 Mana: 1552 / 1552 ]

## SKILLS

[Master Melee [100/100]

Expert Arcana [75/75]

Expert Elemental [75/75]

Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Advanced Biomancy [50/50]

Basic Speech [25/25] ]

## PERKS

Mana Regeneration

## Chapter Thirty-Four

My mind was very busy as I walked through the school corridors, trying to analyze the situation I was forced to confront. I knew that I wasn't the best when it came to assessing the norms outside the school despite my improved capabilities, but even I could confidently state that finding necromancers close to the school was rather unexpected, and the fact that they were willing to ambush three random students without rhyme or reason suggested multiple possibilities, each wilder than the last. Even worse, they had a bone dragon, something well-above their magical prowess to raise, meaning they were a part of something bigger.

Not a comforting thought.

Still, when I got close to the kitchen door, I let it slide. There was nothing I could do even if I wanted to do anything. Exploring further was impossible before I got stronger. Only luck allowed us to survive their presence, because we already had an extensive defensive entrenchment when they attacked, which greatly limited the impact of their undead horde, and their complete lack of tactical sense handled the rest. There was no way we could have survived if they had summoned their dragon even a moment earlier. I was good, but not that good.

Not yet, at least.

Talking to someone about it was not an option either. Neither I nor the girls had anyone we trusted enough to talk to, and even if the girls had, it was impossible to explain how we were able to defeat a bone dragon without revealing the full extent of my abilities, something I wasn't willing to do until I was much stronger. Being mysteriously strong was attention-grabbing, but not as much as gaining fifteen levels in less than a month, especially combined with my abnormal stat growth.

With the decision taken to have no action, for the time being, I focused on my immediate task, namely, slipping inside the kitchen for some extra food. The bag I had taken before was about to be emptied, and more importantly, I was fed up with all those dried fruits and meats, with only stale bread and plain water to accompany it. I needed something more delicious. With that in mind, I walked into the kitchen, silently but proudly walking toward the pantry. Thanks to my improved acting abilities, no one even paid attention to me until I reached the servants responsible for maintaining inventory.

I stood in front of a burly order man, who looked strong and capable enough to work as a butler for a minor noble family, but he clearly chose to work for Silver Spires instead. "I have a

requisition for a wilderness outing,” I murmured even as I passed the list I prepared beforehand, with a genuine-looking stamp at the bottom. It was a decent forgery, not enough to pass a magical examination, of course, but no one was about to assess a kitchen requisition, even if it was rather extensive.

“Wine, magically-preserved meat, quail eggs, aged cheese...” the man read the list, bored rather than disbelieving. “Who fucking brings top-shelf wine to a hunting expedition,” he murmured grumpily.

“Noble brats are still brats,” I answered with a shrug, which earned a sardonic laugh. “Count yourself lucky, at least you don’t have to listen to them complaining about the quality of their linen in the middle of the wilderness while we servants struggle to find clean water.” I sighed pointedly, doing my best to copy a mentally-exhausted servant. “Do me a favor and give me some good stuff. I don’t want to be executed because I snapped and beat that snot-nosed brat with a substandard bottle of wine,” I said, earning another laugh.

“Of course, nothing less for our heroic scions, standing between us and the apocalypse,” he said in faux-worship before turning to enter the pantry.

“As soon as they figure out how to dress themselves,” I added, and the servant disappeared with one last chuckle. When he returned, he was carrying a large bag along. I took the bag, but left only after a few minutes of gossip. It was nice to know people around me. With the bag, I returned to my room and enjoyed a delicious meal, though I doubted that any other mage would have been understanding when I used my elemental abilities to cook myself a delicious steak, and using arcana to clean up afterward. I didn’t open the wine, however, as I had other plans for it.

When I left my room, I was once again disguised as a maid, but this time the clothes were just an illusion rather than a full costume. I had a lot of mana, so wasting a few dozen points was nothing.

My destination was Cornelia’s room. It was not the evening yet, but I wanted to ambush her earlier with my presence, just to make sure she wouldn’t be able to set up a trap. The magical lock on her door didn’t even take a breath to unlock even when I had to circumvent a trap that hadn’t been there during my first visit. My performance last night clearly spooked her, not knowing my display of competence was merely a trick.

Once I was in the room, I replaced the illusions with a field of invisibility. It wasn’t a true invisibility spell, which was ironically too noticeable magically, but a light trick to make me



harder to be seen. Only after that, I cast the second spell, and stepped into Cornelia's large living room, which was empty. So was her smaller guest room and her bedroom. I wasn't disappointed, however, because I could hear running water from the bathroom.

Excellent, I thought as I walked to the bar and took out a nice white wine and two champagne glasses. I wasn't being stingy about the wines I acquired earlier, but Cornelia clearly had better stuff than what was available through the general kitchen, not to mention taking her bottle without asking for permission was another subtle powerplay. Cornelia was under my power, and I intended to teach her how fun it was to be on the other side of the coin.

I even got naked before stepping into her bathroom -and removing another magical trap in the process- while doing my best to stay silent, then sneaked inside. I had to hold back myself from whistling in appreciation when I examined the extravagant bath, once again underlining Cornelia's wealth. But gold-plated taps or silver mirrors barely earned a glance from me, not when I was able to see Cornelia resting in the small pool in the center of the room, her body hidden under a thick layer of bubbles, her eyes closed.

Cornelia was not someone that would respond to kindness, so, the more impressive my appearance was, the better. So, I cast a weak silencing charm -weak because I didn't want to alert her with a mana flare- before walking toward the pool, and slid into the water, all without managing to alert her. "How have you been since our last meeting, little lady," I suddenly said as I opened the wine bottle, yet I also infused the water with mana to react quickly to the inevitable violent reaction.

She didn't disappoint. Her eyes popped open in shock, and a wave of flame came targeting me just as quick. However, it took just a flicker of my fingers to extinguish it. It wasn't even an issue of strength, as her hurried spell had a weak internal structure, easy to puncture with a stab of water, destabilizing it so that it faded halfway through.

Cornelia looked at me shocked, though it was understandable. After all, despite the weakness of her initial spell, it wasn't something a regular elemental mage could achieve. It required a strong analytical capability, and was only possible thanks to my extreme stats and high arcana capabilities.

"So rude," I said with a mocking smirk. "I would have expected more from the noble heiress of House Antony. No wonder your uncle is looking for a better alternative."

"Shut up," Cornelia shouted even as she raised her hand, which was glowing dangerously with swirling flames. I didn't react to her threat. Not because her magical ability was to be

underestimated, but because despite her explosive anger, she was smart enough to understand what was at stake.

If she hadn't exploded in anger after I took the virginity of her girlfriend in front of her, an offhanded insult wouldn't trigger her as well.

I slowly poured wine into the glasses and sent one to her, ignoring the threat. After a moment, the fire around Cornelia's hand dispelled, leaving frustration in its place. "What do you want?"

I took a lingering sip from the glass instead of answering immediately, just another trick to drive home my superior position. It was a nice feeling to feel superior to Cornelia, the scary noble heiress that even the teachers failed to intimidate. "Delicious wine," I commented casually.

"What do you want?" Cornelia repeated, angrier.

"Come on, sweetie. Let's not act like brutes. Enjoy your wine first, we can always talk business later," I answered, my laziness making her even angrier, which made her just more frustrated because she was not used to keeping her anger contained.

"Give me your glass, then," Cornelia said with a sudden expression of enlightenment, doubting there was an underhanded trick on the glass. Not an unreasonable one, though considering how easily I had penetrated her domicile, rather unnecessary as well.

"As you wish," I said, but upon seeing her smug expression, I decided to pull a little trick. A small application of biomancy later, the wine glass was contaminated with an effective aphrodisiac, enough to make the situation even more uncomfortable for her, the mana flare being masked by the levitation spell I cast to send it to her. A moment later, floated toward me. "A delicious vintage," I commented.

"It's from one of our wineries. It's a decent year," Cornelia answered, who used the small break to exchange the glasses to gather her composure.

"I appreciate beautiful things," I answered while keeping my gaze on her face, my smirk widening as Cornelia frowned. She fell silent, and I didn't bother to break the silence, enjoying the bath and the wine at the same time. Cornelia drank slowly as well, but from the distracted expression on her face, it was clear that she was trying to get a handle of the situation. Understandable, considering how much she enjoyed being in control. It was ironic that she was losing control of every aspect of her life, the control of her family due to her uncle, the control of her development due to her level cap...

And the control of her personal relationship thanks to my presence...

For the next few minutes, I asked her several questions, none of them related to her problems, which clearly annoyed her. Then, I decided to push the envelope once more. "So, do you still attend classes after the latest development?" I asked.

Considering her attitude and her situation, I wasn't surprised when her hands started trembling, preluding an explosion of anger. Still, she impressed me by somehow preventing herself from exploding. "I still go to some of them," she answered between her squeezed teeth.

"Good idea, every little bit helps in your condition," I answered.

My dismissive attitude finally managed to trigger her. "Shut up!" she exclaimed even as she jumped to her feet and threw the glass toward me, which missed my face by inches, but I didn't even flinch. I might have annoyed her with my inaction, but since it displayed her beautiful breasts in front of me, I didn't react too badly.

[+50 Experience] 50% Penalty!

"Such a bad attitude," I answered, ignoring her poor assault attempt in favor of shaking my head in disapproval. "It's no wonder your uncle wants to keep you away from ruling the house."

"You're playing a dangerous game," she exclaimed even as two thick coils of flame appeared around her arm, twisting and turning dangerously in a poor attempt of intimidation. Poor, because it wasn't even about the power difference. She was a fire mage currently submerged in water, and I had already shown my water elemental abilities.

I didn't bother to stop her assault, even crossed my arm to signal just how little her display had affected me. Her answer was to increase the intensity of the flames, colorful shadows dancing on the marble walls. "Calm your tits, firecracker," I said before letting my gaze slide pointedly to her chest. "Not your actual ones, of course. I'm very happy with their virility."

My dismissive attitude was enough to dispel her childish display. She dispelled her flames and sat down, the bubbles hiding her body once more. "What do you need?" she asked in a more subdued tone.

"I only need a few things, but I want a lot of things," I answered. "However, the real question is, what do you need, and what are you willing to part with?"

Cornelia scowled. "You know that. I need to find a way to break through the level cap."

I smiled softly. “No, that’s not true. What you need is to protect yourself against your uncle and to take the reins of the family. Improving your personal strength is not the only way.”

“You told me that you can help me on the level cap!” she exclaimed, anger and disappointment warring on her face even as she raised her hand once more, yet again covered with flames. Her tantrums were getting very stale. “You lied!”

“No, I haven’t,” I said calmly. “I have ways to circumvent the situation to increase your personal power, but as you can guess, they are neither easy to find nor easy to implement. I need to trust you a lot more before I actually teach you how,” I said, bluffing shamelessly. I didn’t know whether the companion system would help the situation, and I didn’t even know that I would be able to trigger it with Cornelia, but since she was my only reasonable source of experience, I was willing to take the risk.

“What do you want in return?” Cornelia asked, excited.

“A lot,” I answered without missing a beat. “However, you don’t need to worry about it for now, because it’s a bit early to actually offer that. I have a more reasonable deal in mind.”

“You’re playing a dangerous game, revealing the secret but promising to withhold it. Aren’t you worried that I would reveal your secrets?”

“Not really,” I answered casually, which, for once, was actually accurate. I still didn’t want to reveal myself to the wider public, but it was no longer a deadly secret. Moreover, I trusted Cornelia to act true to herself and be a self-serving bitch. She knew only two things about me, that I was apparently much stronger than I had revealed, and I claimed to have secrets of circumventing the level cap. The first part made it a gamble to reveal my secrets, as she had no idea how strong I actually was. For the second part, she only had my words for the moment with no evidence to back it up. She would have been laughed at by everyone if she went to anyone else with it. The only reason she was listening to it at all was her desperation.

The despondent silence that filled the room indicated that she understood my point of view without an explanation. “What do you have in mind if you’re not going to help me increase my power?” she asked.

“I’m going to support you against your uncle, of course,” I said.

“Why would you do that?” she said in shock. “Training me in secret is one thing, but if you do that, you would be challenging the acting head of House Antony. Since I’m the rightful heir, there’s not much he can do against me, but it’s not the same for you. He would send an endless

number of assassins the moment he discovered your support.” She took a deep breath before continuing, her tone bitter. “You read my letters, you know that he already removed or converted most of my supporters. I can’t prevent him from targeting you.”

“I know,” I said, though I wasn’t really worried. Yes, House Antony was strong, but even for them, Silver Spires was not easy to penetrate. I doubted that they would risk a lot of their power, and considering I might gain a few more levels until my involvement was discovered, I wasn’t afraid of anyone below level twenty-five. House Antony was strong, but definitely not enough to risk losing such a strong warrior while trying to penetrate Silver Spires, risking their ire.

“Then why? You could have gone to my uncle with those letters and revealed my condition. He would have rewarded you greatly.”

“No, he would have given me a few shiny trinkets and a few empty titles. However, if I manage to put you on top...” I dragged, leaving the rewards implied. “You can’t win big by playing safe.”

“Then, what do you have in mind to help me?” Cornelia said, much more interested.

“Simple,” I said. “Your biggest challenge is to hide your stagnation from your uncle, while his biggest objective is to understand how strong you have become. By the way, why is that?” I asked, curious. Her letters mentioned the status, but didn’t go into detail about the reasons.

“I have six months until my uncle can challenge me for the ruling seat, but since it’s a life-and-death challenge, he will only do that if he’s sure of his victory,” she explained.

“Do you know how strong he is?” I answered.

“I’m not completely sure, but he’s likely just below twenty, but definitely stronger than I currently am, not to mention he has access to a lot of magical weapons and treasures,” Cornelia explained. Seeing me nodding without alarm, Cornelia relaxed a bit more. Her thought process was clear. Since I was calm on the prospect of facing a well-armed family head bordering level twenty, I must have been quite strong, which was accurate. If forced, I would have taken that bet, especially if I had Aviada’s sword in hand. “So, that’s my situation. What do you want in return?” she asked.

“I want you to be my maid,” I answered. Just like that, Cornelia was on her feet once more, flames covering her arm. But this time, she clearly intended to attack.

Things were getting interesting...

-----  
[Level: 16 Experience: 133100 / 136000

Strength: 18 Charisma: 25

Precision: 13 Perception: 14

Agility: 17 Manipulation: 20

Speed: 13 Intelligence: 17

Endurance: 14 Wisdom: 21

HP: 1200 / 1200 Mana: 1484 / 1552 ]

#### SKILLS

[Master Melee [100/100]

Expert Arcana [75/75]

Expert Elemental [75/75]

Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Advanced Biomancy [50/50]

Basic Speech [25/25] ]

#### PERKS

Mana Regeneration



# Chapter Thirty-Five

Cornelia was busy sending a thick wave of flame toward me when I finally raised my hand and called a thick wall of water to block her assault, costing me a small chunk of mana. Cornelia clearly wasn't holding back, but I was annoyed because of a different thing. The collusion of magic created a thick cloud of steam, hiding her beautiful body from my sight.

[-45 Mana]

I was about to use an arcana trick to dispel the cloud when a shadow cut through the mist. It was Cornelia, trying to finish the combat quickly, unaware that she was making a terrible choice. It wouldn't have been a bad choice under other circumstances, because almost no mage had physical abilities, meaning she wouldn't have been disadvantaged, especially if the opponent panicked. Also, it gave her a chance to finish it quickly, a bath in the middle of the school wasn't the best arena to fight without alerting others.

It was a pity that it was the absolute worst strategy she could have used against me. Her flaming fist was strong, but it was effectively moving in slow motion against me. I didn't even bother standing up. A gentle palm strike was enough to change the trajectory of her punch, and when it went past my head, I turned my palm into a grip and pulled her on my lap. "Are you going to play nice, or should I teach you how to behave?" I whispered into her ear as I squeezed her wrist a bit, just enough to signal my physical stats. The fact that she was on my lap, naked was a nice bonus. Pity I couldn't take her virginity yet.

[+100 Experience] 50% Penalty!

When she didn't answer, I flared my magic, not by casting a particular magic, but to show my potential, enough to make it very certain that I was much stronger than her when it came to the mystical side of the deal as well. "I'll behave," she answered, trying to sound belligerent, but it was impossible for her to hide her sudden tremble while she was on my lap.

"Good girl," I said as I patted her leg gently, and when she tried to stand up, I was quick to wrap my arm around her waist, keeping her pinned.

"Let me go," she said as she turned toward me, but she must be learning, because this time, she didn't try to use magic to free herself, relying on her angry expression, with a dash of panic.

I had no intention to cater to that particular wish. The sooner she got into the habit of following my orders, the better. "I can let you go," I said, and her expression relaxed, unaware of the part



to come. "However, I would take it as you rejecting my generous offer," I added, and her face fell just as quickly, but even as I loosened my arm around her waist, she stayed in place, thinking hard about my proposal. She was smart enough to realize the full implications of being my maid, not only the sexual parts, but the implied inferiority as well.

For a whole minute she was silent, and I didn't disrupt her, not wanting her to commit before she understood the full implications. Also, it gave the aphrodisiac more time to seep into her bloodstream, adding yet another complication to her decision-making process. Soon, I received the first indication that it was working, when she rocked her hips several times like she was trying to get a better seat, several more times than it was necessary. Her body was getting in the mood even if she wasn't.

Since she was struggling to answer, I decided to help her decide. My hands landed on her waist, caressing her sides gently. I decided to speak when she decided to answer angrily. "Is there something you want to say?" I said lazily even as my hands moved down, caressing her lithe hips. When it came to ass, she lacked Helga's and Marianne's generous expanse, but she was still very sexy. She just huffed and turned her head away, trying to make a decision.

Messing with her was extremely satisfying, so I decided to up the ante. One of my hands moved up until I grabbed her breasts, their size barely failing to fill my palms, but compensating for their failing with their perkiness. I directly focused on her nipples, squeezing hard. The moan that left her mouth surprised her more than it surprised me if her expression was any indicator. "Are you sure you don't want to speak?" I said, amused by her reaction because the aphrodisiac I had given her could never get such a reaction, meaning she enjoyed my rough treatment considerably. Surprising, considering her insistent sadism.

"Keep your hands to yourself while I'm trying to decide," she said angrily, but rather than annoy me, it amused me further, because I could see she was relying on a caricature display of anger to suppress her own shock. My plan was working even better than I had intended.

"And what if I don't?" I countered as my other hand grabbed her beautiful crimson hair before pulling her head back hard, enough to be actually painful. Another moan left her mouth, recognizable despite her efforts to disguise it as a pained yelp. Her head was bent back, which gave me direct access to her neck. I bit her neck hard enough to earn another moan. Her thighs tightened around my shaft, another sign of her enjoyment.

[+300 Experience] 50% Penalty!

With her bluff seen through, she once again failed to come up with an answer. I didn't push her

for it. Why would I when I already found such an amusing way to pass the time. I held her under a double-assault, my fingers mauling her breasts while I alternated biting and sucking on her neck, but both violent enough to leave a mark. She tried to hold back her moans at first, and when that failed, tried to hide them under yelps and grunts, but her attempts failed sexily.

I could see she was surprised by her reaction even more than I was, but unlike me, her reaction was a fresh surge of anger. I realized the explosion before she did. "That's enough!" she exclaimed and tried to stand up, but my grip around her hair tightened. "Let me go!" she shouted, but maintained enough presence of mind not to use a spell.

"I can, but I'm going to be kind and ask you a question," I said, speaking slowly, each word heavy and measured, with the full weight of my charisma behind it to intimidate her. "Are you sure you want to reject my support?"

The way Cornelia trembled at my words was delicious, and the fact that she was intimidated rather than lashing out was enough to prove that my way was working. Her lips moved a while later, breaking her frozen state. "I accept," she murmured.

"Excellent news," I said cheerfully before I pushed her away from my lap and stepped out of the water. "Follow me then we have a lot of things to talk about," I said and started walking. I snapped my fingers after two steps because I didn't hear her walking. The sound of a splash reached my ears, followed by several rapid footsteps, briefly interrupted by the ruffle of fabrics. I ignored it and continued to walk, using a small cantrip to dry myself. No need to ruin her couch.

I was going to spend a lot of time here, after all.

Cornelia appeared through the door several minutes later, her confident mannerism telling me that she had used the small break to gather her confidence, but she was unable to hide the truth from my sharp eyes. It was just a trick on the surface. Underneath, I could see her emotions churning in a panic. I wanted to punish her for daring to be late, but I chose to pause a moment to enjoy the sight of her body. Her long thin legs deliciously disappeared under a thick white towel, but even its thickness was unable to hide her thin waist and her shapely hips from my discerning eye.

Unfortunately, she had pulled the towel high up on her chest, hiding it from the view, not even a hint of cleavage was present. It seemed that I needed to explain to her about the appropriate behavior for a maid, starting from how not to be late. "What do you think you did wrong?" I asked her.

“What?” she answered eloquently.

I sighed. “Come on, firecracker, keep it up. You’re my maid now, and you need to call me sir,” I said dismissively even as I leaned back, putting my muscles on display. No matter what, her eyes trying to catch a glimpse of my body was extremely satisfying, especially with the blush that resulted after she did.

“If you think that I’m going to call you-” she started, only to be cut off by my angry glare, backed by the presence of my charisma, reminding her who was the boss here. “I’m sorry, sir,” she said instead. Her tone was still rebellious, of course, but it was progress.

“Excellent,” I said, once again cheerful as I stood up and walked next to her. “It’s going to take a while to properly educate you, but luckily for you, I’m kind enough to put in the time required,” I added even as I put my hand on her waist, leading her toward the table. Even through the towel I could feel her smooth skin, tempting me to cut to the chase and push her down for the true conquest. Unfortunately, slowly teasing and educating the angry queen of the school was too tempting to forgo just like that.

“I understand, sir,” she managed to say despite her clenched jaw, but her dissatisfaction was nothing compared to the one she would feel during the next stage of my plan. When we arrived at the dining table, I pushed her forward without a warning until she collided with the surface, expelling a painful breath. Her towel rode up, creating a delicious view of her naked bottom. “What the hell-” she managed to exclaim until I interrupted her once again, this time my palm exploding against her naked bottom.

[+100 Experience] 50% Penalty!

“Why don’t you try that again?” I said with a gentle tone that greatly contrasted with my painful spank.

She managed to twist her head enough to look at me, but the angry tirade she was preparing faded against my stern expression. “What was that for, sir?” she replaced her words. Her resentment was still clear, but I let it go unmentioned. After all, it was her first day in her new role.

I had plenty of time to properly educate her.

“Because you were late by several minutes after I ordered you to follow me,” I explained. “I was willing to be merciful, then you went and disrespected me. Maybe some punishment will educate you about the perils of talking back.”

“As you wish, sir,” she answered smoothly, with an undercurrent of pride. She was clearly underestimating my punishment. Understandable, considering the scene between her and Helga I had stumbled on several days ago. She prided herself in her bondage abilities, and my simple spank must have seemed rather simple.

I couldn't help but chuckle as I waved my hand, summoning a bag from her wardrobe, dispelling its protections with another flick, which showed her arcane capabilities were extremely poor compared to me. “We can start if you're feeling ready,” I said even as I pulled a familiar crop from her bag.

“How?” she asked, shocked, but received a soft hit from the crop, and a quirked eyebrow. “How, sir?” she repeated.

“Come on, firecracker. You didn't think you were unnoticed when you were using them in the library, right?” I said, despite her shock when one of the ribbons flew out of the bag under the control of my magic, and tied her hands behind her back. “Where do you think I came up with the idea of making you my maid?” She opened her mouth, but I preempted her by using the crop on her bottom, hard enough to leave a mark. She gasped while I dragged a finger on the mark it left. “It isn't as easy when you're on the receiving end, is it?” I said.

“No,” she managed to say while she was trying to suppress her voice, when I flicked her ear. “No, sir,” she corrected herself, humiliation burning clear.

“Excellent,” I said even as I used the crop once more. “I want you to thank me after every caress,” I added. “After all, I'm here, wasting time to educate you.”

“Of course, sir,” Cornelia answered, her eyes burning with humiliation, especially since she was unable to hide the signs of arousal slipping from her entrance. I stayed silent, but the crop didn't, exploding on her tight bottom several times, each earning a grudge-filled thank you from Cornelia.

[+500 Experience] 50% Penalty!

“Not bad, firecracker,” I said after reaching the two digits. “I wasn't expecting you to give such a nice performance, maybe there's hope for you after all.”

“Thank you, sir,” she said once more, but this time, her words turned into a shocked gasp at the last moment as I caressed her sopping wet entrance.

“Don't worry, I'm a good employer,” I explained. “You have worked hard for your reward.”

Before Cornelia could say anything, I dragged my finger against her entrance once more, making her gasp in shock, but otherwise staying silent. Not surprising, considering the sexual part of her job definition was obvious from the start, not to mention she was too horny to obviously care. Even more amusingly, she clearly hated her own reaction to being the submissive party in the relationship.

She was learning, however, because her only reaction was to thank me again when I pulled the towel away, revealing her naked body. “No problem, firecracker,” I said even as I dragged my finger on her spine gently, making her shiver in desire and appreciation. Under a dedicated assault, I would have her gushing like a spring in less than a minute, but as amusing as the idea was, slowly torturing her with pleasure while denying her a climax sounded much better.

With that idea in mind, one of my hands dragged down until it was on the outside of her thigh, gently massaging her flesh, occasionally slipping inward to give her a boosted dash of pleasure before moving outside once more. While she was busy trying to contain her reactions, I spent a minute enjoying the beautiful sight in front of me, lithe but curvy where it counted, with a great sensitivity that made playing with her really fun. I couldn’t wait until I could put her into a slutty maid uniform, ready for my attention.

I kept her in the same position for more than half an hour while I played with her body slowly, exploring her treasures while allowing her pleasure to build, but never to a point of allowing her to climax. Watching her getting frazzled even worse than she was when I forced her to become my servant in exchange for my support, though on second thought, it was reasonable. As a noble scion, there was little in life she couldn’t immediately attain, therefore she never faced a situation that she had to delay gratification, making the little edge-play I had been applying extremely effective.

[+500 Experience] 50% Penalty!

“Are you enjoying your little reward,” I asked, jolting her out of her frustrated dreams.

“Yes, sir,” she moaned as I dragged my finger along her entrance, giving her a fresh jolt of pleasure. For the first time, the word sir left her mouth naturally rather than with a grudge.

“Excellent,” I said even as I dragged my finger over her entrance once more, carefully calibrated to prevent her from climaxing. “I wonder how impressive your climax would have been?” I added absentmindedly.

Despite her dazed state, she was smart enough to catch my particular usage of words. “Would

have been, sir?" she asked, and I was glad to note a huge dash of panic in her tone.

"Would have been, of course, firecracker," I said casually even as I slipped my fingers inside her for a moment, just enough to give her a jolt before pulling out and replacing it with a spank. "You can't seriously think you deserve a big reward after your lackluster performance. You need to really impress me before reaching a climax."

"But-" she started, only to be silenced by another spank. "Sorry, sir," she said reproachfully. "Is there anything I can do to gain enough favor?" she asked, which, more than anything, proved just how weak she was against pleasure, even overwhelming her prickly pride.

"Hmm," I said as I dragged my hand over her back, dipping toward the edge of her boobs for a moment, enough to make her shiver. "I wouldn't be adverse to it if you manage to give me enough pleasure. Do you think you can handle it?"

"I can handle it, sir," came the answer, much quicker than I had expected. I took a step back, examining her body, trying to understand whether she was actually that crazy about pleasure, or whether she was trying to lull me into a false sense of security. As I examined her, I could see that she had some kind of ploy in mind, but I didn't know her exact plan. Still, I felt secure enough to test her.

"Interesting, let's see whether it's just empty talk, or if you'll be able to handle your commitments," I said cheerfully as I waved my hand, and the ribbon that kept her hands wrapped disappeared back to her bag. "That's enough for today. I'm going to visit again tomorrow, right after sunset. I expect you to impress me," I said as I waved my hand, my clothes flying toward my body.

"That's it for today?" she murmured in shock, clearly dissatisfied. "Sir!" she added when I spanked her bottom in warning.

"Yes, and you're forbidden to play with yourself, and believe me I will know," I said as I patted her shoulder, using the opportunity to cast a spell to prevent her from climaxing. It wasn't impossible to break, but I would know if it was broken.

I could have easily pushed forward, of course, but I wanted her to truly process what she had signed up for. I wanted her to regain her fire, only to break her once again.

Playing with her was going to be fun, I thought as I stepped into the main corridor once more...

-----

[Level: 16 Experience: 134600 / 136000

Strength: 18 Charisma: 25

Precision: 13 Perception: 14

Agility: 17 Manipulation: 20

Speed: 13 Intelligence: 17

Endurance: 14 Wisdom: 21

HP: 1200 / 1200 Mana: 1484 / 1552 ]

#### SKILLS

[Master Melee [100/100]

Expert Arcana [75/75]

Expert Elemental [75/75]

Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Advanced Biomancy [50/50]

Basic Speech [25/25] ]

#### PERKS

Mana Regeneration

## Chapter Thirty-Six

Imagining the expression of Cornelia as her arousal was slowly dismissed put a smile on my face. I would have liked to be there, watching as her joy and arousal was replaced by horror as she understood just what she had signed up for. Also, if I had stayed there for the night, it would have made the process even smoother, allowing me to suppress any sign of rebellion before it even started.

However, I had more important things to do.

The encounter with the necromancers spooked me, not only because I had met with a danger much stronger than what was supposed to exist, but because it showed me just how little I knew about my surroundings. I needed more information. Luckily, as a library worker, I was in the epicenter of information. Sneaking into the library in the middle of the night wasn't even a challenge for me, and more importantly, I had a ready excuse if I got caught.

My abominable reputation was occasionally helpful.

After entering the library, I ignored my usual destination, the shelves on magical theory or leveling, instead moving to where historical battle records were held. I knew a lot about battle tactics and abilities of necromancers as well as many other fringe organizations because they were talked about in detail in the magical theory books, but I had no idea what their aim was, or the reason for their existence.

After quickly skimming through several books, however, I wasn't any closer to the answer of those questions. From what I could discover, their existence stretched back for hundreds of years, but there was nothing definite about their origin, which was suspicious. Not because the lack of information itself, but there were also very few theorizing anything about their roots, which was weird considering that despite their sparse existence, the necromancers were allied across the continent, and knowing their origins would have allowed a much better understanding about their organization.

The more I read about it, the more suspicious I got. It was like they were intentionally avoiding finding an answer, making me even more curious about its roots. But no matter how many books I browsed, I wasn't any closer to its source. Soon, the idea solidified in my mind even further. It was known, but was being kept hidden for some reason.

Before I could delve deeper, however, a chilly sensation passed near me. If it had been any other time, I would have dismissed it as a night chill, but I had remembered that exact



sensation from earlier, where I had been fighting against the undead. It was necrotic energy, only much weaker than what I felt against the horde, so weak that I doubted I would have been able to feel it without my biomancy. Feeling the same energy in the middle of Silver Spires was not a good sign. The smart thing would have been to turn my back and leave the library. My identity was already tricky without angering a nebulous organization with a horde of death at their beck and call.

However, in the end, my curiosity won, and I started following the energy from a distance. Soon, I was close enough to the source to see a shade moving deeper into the library. It was both good and bad at the same time, because while shades were excellent scouts, they were utterly rubbish when it came to any kind of confrontation. Their value lay in their near-invisibility to any kind of senses. Too bad it caught me when I was most alert against that kind of energy.

However, there was a complication. Like any necrotic construct, their range of control was limited, meaning there was actually a necromancer in the confines of the school controlling it. That was dangerous news, no matter the situation. Necromancers sneaking into the school easily was not good news, but it was still better compared to the alternative. Moreover, shades contained a small piece of soul from their creator, meaning they couldn't be given to others to use. They needed to be near their creator.

The school had a traitor inside.

I doubted anyone other than myself would have reached that conclusion that easily, but I was the living proof that the vaunted security of the school was less than perfect against a sneaky approach once the initial infiltration was successful. It was supposed to be impossible for a necromancer to hide their unique aura, but I was the evidence that saying something was impossible didn't make it so.

With that in mind, I continued following the shade, but being careful to stay hidden, only to receive another shock. The shade arrived in front of the vault and slipped through the wards while taking a complicated route. Another evidence of long-term infiltration, otherwise, the shade would have never known the way to bypass the wards that easily. I waited outside, while trying to understand the point of sending the shade into the vault. Shades didn't have physical presence, so they wouldn't be able to take a book from the book. Even flipping a page to read a book was above its capabilities.

Regardless, I followed it when it left the vault as easily as it entered. Its controller clearly had a reason to send it there, and I was still curious about its owner. Luckily, shades had another

drawback, that they couldn't communicate their findings remotely. They needed to be reabsorbed by their creator. So, I followed from a distance, hoping to find the owner. I had been expecting it to go toward the creature forest, giving me the opportunity to spy on the owner, maybe even ambush them in the dark.

I received another shock when the creature started moving toward the central section, where the most prestigious professors lived. The situation was even worse than I had thought. It was either one of the keystones of the school was traitor, or a necromancer was hidden there, good enough to avoid the detection of the best the school had to offer. Combined with the three necromancers I had faced, it pointed to a disaster.

I was a selfish person, but not selfish enough to do nothing after stumbling on a situation dangerous enough to threaten Silver Spires. I decided to take action. I took a breath to still my trembling hand before sending a jolt of arcana energy, destroying the shade, therefore preventing its controller from learning whatever they were trying to get. Then I dashed away, my heart thumping crazily.

I cast several arcana spells rapidly to hide my presence before dashing back to my room, fearful and excited at the same time. I could almost feel eyeballs on my back, afraid of being caught. Unless I had been severely underestimating the undercover necromancer, they were already aware of the destruction of the shade. I had no doubt that if they weren't worried about blowing their cover, they would have already caught me. But they didn't have the luxury of raising alarm, not more than I do.

I tried to sleep, but it proved elusive, rejecting to arrive no matter how many twists and turns I had to take. Luckily, the library wasn't the only place that held distractions for me. I had another destination where my imposition would be greeted with enthusiasm while also helping me to level up. So, I stepped into the corridors once more and started walking, glad that Marianne's room was not close to the central residential or the library itself. Even if someone was searching, a servant walking around in the middle of the night, carrying stuff, was not something to pay attention to.

Sneaking into Marianne's room was a simple task, though after entering, I made sure to put an extra alarm ward just in case. The living room was empty, so I moved to the bedroom, only to meet with an amazing sight. Marianne was on the bed, sleeping with a soft smile on her face, occasionally letting out soft moans. Even more impressive was her body, partially revealed as her covers slid away, displaying her amazing lingerie, pure white, short, and transparent enough to give a hint of skin underneath and to reveal the absence of underwear. Her nipples pushed against her nightie determinedly like they were trying to cut free, making me excited

for the next step.

[+50 Experience] 50% Penalty!

I quickly shed my clothing and slid into the bed next to her, careful not to wake her up as I pulled her head on my chest. She hugged me immediately as a soft moan left her mouth, but she stayed asleep. Curious about the depth of her sleep, I caressed her shoulder with no effect, before slipping my hand under her nightie to meet with her generous breasts. I gently squeezed, but the only reaction was another sleepy moan, and her nipples hardening even further. So, I squeezed her nipple.

That managed to awaken her from her sleep. "Such a nice dream," she murmured as she looked at my face from her barely open eyelids. Since our bodies were close, all she needed was to turn a bit to capture my lips in a soft, fleeting kiss. I continued caressing her breasts while her hand dragged down, slowly tracing my chest first, then my stomach. But a gasp escaped her mouth as she wrapped her hand around my shaft, and looked at me much more alert. "It's not a dream, is it?" she asked in a trembling voice.

"Guess," I answered with a smirk as I initiated another kiss, gentle and slow. Meanwhile, I was enjoying the feeling of her breasts, kneading her impressive globes with a slowly ramping up intensity, her lips following the trend immediately as well. I didn't know whether it was the sleep grogginess, or whether our last lovemaking session had managed to destroy her shyness, but I was loving her taking initiative.

[+300 Experience] 50% Penalty!

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 19%]

Still, I was surprised when I felt a pair of soft hands on my shoulder, pushing me back. I let her succeed, curious what she had in mind with such an aggressive move. She climbed on my lap, hovering over the length of my shaft close enough for me to feel the heat. "Close your eyes," she whispered in a sudden bout of shyness, and I did so, unable to resist her cuteness, even when I felt her leaving the bed and hurriedly pulling open a closet, followed by the sound of fabric.

Then, a warmth covered my shaft, and curiosity overcome me, only to see Marianne leaning over my shaft, brushing its top with her tongue while her hand was wrapped on its bottom, gently moving up and down. Moreover, she surprised me with her change of clothing. Her white nightie was gone, replaced by a pure black corset that pushed her already-amazing breasts to

perfection. Moreover, from her reflection in the mirror, I could see a very noticeable absence of her panties, replaced by a pair of thigh-high stockings. However, with the cute expression of concentration on her face, she looked like an angel who was doing her best to act rebellious.

It was a cute view, Marianne gently teasing the crown of my manhood, occasionally pulling back to appreciate the throbbing head before leaning down once again. Then, she did something that surprised me, and plopped an ice cube into her mouth before returning to her task.

I couldn't help but gasp in pleasure as the combination of cold and hot assaulted my shaft, though I was equally impressed with Marianne actually going out of her way to try a new trick. She truly managed to impress me.

[+200 Experience] 50% Penalty!

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 20%]

I decided to respect her wishes and kept my eyes closed, enjoying the way she moved deeper and deeper with every repeat. Soon, she was holding most of my shaft hostage in her mouth, her hands dancing on the bottom, occasionally slipping down to my balls to enhance the sensation. Minutes passed as she moved back and forth, slowly and sensually like she was worshiping my presence. Understandable, as not only had I taken her virginity in every conceivable way, but I also impressed her by thoroughly defeating her hero in front of her to a point that Cornelia hadn't been able to react.

It was going to be fun when I educated Cornelia enough to make her serve us while I was together with Marianne.

As the time passed, she slowly deserted her slow and sensual motions in favor of wilder, more aggressive activities. As the heat enveloped me deeper and deeper, a gag reached my ear. But Marianne impressed me when instead of pulling back, she pushed even deeper, her hands clamping on my thighs to get extra strength. Soon, the familiar tightness of her throat wrapped around my head, pushing me closer to climax.

I could have held back, of course, but seeing she had gone through such an effort, I decided to reward her. My shaft started twitching inside her mouth, which she was alert enough to recognize and pulled out a bit, just enough to keep the crown in the perfect position. It wasn't a scene to be missed, I decided, watching as Marianne was humming in enjoyment as she devoured my seed enthusiastically, managing to catch all of it without spilling any.

[+300 Experience] 50% Penalty!

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 22%]

“How was it?” she murmured, her shyness feeling a bit ridiculous considering she was wearing a sexy corset with panties absent, and had just finished a voluntary blowjob that went much deeper than I would have expected.

“It was amazing,” I answered as I grabbed her arm and pushed her down. “It’s my turn now,” I said as I leaned down over her, positioning nicely between her legs. I kissed her clit, but it was a sharp, aggressive kiss, one that implied dominance despite the supposed subservience the position implied. I was amused by the way her body jumped, but instead of saying something, I let my tongue work on more important tasks, such as exploring the area surrounding her knob.

When my tongue moved down, her hips started to move, following my beat to increase her pleasure. “Yes, more please,” she moaned out without bothering to keep her voice down. Her reaction was understandable, considering she was already sopping wet when I started, and her passion only intensified as the time passed. Soon, she was gasping and moaning helplessly while I cut loose, my tongue penetrating her again and again, pushing her closer to a climax.

[+200 Experience] 50% Penalty!

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 24%]

However, I wanted to make the moment of completion where she got her achievement from the system more memorable, so I pulled back which earned me a short-lived disappointed gasp that turned into an excited moan when I hovered above her, ready to take her in the missionary position. “Do you want me?” I asked her as I leaned forward, capturing her in my gaze.

“I want you,” she murmured helplessly, her chest moving up and down wildly with her breaths.

“You want me to do what?” I asked again even as I pressed my shaft to her entrance, but didn’t push forward.

“I want you to ... fuck me,” she whispered. I would have made her repeat it, but she gasped with such a thick sense of desire that I decided to have a little mercy and pushed deep inside her. “Yes, fuck me! Hard!” she moaned, her expressiveness surprising me, or maybe I just misunderstood how horny she had been feeling. I slammed into her mercilessly, ferociously, until her expression was dominated with pleasure. I didn’t stop even when she started showing signs of climax, and impaled her until she started shuddering helplessly.

[+500 Experience] 50% Penalty!

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 25% - First Stage Completed +5000 Exp]

[Companion Acquisition: Relationship not sufficient for the second stage]

Level UP!

[Select one of the following skills: Expert Biomancy, Master Elemental, Basic Observation]

I quickly chose biomancy despite the combat-related advantages I would have received from improving my elemental skill. After two encounters with necromancers, I wanted to be better prepared against their presence, and biomancy allowed me to directly counter their necrotic energy.

Meanwhile, Marianne's eyes popped open in shock in the middle of her arousal. "Do you like your gift?" I said confidently, at this point, aware that she had received an achievement. It was a pity that our relationship had yet to reach a point that would allow us to progress to the second stage, meaning I need to find a way to help her progress, but still, it wasn't a huge challenge.

"How? Why?" she murmured dazedly, the shock of receiving an achievement not helping her to process her orgasm.

"It's a secret," I said to her even as I started moving inside her once more. "You need to keep it secret for now, but I can say that it's just the beginning. Understood?" I added, and she nodded enthusiastically, though I wasn't sure how much of it was true comprehension and how much of it was her enthusiasm for another session. Regardless, I pulled out and flipped her over before putting my hands on her back, pinning her in place. "Are you ready?" I asked.

"Yes!" she moaned, which turned into a loud cry as I plunged deep inside her. With my other hand, I grabbed her hair tight, pulling it back enough to give me access to her beautiful neck, sucking and licking to increase her arousal.

She was in the mood, I had no intention to sleep, so we continued our lovemaking until the sunrise.

[+5000 Experience] 50% Penalty!

I would have continued further, but I had another expedition with Helga and Aviada, and after

the event with the shade, I had no intention to skip it. They were my only allies, and the stronger they got, the better.

[Level: 17 Experience: 146150 / 153000

Strength: 18 Charisma: 25

Precision: 13 Perception: 14

Agility: 17 Manipulation: 20

Speed: 13 Intelligence: 17

Endurance: 14 Wisdom: 21

HP: 1275 / 1275 Mana: 1621 / 1649 ]

#### SKILLS

[Master Melee [100/100]

Expert Arcana [75/75]

Expert Elemental [75/75]

Expert Biomancy [50/75]

Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Basic Speech [25/25] ]

#### PERKS

Mana Regeneration

## Chapter Thirty-Seven

“I can’t believe you’re forbidding me from going to the library!” Helga gasped in anger.

I sighed, but didn’t bother to silence her. We were in the middle of the wilderness, and if there was anyone close enough to hear us, we had bigger problems. “Really,” I said instead. “That’s your big reaction to the school being infiltrated by a necromancer of unknown power?”

“It’s not like I can do anything about that part,” she said, but I was happy to note a blush on her face as she realized her rather selfish perspective. “And are you sure my absence wouldn’t be more attention grabbing anyway,” she added, trying to make it sound like a logical argument, but I could hear the desperation in her tone.

“Come on, booksie,” Aviada cut in, smirking, her arms crossed on her chest. “It wouldn’t kill you to stay away from your real lovers for a few nights.”

“But I just gained a new skill for spell architecture,” Helga murmured, reminding me more of a child than a self-possessed ambitious woman ready to challenge every adversary for her own ambitions. “It’s an unfair sacrifice.”

“And I have to loan my precious sword again and again,” Aviada cut in with an annoying smirk. “We all make sacrifices.”

As much as I liked to see casual banter between them, it also cost us a lot of time. Otherwise, I wouldn’t have limited myself to two quickies to activate the mana regeneration perk before cutting into the wilderness. I took a step back, and two slaps exploded on their bottoms, one for each. “Come on, girls, pay attention,” I said. “We don’t have a lot of time to waste, we need to improve your levels as much as possible in the next few days.”

I had no doubt that anyone else would have received a deriding scoff for daring to mention the potential to gain even a level in a few days, not to mention multiple levels, but since yesterday’s expedition had resulted in three levels, I had a lot of leeway to mention such a thing. I received two shy nods before the girls donned their game faces and turned their attention outward. We were currently in the Soundless Canyon, a place famous for its deadliness even for high-powered parties, so we all needed to be on high alert.

I chose the canyon for two reasons. First, danger meant stronger creatures, which in turn meant quicker leveling. Second, and the more important part was that the canyon was in the opposite direction from our encounter, making it unlikely for us to be caught by the



necromancer scouts that were doubtlessly sent. I would be lying if I hadn't been tempted to hunt those. Their intrusion to the library felt really personal. After all, for better or for worse, that place had been the closest thing to a home for me, not to mention my damnable curse was broken there.

That place was special, and it annoyed me to see it soiled by undead trash.

Still, I was self-aware enough to realize antagonizing a faction of unknown strength and capabilities required more than a sense of annoyance. Yesterday's encounter and my impulsive decision to slay the shade had been rather unforgivable. It was for the best if they had never learned of my identity.

"Helga, this is for you," I said just after I incapacitated another Earth Serpent with a swing of my sword. Those were a dangerous species of creature famous for their ambushes, bursting through the ground with little warning, their jaws strong enough to threaten even the strongest warrior. Luckily, my earth magic allowed me to detect the vibration they created, allowing me to reverse their ambushes easily, making them easy targets. The girls, who long since lost their shock at my prowess of destroying class twelve creatures with a swing, were satisfied with the easy experience.

"Another detection spell?" Helga said even as she sank her dagger into the helpless serpent's brain stem, having long gotten used to delivering finishing hits.

I just nodded as I focused on my palm, creating another ball of ephemeral energy, holding it still for several seconds for Helga to examine. When she nodded I triggered a nova, its presence washing over my body like a warm blanket.

[-24 Mana]

[+1 Biomancy]

"It's better than the last time," she said with a cute frown as she stayed focused on my palm. "At least this time you managed to keep your connection with the life energy for twenty feet before you lost control."

"It's progress. If those dead bastards can throw their rotten energy left and right, I should be able to do the same with the reverse," I said with a shrug even as I conjured another ball, this time trying to put more power in it, but it destabilized and exploded as a ball, washing over us calmly, wasting a lot of mana. Manipulating pure life energy from a distance was much harder than I had been expecting. On a positive note, I felt my exhaustion disappear, and from the

rejuvenated expression on their faces, the girls experienced the same.

[-60 Mana]

“Do you really think that you can copy their approach? Necrotic energy is much more malleable than life energy,” Helga said with a concentrated expression, the one she had whenever she had a complicated problem.

“Of course. I already had a preliminary success, and it has been just a day since I have started working on it,” I said with a scoff. “I can’t believe no one else had tried this.”

Helga slapped my shoulder. “Not everyone has virtually endless mana to throw around.” She stopped for a moment. “Or they have good enough stats to take generic biomancy instead of healing. You’re the only one I know that has a chance to use such a wasteful spell.”

I shrugged. “If it works,” I said with a smirk.

Aviada cut in. “God damn it, Gaius, you’re making me feel like an idiot. Is there anything you can’t do well?”

“I’m not that good at throwing,” I answered modestly. That was one combat area I was planning to neglect.

“What are you talking about,” Aviada answered. “I have seen you hitting a moving target a hundred feet away with a throwing knife.”

“Yeah, but it hit its arm,” I explained. “I was aiming for the eye.” Aviada snorted as she leaned down, busy digging out the fangs of the earth serpent. They weren’t venomous, but they were still valuable, and more importantly, they were easy to carry. After that, we moved on, leaving the carcass behind, even though my heart ached for wasting a small fortune. Unfortunately, we weren’t in a position to hide those valuables.

The next three hours passed nicely. We came across a large nest of Kappa in addition to the serpents, pushing the girls close to a level up. Meanwhile, I continued to work on my detection spell, wasting a lot of mana but improving the spell quite a bit. The significant improvement of my biomancy was a welcome bonus as well.

[-546 Mana]

[+12 Biomancy]

"I think I got it," I said with a smirk as I converted a nice chunk of mana to life energy and converting it into a stable ball before releasing it, feeling it spread around for several hundred feet without losing connection.

"It seems stable," Helga said. "It's a pity that we can't use necrotic energy to test-" she continued, only to be cut when I suddenly pressed my hand on her lips.

Her annoyed expression left its place to panic when I spoke. "The spell detected something," I said, quite surprised myself, not to mention feeling panicked.

"Are you sure?" Aviada said as her grip tightened around her sword.

"Not a hundred percent," I answered. "It's still a new spell, and there's no guarantee that it's working correctly. Before last night, I would've written it off as paranoia, but if they are strong enough to actually penetrate the school, we can't afford to write it off as a coincidence."

"We're not going to ignore this, are we?" Aviada asked, looking ready to push forward already.

"Can we take the risk?" Helga asked. "The last time we almost died, and they underestimated us."

I understood Helga's point. We had just got rid of a sizable force, and if they were being led by a half-decent commander, they would be on alert. "I really don't want to, but we can't afford to ignore it. The situation is worse than I first thought, and getting rid of that shade and yesterday's team might have galvanized them into early action. I need to check to make sure."

"You meant we, right?" Aviada said, her tone sharp.

"Unfortunately, no," I said even as I passed her sword back to Aviada. "I would move faster if I'm alone." She looked like she was about to complain, but I waved my hand. "No, we can't afford to fight. We're going to retreat first and you're going back to the school. I don't want you to be out in case they get suspicious. They are already in the school, so they can check the records to see who was outside when they lost the battle."

Both Aviada and Helga looked dissatisfied, but they were sensible enough to understand the reasoning. "Keep the sword at least," Aviada said, trying to pass the sword to me once more.

"No, that's too recognizable. They already have spies in the school, I don't want them targeting you," I said decisively, which put a small blush on Aviada's face. "Moreover, this time, I'm not planning to fight but scout the opposition, so it won't be necessary."

I looked at my surroundings as I escorted the girls outside the canyon, not wanting to keep them near the event. I was confident in my abilities, and even if I was detected, I could trigger a landslide to escape. The natural limits and concealment that made the place a pain in the ass when fighting against the monsters were a bonus if I suddenly found myself against another undead horde. However, if I was forced to that point, trying to protect the girls while trying to run would have been too much even for me.

Soon, we arrived at the protection of the wards once again. “Do you want us to stay close, just in case,” asked Helga with a worried expression.

“Thanks for the offer, but I want you two to be visibly away from here,” I explained as I put my arm on her waist. “But I appreciate the offer,” I added, pulling her close for a kiss, and Helga responded enthusiastically, her body smashing against mine. It would be a lie if I said I wasn’t tempted for another quickie, especially since Aviada was watching us with hungry eyes, no doubt willing to join the moment we started. Unfortunately, I had a bad feeling about the undead presence, and didn’t want to delay anymore.

So, reluctantly, I pulled away from Helga, and after a goodbye kiss from Aviada -no less passionate- I was walking toward the canyon once more. It was not a good sign to come across undead wherever I walked. There was clearly a bigger plan, dangerous enough to target the school itself.

Though, as much as I wanted to protect the library because of my emotional entanglement, I was also aware I could be revealed. Earning some goodwill beforehand just in case would help immensely.

As I moved deeper into the canyon, I turned my attention back to more immediate concerns. As I moved, an oppressive feeling of death and decay filled the air, so much that I had to cast a warding spell to protect myself from the uncomfortable sensation while simultaneously hiding my presence.

[-12 Mana]

[+1 Biomancy]

Sensing that I was close to the center, I didn’t dare to cast my detection spell, afraid that necromancers would detect its presence. Hence the reason I was almost caught when a black robed figure suddenly appeared around the corner, forcing me to duck behind a large rock, glad that their presence had driven the monsters away.

I watched with a frown as the necromancer picked a central location and started drawing a large hermetic circle. Both the design and the runes themselves were unfamiliar, but the energy that was spreading from it was even more disgusting than the necrotic energy. Thankfully, it was rather muted, possibly because it wasn't activated yet.

The necromancer left the area after it was completed. I cast a detection spell to make sure I was alone in the area before walking closer to the array, trying to examine it through my arcana abilities. But the moment my mana touched one of the runes, it awakened, and it started invading my spell. I forcefully terminated the spell, and expelled a large amount of mana to make sure corruption didn't invade my body.

[-245 Mana]

Of course, such a flare of magic had doubtlessly alerted the necromancers to my presence, so I dashed toward the canyon walls once more, this time climbing upward several feet before creating a cave on the surface, one that closed behind me the moment I stepped in, only a small crack remaining.

I watched as three robed figures dashed towards the opening, their hands already glowing with the sickly gray of their death magic. "What was that surge?" asked one of them as he looked around carefully. He was the one that built the circle. "Are we under attack?"

I felt annoyed. I put myself into a deadly danger because of a moment's carelessness, and I had no illusions about my hiding place. Thankfully, my luck held up, and one of the others spoke after looking around cursorily. "Don't worry, the leftovers are obviously corrupted. Lictus screwed up, again," he said, his derision was clear.

"Say that again!" the first one bellowed, clearly unhappy about the insult.

With that, two necromancers argued for a while until the third one cut in. "Enough," he called angrily. "Stop acting like children. We still have several nodes to create."

"But-" one of them said until the leader cut him off once again.

"Enough," he said, and continued when the other seemed ready to cut it off. "If you want to explain to the boss why the trap is not ready, go ahead, keep arguing. I'm sure he will be understanding."

Referring to their mysterious boss solved the situation quickly. They stopped bickering and started examining the runic node with a rapid discussion between them. When they determined

the array was working as it was supposed to, they disappeared in different directions, too busy to ask why a perfectly working array had resulted in a surge.

Before leaving my hiding spot, I needed to decide what to do. The array was clearly dangerous, so much so that if I hadn't already positioned myself as an enemy of them, I might have chosen to leave. If my situation was ever revealed, it wouldn't have taken a genius to match my presence with their recent setbacks. Since I had already declared war, weakening them further was an obvious choice.

Once again I walked to the magical node, examining it carefully. I had learned from my mistakes, so instead of pushing my magic into the array, I examined it passively. With my limited time, I wasn't able to discover a lot about the array, but I managed to discover how to track its connection to other nodes.

It left me with another challenge, namely, how to take action. Destroying it outright was not an option because it would have alerted the necromancers. Deciphering it might have been a viable choice if I had enough time and access to the library, but I didn't know when it would be triggered, so that was not a viable option as well.

In the end, I decided to learn from the example, and created a small explosive array linked to the control one. The explosive array was a small but ingenious combination of arcana and earth elemental effects. Arcana to maintain the connection and trigger, earth elemental to destroy the foundation of the node, therefore harming the array.

There was one problem, I didn't know whether destroying one node would be enough to hamper its effects.

Since the necromancers were working hard on its construction, it would be foolish for me to assume that the loss of one node would destroy the integrity of the whole array. Luckily, I was able to discover the connection between the arrays, so finding the others wouldn't have been difficult.

Decision made, I started following the ephemeral lines of connection between the nodes, occasionally avoiding patrols while I planted my explosive traps near each node, each concealed under the nodes' intimidating corrupting glow.

I managed to trap almost twenty nodes when the necromancers suddenly dashed toward the center of the array. I followed them instead of doing the smart thing, as I couldn't help but feel curious about the aim of this huge array, trusting my abilities to keep me hidden in the canyon.

As I moved, I trapped several more nodes, much easier now that the patrols were pulling to the central location.

When I arrived at the center of the array, I was suddenly glad that I decided to stay, because even seeing the complicated patterns of the central array gave me a better understanding of wardmaking. It was truly a masterpiece. Too bad that it was developed by the necromancers and I had to destroy it.

Then, just before I could activate the array, I felt its presence disappearing, which reinforced my expectation that it was a trap. The question was, for whom?

The answer I received a minute later, when two figures dashed into the canyon, one unfamiliar figure wrapped in several arcana glows as it escaped, carrying a book in hand as he dashed away. But my attention was grabbed by the figure that was following it. It was the head librarian, covered in lightning, her anger visible even from a great distance as she pursued.

Shocked by her appearance, I forgot to trigger my explosives until I felt the array stirring, its softness belying the dangerous threat it presented.

I didn't know if it aimed to kill the head librarian, or something worse, but either way, I knew that I couldn't have allowed it. "Librarian! Be careful!" I shouted even as I activated my explosives, hoping that it would be enough...

-----

[Level: 17 Experience: 146150 / 153000

Strength: 18 Charisma: 25

Precision: 13 Perception: 14

Agility: 17 Manipulation: 20

Speed: 13 Intelligence: 17

Endurance: 14 Wisdom: 21

HP: 1275 / 1275 Mana: 1621 / 1649 ]

## SKILLS

[Master Melee [100/100]

Expert Arcana [75/75]

Expert Elemental [75/75]

Expert Biomancy [64/75]

Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Basic Speech [25/25] ]

## PERKS

Mana Regeneration



# Chapter Thirty-Eight

My shout of warning arrived at the last second, because a moment later, twelve figures donned in black robes stepped into the opening, their hands already glowing with necromantic energy. The stirrings of the array increased while twelve webs of energy spread, each centered on a necromancer. Then, they connected, creating a cage with a domineering presence, impossible to escape even someone as formidable as the librarian.

Meanwhile, the one that had been escaping from the librarian had stopped just outside of the cage, showing, a blob of purple energy coalescing around him, with a distinct sense of aggressiveness that the cage lacked. However, despite all, it wasn't satisfaction in his eyes but anger. "Kill the intruder!" he shouted even as he pushed his energy to the cage, his attack amplified greatly by the array itself.

However, the attack flickered, its structure losing its balance halfway thanks to the destruction of some of the nodes. Combined with my early warning, the librarian managed to react in time. She raised her hand, and a wall of light appeared between the attack and her.

My eyes widened, because I didn't know what she had used, not just the specific spell, but the category of the spell itself. It wasn't arcana, elemental, or life energy, but something completely different. Whatever it was, however, it was far more potent than anything I could achieve. Even with some of the nodes destroyed, the necromantic attack was enough to erase me from existence just by a glancing touch, but the wall managed to resist its presence just with several deep cracks, protecting the librarian behind completely as well.

Even more impressively, a wave of her hand transformed the wall into an arrow, which slammed onto the cage mercilessly, making it shimmer dangerously. Unfortunately, the cage was too strong to be destroyed in one move, and it recovered after a momentarily dimming.

I wanted to watch more, as even a glance at such a high-level confrontation taught me a lot about magical combat. However, the sound of arrows cutting through the air took precedence, forcing me to turn away, only to see almost a hundred skeleton archers aiming at me with a second volley. I cast a wind wall, knocking the arrows away. Then, without lowering my hand, I flicked my fingers, and sending a low-level fireball in the middle of the formation. It wasn't strong enough to destroy the skeletons, but the same couldn't be said for their bows, their strings turning ash instantly, removing the danger from the stray arrows.

[-35 Mana]

Too bad that the skeleton archers were the smallest of my challenges. Behind them, I could see seven figures already casting spells, their bodies burning with necromantic energy. They didn't feel as strong as the ones currently managing the array, but they were strong enough to be a threat. Though, they weren't as scary as the three hulking figures appeared next to them. Three bone dragons.

Under the threat of a combined magical and melee assault thick enough to overwhelm me, the solution was obvious. I slammed my hand on the floor, triggering an earth elemental spell, raising a huge dust wave. I was already casting a second spell as the dust rose, creating an identical copy of my life signature, then a third spell to hide my own, before I started running away.

[-26 Mana]

[+3 Biomancy]

As I departed, several of necrotic energy passed the space I had been occupying just moments ago, but one of them had a worse aim than the others, and his bolt of energy moved wide, hitting my shoulder instead.

[-147 HP]

I couldn't help but wince as a horrible pain pulsed in my body, and I lost a tenth of my health, but I gritted my teeth and continued to run away. I didn't cast a spell to hide its effect, afraid that they would notice the discrepancy between my life signature and the mana flare. It was the same reason I had been relying on my physical power only to escape.

The curtain of dust was thick enough to cut their sight for a long while. Unfortunately, they were smart enough to realize the problem in just a few seconds. "It's a decoy! Find him!" shouted one of them even as their attack shape changed, using wide waves that swept the floor instead of bolts.

Luckily, I was already next to a large stone. With my agility and speed, it took a second for me to rapidly climb through its rough surface, avoiding their assault. And if there was one good thing about being in the middle of a necromancer camp, I didn't have to worry about any living creature. Their defenses had since long secured the area.

A sudden downpour of rain suddenly appeared in the opening, suppressing the dust, but it was too late for them. I was already hidden from their view. "Where is he?" called one of them.

“He is clearly hiding! Find him!” shouted the leader once more. I continued running away, confident in my success not only because of my stealth skills, but also thanks to the blanketing effect created by the battle between the librarian and her ambushers.

I stalled for a moment, trying to decide what to do next. I had underestimated the presence of the enemy. Even with a dozen of them locked in a battle with the librarian, they still had enough in reserve to completely overwhelm me. I could escape easily under the coverage of the librarian’s battle, but its final result was still in doubt. The librarian was stronger than I had estimated, but so was the ambushers with the support from the arrays. If I ran away, there was no guarantee who would be the victor.

However, facing them directly was not an option either, not when I had to defeat seven necromancers, three bone dragons, and numerous other critters... Luckily, they had other points of vulnerability, and I was thoroughly concealed. I stopped for a moment, using my perception to identify the location of the other nodes, which was shining distinctively in their active state.

I moved to the most distant location before starting to destroy the nodes. Destruction of the first four went unnoticed, but when the fifth node fell apart under my magical attack, a loud cry escaped the mouth of their leader. “He’s destroying the nodes in the northeast, you idiots!” he cried in warning, his voice enhanced magically.

Since he was kind enough to alert me, I dashed away before they could arrive, moving to the west section of the array, and destroyed three more until he managed to raise an alarm. “He’s attacking the east now, you idiots! He slipped away from your attack. Spread out and prevent him from destroying it!”

I stopped destroying the nodes once again, but this time, I didn’t run away, instead, climbed on top of a large rock that was towering above the only feasible path from the northeast section, holding as much as mana as I could without glowing like a lighthouse.

When two necromancers and a bone dragon appeared on the opening, accompanied by a horde of skeletons, I was ready. I waited as the dragon passed and the skeleton brigade started to pass. Necromancers were in the middle, standing next to each other, mana shields shining in their hands, ready to destroy any magical attack, their eyes dancing wildly.

Unfortunately, they trusted the skeletons to guard their immediate surroundings. So, when I jumped down from the rock when they were directly under me, they were too late to react. I swiped the sword once, and one head flew off, blood spraying wildly. “Goodbye,” I said even as I swung my sword, ready to decapitate the second one.

That didn't work as well as I intended. I succeeded in decapitating part, but this time, there was no blood spray, just a decayed neck, made of bone and sinews.

"Try again," cackled the flying head even as the body lifted its staff and slammed me with the energy he created by breaking the shield. I threw myself back, rolling with the attack, doing my best to avoid slashes of the skeletons gathering around me, but with limited success. Luckily, I still had HP to spare.

[-97 HP]

I couldn't help but feel excited as I found myself face to face with a lich supported by a significant army. The body of the lich raised its hand and sent a flare, no doubt summoning his compatriots. "Perfect," I murmured. Not only I had to face a full-blown lich, a bone dragon that was currently charging toward me, and almost a hundred skeleton warriors, but also I had to finish it before the reinforcements arrived.

One good thing about it was with my position revealed, I didn't have to pull back. I pushed a generous blob of life energy into my sword, making it glow brightly, enough to make the skeletons around me a step back, giving me the opportunity I needed.

[-120 Mana]

[+2 Biomancy]

I dashed forward toward the lich's head, aware that my makeshift enchantment wouldn't last more than a few seconds. My sword danced like a snake, the skeletons helpless against my master melee skill, especially when a good strike was enough to unravel their cursed existence thanks to the enchantment.

The body of the lich positioned itself between me and the head, its full-frame glowing with the necrotic experience. From the unstable way it glowed, I didn't have a good impression of what was awaiting me. I lunged forward even as I waved my empty hand, desperately trying to create a brand new biomancy spell.

The purple energy was already pulsating as the beginning of an overwhelming wave when I pushed my sword into its heart, using it to inject more life energy into its body.

[-673 Mana]

[+1 Biomancy]

My desperate innovation attempt succeeded only partially, turning its body into a pile of ash, but its spell stayed partially intact, hitting my body violently.

[-364 HP]

Being in the ground zero of a lich's desperate ultimate attack was not fun, I noted. I could see its head a few feet away, unaffected by its area-effect spell, unlike the skeletons, moving with a renewed energy. It was one of the most annoying aspects of fighting against Necromancers, they were free to use their area effect spells without fearing hurting their minions, as the necrotic energy enhanced them instead.

I cast a simple arcana bolt to its head, which fell apart easily, signaling that its soul had used the opportunity to escape. Their ability to send their soul back to their soul container was one of the things that transformed the challenge level from difficult to nightmare.

There was a limit to the range of effectiveness of the soul container, and under normal conditions, though still measured in miles. I might have searched for it under better circumstances, but the sound of bone dragon closing in didn't allow me to chase such luxuries.

Such as running away from an enraged bone dragon. The only good thing about destroying the necromancers was that the bone dragon had no controller anymore, so it was limited to blindly chasing me. I dashed back to the rocky part of the canyon, cutting and weaving through the skeleton warriors, once again using my melee skill to maximum benefit, running to my maximum capability even if I had to take a few blows I would have avoided normally.

It was well worth it, because the bone dragon was just a step away when I stepped into the passage, leaving it to crash violently against the thick stone wall before starting to dig with all of its undead single-mindedness. Secure, I used my biomancy to great effect once more, this time to heal myself.

[-320 Mana]

[+286 HP]

The agonizing pain had turned into an annoying buzz. I was glad to see that I had almost reached a parity between my mana spent and hitpoint recovered. I started running, but not before I left another decoy, more than enough to trick the mindless bone dragon. Then, I created a weaker, but still noticeable decoy, and sent it toward the south, hoping that it would distract the others.

Then, I sent a pulse of biomancy energy to detect their locations, to make a better plan about the next step. I couldn't help but smile excitedly as I realized that in their hurry to protect the arrays, the undead army had moved toward the periphery, leaving the center open.

Big mistake on their part.

Thanks to the limited mental capabilities of most of my enemies, it wasn't much of a challenge to avoid them, though occasionally I had to use some elemental tricks to create shortcuts, my mana surges obscured by the ever-increasing effects of battle in the center of the array.

When I arrived at the center, I met with an amazing sight. The librarian was still trapped in the middle of the array, defending herself with her unique light magic and using the same magic to batter on the walls of her prison instead. She looked exhausted, but it didn't alarm me, because her attackers were in an even worse state, furiously trying to keep the array stable. Even their leader was exhausted, more focused on stabilizing the array rather than trying to attack.

Still, a battle was an uncertain thing, and there was still a chance that the librarian might lose. I decided to tip the balance in her favor more. The necromancers were too focused on the threat she represented, so they failed to notice my presence as I sneaked toward them. My target noticed my presence as I swung my sword, but it was too late. With his focus and his magic dedicated to stabilizing the damaged array, before he could make a sound, his head was already gone.

"It's an ambush," shouted the leader as he looked at me before he sent a warning flare. "Everyone, come back!" he ordered, his voice enhanced. If the supporting army returned from all angles, they would trap me in place, making it impossible for me to escape alone.

Luckily, I wasn't alone. Even better, with the death of one of them, they had to focus all their attention on the ward just to prevent themselves from burning. Combined wards were dangerous when things were going bad. The librarian was smart enough to see the opportunity, and cast a much brighter spell, this time directly to attack rather than a modified defense spell.

The result was spectacular. Her prison shimmered and weakened, looking like it was about to shatter. I cast a fireball to leverage the opportunity, injuring two more necromancers enough for them to lose their control, burning up as a result.

[-65 Mana]

I was hoping that the battle was about to end, but then the leader proved that there was a reason for his post. "Cancel the prison!" he shouted, and before I could take the opportunity to

kill another necromancer, the librarian's prison shattered. Meanwhile, the reinforcements arrived in the form of five necromancers and three bone dragons.

Luckily, I had reinforcements of my own. But when I looked at the eyes of the librarian, I could see the exhaustion dancing in her eyes. The trap took more than I had been expecting. I looked around, and detected the east section was the weakest. I gestured her to attack that side, while I turned toward the leader, gathering as much as mana as I could, turning it into life energy.

It wasn't surprising that between the librarian and me, they decided to attack me first, reasonably taking me as the easier target, while sending the bone dragons to delay the librarian, supported by a few necromancers. That was a mistake from their end, because even exhausted, the librarian was able to deflect them without even slowing down.

"You have messed with the wrong person," said the leader as he walked toward me, his hands burning with necrotic energy, his intention was clear. He looked confident, understandable considering I was surrounded by ten necromancers and a lot of skeletons. Unluckily for them, most of them were still exhausted by operating the array.

The leader realized his mistake when he realized the spell in my hands was growing without a limit. He threw a bolt of energy to me hurriedly, but it was too late. I let my spell, the strongest I had cast to date. It was a biomancy nova, filling the canyon with life energy.

[-1230 Mana]

[+5 Biomancy]

Despite almost completely emptying my mana, the spell wasn't as strong as I would have liked. The skeletons were all destroyed, their weak structure unable to resist the area effect spell. The necromancers were, unfortunately, stayed alive -for a given value considering their occupation- but they were distracted, not to mention shocked by my spell. So, when I followed it with another dust spell to hide from their view, their first reflex was to shield themselves, ready to protect themselves.

That gave me the time to follow the opening the librarian had created, saving me from the envelopment. Soon, I caught up with the librarian. "Good, you managed to get away," she said, but when I noticed a slight slurring in her tone, I realized that the escape would be even more difficult than I had first assumed.

We dashed away at the full speed, hoping to avoid our pursuers, at least avoiding them enough to recover some mana, as currently, I was running on fumes. Though, a smile appeared on my

face when I received a notification the moment the last skeleton disappeared in my field of view.

[Deadly Departure: Rescue a damsel in distress from a deadly ambush in a great personal risk, impressing her greatly in the process. +2000 Experience, +2 Speed, +2 Charisma]

It was shaping out to be an interesting adventure...

-----

[Level: 17 Experience: 148150 / 153000

Strength: 18 Charisma: 27

Precision: 13 Perception: 14

Agility: 17 Manipulation: 20

Speed: 15 Intelligence: 17

Endurance: 14 Wisdom: 21

HP: 967 / 1309 Mana: 93 / 1683 ]

## SKILLS

[Master Melee [100/100]

Expert Arcana [75/75]

Expert Elemental [75/75]

Expert Biomancy [75/75]

Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Basic Speech [25/25] ]



PERKS

Mana Regeneration

# Chapter Thirty-Nine

Trying to escape from a horde of undead while trying to protect the famous head librarian of the Silver Spires wasn't what I had been expecting when I woke up, but I took it in stride. I was getting used to the curveballs the life was throwing to my way.

I raised my hand after we took a turn, mana gathering at my palm. The librarian rose her hand in an instant, her fingers glowing brightly, her expression threatening despite her exhaustion. I felt the hairs on the back of my neck rise in fear as I realized my mistake. Casting a spell on a situational ally afraid of her situation wasn't the safest thing to do.

Luckily, the situation was dangerous enough that rather than blasting me directly, she chose to threaten me. "Calm down, I'm trying to mask your presence," I said even as I pointed my own body, and let the biomancy-based spell to cover my body and mask my life presence. The spell took hold much easier thanks to my skill increase, while the librarian's eyes grew in surprise.

[-15 Mana]

"You can cast it on me as well," she said after a moment's hesitation. I appreciated her quick response, as I could hear the undead moving once again. I flexed my mana once again, ignoring the sense of exhaustion that filled my being. Still, I forced myself to cast another spell, this time creating two fake life signatures dashing out of the canyon, directly toward the school.

[-36 Mana]

"Let's move," I said, but rather than dashing outside the canyon, I turned back.

She followed me for a while, but I could see the doubt on her face as we moved deeper into the canyon. "We shouldn't move too deep," she said, though her tone was already reminiscent of order despite her exhaustion.

"Why?" I asked, more to highlight the fact that I wasn't her subordinate at the moment rather than actually learning her reasoning, which was obvious. She wanted to use the opportunity to slip away from the canyon before the necromancers could establish a cordon, not wanting it to turn into an endurance battle when her mana was so low. Of course, she didn't know that, for the next several hours, I had the absolute advantage thanks to my mana regeneration.

And if that gave her the impression that I was stronger than I actually was, all the better.

Upon being questioned, her displeasure was clear. After all, back in the school, she was famous

for her unbending ways, not just against the staff and the students, but also against the other faculty members. It was evidence of just how exhausted she was that she actually chose to explain. "We have already ditched them thanks to your spell. That's the best opportunity for us to get away from the canyon before they realize our trick and envelop the canyon."

"I don't think that'll work," I countered. "When we step off of the canyon, we'll be out in the open. They have too many disposable soldiers for us to be confident about ditching them safely."

"At least we would have a chance," she countered, her anger intensified. "Once they return and envelop the canyon, we'll be sitting ducks, and they'll find us long before we could recover enough mana."

Even with her exhaustion and her thankfulness about being saved, I could see that her patience was running thin. "Long before you could gather enough mana," I countered with a smirk on my face, mostly thanks to my subterfuge, because I was trembling inside.

"You can recover mana faster," she stated, not bothering to hide her shock, while I nodded, doing my best to look nonchalant. Her shock was not misplaced, as according to everything I read, mana regeneration had always been an insurmountable challenge for the mages, restricting their leveling efficiency greatly by forcing them to rely on warrior specializations. "When will your mana refill?"

Under her careful gaze, I felt like an animal to be dissected. Even if the mana regeneration wasn't my biggest secret, revealing it to someone whom I didn't have the slightest leverage against was dangerous, especially that someone was significantly stronger. Still, since I had already taken the step, there was no reason to hold back. "About half an hour," I said, glad that I had the perk active from both Aviada and Helga. Sometimes, being prepared helped.

She smiled, and for a moment, her harsh expression melted, revealing the beauty hidden under her prickly demeanor. "That's good," she said. "Our survival is almost guaranteed now."

I responded to her with my best smile, using the full extent of my charisma and my charm, even though the rational part of my mind cursed me for daring to something as stupid as trying to seduce the head librarian. The horny part of my brain, on the other hand, showed its full support, especially with my memory bringing forth the amazing sight I had observed when she was in the shower.

Some things were worth the risk, I decided.

We moved in silence for a few minutes, then I gestured her to stop when I noticed a perfect hideout. “Why do we stop here?” she asked.

“It’s the perfect defensible spot,” I explained even as I moved to the nearest wall and started to draw a rune. “The entrance is small enough to prevent the bone dragons from entering, and while some of the walls are a bit thin, we can reinforce them with runes, which will also function as an escape route. Moreover, we could easily trap the path leading to the entrance, and the cave itself is large enough that they can’t force us out with area-effect spells.”

“That’s an awful lot of enchantments,” she said doubtfully. “Even with your regeneration, can you really do all that before they find us?”

Her suspicion was reasonable. After all, the enchantments I had mentioned wasn’t the simplest in terms of mana consumption, not to mention the great variety we required to implement them successfully. However, thanks to my excessive stats, I had a mana pool quite a bit larger than my level justified.

Rather than answering, I started drawing the first runes on the walls of the cave to hide our life signature as well as partially suppressing mana fluctuations. It would not allow us to freely throw fireballs and lightning bolts, but we would be able to charge the defensive runes faster than a tortuous’ crawl.

After some complicated mental calculations, I started working on the defensive enchantments. “That’s an interesting rune,” she murmured as I draw the first reinforcement rune on the wall to prevent the walls from being collapsed with a swipe of a bone-dragon. “It lacks an internal balancing component, but you’re balancing it with your own magic,” she added, with just the slightest doubt. After all, stabilizing a rune was beginner stuff, which made my choice a bit weird at the first glance.”

I didn’t say anything, but focused on drawing the second rune, once again balancing it with my own magic, but pulling just a dash from the first one. “Interesting,” she murmured.

“Impressive perception,” I said, even as I couldn’t help but feel slightly bummed. I was hoping to impress her after the full scheme had been completed, though I guessed that was a bit arrogant. She wasn’t one of the most famous mages of the Empire for no reason.

“Not as impressive as trying to build such a large defensive scheme without self-balancing nodes, relying their magical weight on each other to achieve balance,” she said, for once, sounding impressed. “It requires more finesse to establish, but it would be more stable.”

Genius,” she continued, easily summarizing the benefits of my approach.

“I can’t take the full credit,” I said with a dismissive wave. “The idea belongs to a friend, I just came with the practical application for it.”

“I would like to meet that friend someday,” she said in a casual tone.

Too casual, even, but I didn’t comment on it. For all of her direct reputation, she apparently could play it slowly as well. It was an invitation for me to talk about who I was, but in a way that I could easily ignore without being rude. I chose to ignore, as I had already revealed more than I was comfortable with. “Maybe someday,” I answered in a similar easygoing manner as I finished another rune, feeling a sweat sliding down on my forehead. The array cost significantly less in terms of mana compared to the traditional approach, but required intense concentration when finalizing it.

My esteemed guest chose to sit a nearby rock, carefully examining me as I engraved the array, her gray eyes shining with deep concentration despite her clear exhaustion. Under her careful gaze, I carefully finished the last node before placing the last of the connection, then let out a sigh, letting myself breathe freely once more.

[-476 Mana]

[Mana: 531 / 1683]

The array cost me a good chunk of mana, but funny enough, my mana was around four hundred when I started establishing it, meaning I actually managed to recover mana while establishing a defensive formation. The mana regeneration perk was truly unbelievable.

After taking a few deep breaths to relax, I started drawing the next set of defensive arrays, not wanting to lose any time. She looked at me with no small amount of shock, clearly aware of just how much mana I had spent on the array. I just shrugged with a smile.

“Who are you?” she whispered, finally unable to resist the temptation, but her tone had a slight alarm as well.

I couldn’t help but stiffen. I understood her reasoning, as I had shown, and continuing to show, an impressive number of nonstandard abilities, making her wary even after I had saved her life. I guessed that from the extra effort I had to put in the ambush, she knew that I was weaker than her. She would have just cut through the ambush and freed herself and the hostage. But I was revealing too many diverse abilities to make her feel comfortable.

If it was someone else, or her under different circumstances, I would have just ignored the question, or outright rejected it, abandoning them to their fate. She was different, not because she hid an amazing body underneath her robes —though it didn't hurt— but because the necromancers were clearly stronger than I had first assumed —both in and out of the school— and she was the only one I could trust to be against them. It meant that sooner or later, our paths would cross. It would be more useful if she had good feelings toward me.

“That’s a complicated question,” I murmured, which, technically, was honest and true. Before that fateful day, who I was was obvious, but every day after that, it was getting more and more blurred. Just a week ago, I was scurrying around like a rat as I tried to peek on the students, but here, in the cave, accompanied by one of the strongest mages of the Silver Spires, preparing to face against a horde of undead led by more than a dozen necromancers... The answer was getting more blurry than I had expected. “But you can say that I’m trying to find myself,” I answered.

“Interesting place to look,” she answered, and for the first time, I saw a genuine smile of amusement on her face.

“Can’t argue with the results,” I answered with a shrug even as I drew yet another rune to establish a defensive trench at the entrance, littered with several fire and earth runes. I didn’t want the cave to be filled with the skeletons. “The school has interesting opportunities for clarity,” I murmured, though I looked at her pointedly, revealing yet another secret to her against my better judgment. I hoped that it wouldn’t explode to my face.

To her credit, her only reaction was a widening of her eyes, understanding my point. With my abilities, if I had been a genuine student, everyone would have recognized me, and she already knew the rest of the teaching staff and notable guards. Which left only a few options, I was either a stowaway, or I was a staff that was hiding his abilities, both having rather dangerous implications considering no one had noticed my presence.

“Yeah, neither the guards nor the wards really work to keep a sneaky intruder out,” I said, answering her concerns before she could answer. Yes, my role as staff had given me a big advantage, but even without that, I could sneak in with half of my current abilities.

“Maybe you can share some ideas to improve security,” she offered, revealing another benefit of my last statement. For her, the security of the school was more important than delving deeper into my identity. It was a small advantage, but an advantage nonetheless.

“I would like that,” I said even as I put the finishing touches for yet another magical exploding

trap. “But let’s handle our current problem first. Our biggest threat is their necrotic bolts. Those hurt a lot, and even with our defenses, there’s no guarantee that we can avoid if all of them attack at the same time.”

“True, but why do I feel like you already have an idea?” she answered.

I smirked in response. “Not a workable one,” I answered with a frown. “Not yet, at least,” I added before crouching next to her and quickly scribbling a few symbols on the ground. “I’m trying to establish a deflection field based on life energy, and using arcana to shape and stabilize, but I’m still having problems.”

“Arcana, elemental, and biomancy,” she murmured. “That’s an interesting selection.”

“It works for me,” I said, dismissing that line of inquiry. We didn’t have time, and even if we did, I had already revealed more than I was comfortable with. My leveling strategy could wait for the second date. “Do you have any idea how I can make this ward work?” I added, deflecting her question.

That launched a rather lengthy discussion about the comparative advantages of different ward schemes. I managed to surprise her more than a few times with my innovative approaches, but it was nothing compared to how much I had learned. Even if warding was not a focus area for her, her experience still towered mine an incredible amount, allowing me to figure out a lot of new applications for my stationary magic. Luckily, with my intelligence and wisdom scores, it had been rather easy to memorize every single word that left her mouth. Her words were truly treasures, especially considering she was the caretaker of the —second— biggest information repository of the world.

[Tempting Tutoring: Impress a sexy educator with your impressive learning capabilities. +1000 Experience, +3 Intelligence]

I could see the signs of her approval, but the system’s confirmation was always welcome, though three points increase from that was a surprise. I knew she was impressed because she holding herself back, revealing more theorems and secrets in half an hour than I was able to dig out in the library since my awakening, though, considering her survival was highly dependent on my performance, maybe it wasn’t that surprising.

A while later, I stood up, drawing another set of runes to establish the nodes even as I continued to talk with her. I was moving, because my mana finally recovered, and I didn’t want to waste a second of regeneration. More defensive encampments we had, the better. Of course, I took

time to heal both her and myself to full health.

[+310 HP]

[-245 Mana]

Soon, my new array took shape, creating a subtly glowing wall of arcana energy, but with the warm sensation of life magic. I just hoped that it would work better than we had hoped against the necrotic energy. After being hit by their attack several times, I didn't fancy struggling to defend a chokehold under a rain of their disgusting death bolts.

"So, why exactly you were chasing that guy with such anger," I asked even as I started working on the escape tunnel, in case things got too bad too fast.

"He stole a precious book of mine," she answered.

"It must be really precious," I answered even as my mind shifted to the vault. After failing to use a shade, it must be the next strategy. "By the way, I remember having to kill a shade yesterday, which, now that I'm thinking about it, was suspiciously close to the library, and was about to enter the faculty residence. Do you think it might be about that?" I said. At this point, considering everything else I had revealed, it was hardly a secret.

"Maybe-" she started, but before she could say anything else, a rumbling sound reached our ears, most likely from a bone dragon trying to push himself through a tight spot. "They are here," she said.

"About time," I answered even as I squeezed my fists, excited to test my new toys. "How is your mana situation? Do you think you can defend yourself here alone?"

"I have enough mana for a few big spells," she answered, though her expression confused. "Considering they wouldn't be stupid enough to push through the defenses blindly, I should be able to resist for several minutes without trouble. Why?"

"I was thinking about some creative greeting."

[Level: 17 Experience: 149150 / 153000]



Strength: 18 Charisma: 27

Precision: 13 Perception: 14

Agility: 17 Manipulation: 20

Speed: 15 Intelligence: 20

Endurance: 14 Wisdom: 21

HP: 1309 / 1309 Mana: 1685 / 1734 ]

## SKILLS

[Master Melee [100/100]

Expert Arcana [75/75]

Expert Elemental [75/75]

Expert Biomancy [75/75]

Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Basic Speech [25/25] ]

## PERKS

Mana Regeneration

## Chapter Forty

I could feel the Librarian's eyes on me as I walked out of the cave, moving as fast as I could while I could still stay concealed. The biomancy-based detection trick I had figured earlier worked wonders, allowing me to avoid the horde that was circling around the cave. Their discovery of the cave was inconvenient, but also inevitable. After layering that many defenses, it was hard to hide.

The undead and the necromancers approached the cave in a disorderly way. The undead horde was as fresh as ever, but the necromancers were showing the signs of exhaustion, both mental and magical. Despite that, their confidence was obvious as they moved to their destination, thinking that their victory was a given. Even better, only around half of them were a part of the attack force.

I slipped through the cracks in their formation, then started searching for my target. I had arranged the defenses of the cave for a full assault, and with their numerical disadvantage, I doubted that they could crack it without sacrificing their resurrected monster horde, and since they think that they were in the cusp of victory, I doubted that they would be that wasteful. So, I was calm as I searched for my target, the leader of this little ambush.

I found him on the back of the formation, sitting on the shoulders of a bone dragon, raining orders to other necromancers. He sounded panicked, which was understandable. He seemed like a middle-management type, making it likely that his small army was a loan, or a part of his mission, and he had to explain the loss of so many high-level necromancers against two targets. I doubted anyone that ruled a band of necromancers could be classified as merciful.

So, his death was basically charity, I noted with a smirk as I stayed hidden just twenty feet away under the shadow of a rock, magically hiding my signature, waiting for the perfect moment to attack. I stood still as I watched him order a probing assault, mindless skeletons triggering the first layer of defenses before disintegrating among a flash of fire and earth. He frowned before calling the second and third waves, this time in different formations, minimizing the impact of the explosions but not giving them a chance to recover as well. The initial ambush was not a stroke of luck, I realized. He was really proficient when it came to tactics.

Too bad that he was wrong about the game we were playing. I waited until he was focused on talking with yet another necromancer, his attention split between the formation and the discussion, before I dashed forward, as silent as a shadow, my sword in hand. I was already behind him when I flared my magic, coating the sword with a thick layer of arcana energy,

sharpening the edge to an unimaginable degree for a split second.

That split second was all I needed to decapitate him. His eyes widened in shock as the blood spurted, showing that, unlike my other target, he wasn't a lich. Just to be sure, I drove the sword to his head and let out a thick rush of flames, bright enough to melt the sword while turned his head into ashes.

[-142 Mana]

The biggest threat was gone, but that didn't mean that I could relax. The other necromancer who was getting orders stood frozen, unable to react for a moment. Then, he opened his mouth, whether to cast a spell or to call for help, I would never know, because I stuffed my melting sword into his mouth, silencing him forever. It wasn't the simplest way to die, but also, they deserved it.

I grabbed the sack of the leader and checked to see whether the book was in there. Since it was precious enough to be bait, I didn't want to risk it leaving back. I even flicked it open, but unfortunately, it was in an alphabet I had never seen before. Pity, as I would have liked to know what the book was about.

My assassination attempt wasn't exactly silent. Most of the necromancers turned to face me, their hurried attacks cutting through the air. I responded to them with a deluge of magic missiles, it wouldn't hurt more than sting, but after my previous displays, it would force them to the defensive.

[-43 Mana]

While they were trying to conjure shields, I dashed forward, hitting the group on the flank, using their allies as a barrier. Fire and earth and life energy flew from my hands boundlessly, forcing them to defensive, burning one or two of them. It was aggressive and wasteful, but defeating all of them was a pipe dream, the best thing I could do was to intimidate them enough to pull back while I regenerated mana once again. The assault took a minute, but draining me almost to the limit.

[-1300 Mana]

Just as I was planning to pull back, a bright explosion of light exploded from the cave. A huge ray exploded from the cave, cutting through the horde without losing a spark, and disintegrating two necromancers in the process. I looked to see the librarian standing at the entrance of the cave, her robe dancing with the wind, like she was a part of the legend.

I hoped that our enemies were too distracted to notice the paleness of her face. I knew for a certainty that she had used the last scrap of her energy in that spell, and was struggling to stand on her feet.

But after failing the ambush, suffering under a series of counter-ambushes, losing their leader, and pincered between two formidable mages, the morale of necromancers finally plummeted. One of them dashed away, and it seemed like the signal, because the rest started running as well, choosing different directions. They seemed to think that the best idea was to avoid our attention. To reinforce the idea, I started following the largest group, pattering them with fireballs which looked much more impressive than they were actually dangerous, even if it drained the most of my remaining mana.

When I returned to the cave entrance, I was met with a dangerous sight. Without the necromancers to control them, the undead horde was charging toward the cave entrance. Most were destroyed ignobly, failing to account for the traps, but one of the bone dragons was too durable, and had managed to break through it, attacking the librarian.

She managed to defend herself, but not without a cost. She was using flares of light to deflect the dragon's claws. It was a simple spell, likely costing one or two mana for each casting, relying on her reflexes to work. But in her current state, even one point of mana was too costly, losing color with each casting. If I didn't know any better, I would have mistaken her for a zombie. Her robes were ruined by the dragon's claws, leaving bloody gashes behind.

I dashed forward as fast as possible, taking attacks of the zombies instead of delaying even for a second. Even then, I was almost too late. When the dragon swung its claw to a dangerous strike, she raised her trembling hand, but no light came out. There was no time to cast a spell, and I doubted I had the mana to deflect such a strong strike. I was running in fumes as well. I tackled her out of its way, taking a bad gash in my back in exchange.

[-264 HP]

The position I found myself in would have been rather romantic if it wasn't for the bleeding, exhaustion, and the undead horde trying to kill us. When I met her eyes, however, I found dazed disbelief. The temptation was simply too much. I leaned down and stole a fleeting kiss, pushing a bit of color back to her face.

[Achievement: Seductive Stranger. Melt the heart of an icy maiden with the irresistible charm of a mysterious savior. +3 Charisma, +1000 Experience]

The achievement was a nice surprise, especially since the sudden boost in my charisma giving me a few points of extra mana and a dash of extra strength just when I needed it. I grabbed her and rolled away, the claw collapsing the area I had been holding just moments ago. When I stood up, I was holding her in a bridal hold, dashing as fast as I could while using the extra mana to connect the array once more. I managed to step into the emergency tunnel, but not before I received another painful gash to my back.

[-326 HP]

“It’s payback time, you bony bastard,” I gasped in excitement as I flared my mana, once again emptying my reserves. The rush of mana triggered an inactive node in the defensive array, and a second later, the cave exploded into a true cacophony. It was a pity that I couldn’t return to destroy the stragglers, but neither I nor the librarian was in a good state, and my mana regeneration perk was about to expire. Spending that mana for healing and saving the rest for emergencies was a better idea.

Thirty minutes later, we were far enough from the canyon that I started to feel safe. I couldn’t say that the risk was completely gone, but after the last disaster which cost them their leader and —hopefully— the most of their horde, I doubted that they would try to follow us. I would have welcomed her opinion about the next steps, but she was limp in my arms, exhaustion and wounds long caught up with her. I had taken a quick break to cure the worst of her wounds, but she was still spent.

My first instinct was to return to school, but that was not viable. She was in tethers, and we know for a fact that there were enemies in the school. Doing so would end in a nasty assassination. So, I started looking for a nice cave we could stay hidden. Luckily, even if the necromancers changed their mind and continued searching for us, it was easy to handle without the endless numbers of the horde to help them.

When I found a cave with a hard-to-notice entrance with a reasonably close underground water reserve —elemental magic was useful for more than just combat— my mana pool was almost completely full once again, so, it was very easy to carve several runes on the cave to hide us from the dangers, as well as regulating the temperature and cleaning the air. If I was going to stay in a cave, I’m going to make it as comfortable as I could. I even created a large pool in the middle by digging a small water reservoir, which was needed to clean our wounds.

My first focus was my damsel in distress, even though she had skipped the risky period. The sooner she recovered, the sooner we could act. Her eyes fluttered open when I lay her on the floor —softened as much as possible using earth magic— and looked at me with an expression

of shock. “We’re alive,” she murmured, her whisper almost impossible to distinguish from the rustle of the leaves.

“Yes,” I said with a bright smile, bringing the full impact of my charisma and my seduction experience to the game, and I was happy to see another fleeting blush on her face. “You have performed amazingly, like an angel of vengeance, beautiful and bright.”

“Shut up,” she murmured shyly, which surprised me quite a bit. It was hard to imagine the figure that intimidated everyone with her sheer presence as shy. Though, considering just how comfortable she had been dressed in just an illusion, I ruled it out the general shyness, which meant my kiss truly had worked wonders in penetrating her defenses, though literally saving her life heroically likely helped.

“Now, for something uncomfortable,” I said with a soft smile, and she looked worried. “About your wounds,” I added, and her expression turned to panic. I let her stew in it for a moment before continuing. “I need to remove your clothes to cure you.”

The expression of shock on her face was spectacular. She looked like a teenage girl receiving her first catcall rather than the legendary mage ruled one of the most important locations for the civilization with an iron fist. “But...” she murmured, her exhaustion momentarily forgotten under the rush of adrenaline. She tried to stand up, but the only thing she was able to do was to shift in her place before the pain invaded her face.

“Yeah, that,” I said, trying to look equally shy at the prospect.

“Can’t you do it over the clothes?” she asked, her voice tiny. “The other healers do.”

“I’m not primarily a healer, and I can’t take the risk. I can try to bring you back to Silver Spires if that’s your preference, but...” I said, leaving it lingering. We both knew that returning back without the full recovery was a death wish.

“I don’t...” she murmured, her gaze finding my face once more, but her inquisitive gaze failed to penetrate the shy surface I was doing my best to reflect, leaving my dirtier thoughts inside. I watched as she tried to make a decision before sighing in defeat. “Okay.”

[Achievement: Meritorious Medic. Not all good deeds go unrewarded. +3 Wisdom +1000 Experience]

I had to hide my smile as the notification rang. Two achievements on the same day were definitely welcome, though I would say they were well-earned. I looked somber, because I was

pulling a knife, her clothes were stuck to her body with blood and grime, and trying to remove them otherwise would have been more difficult. She said nothing as I removed her clothes with smooth and methodical slices, leaving her body clad in her underwear, though wounded and covered in dirt, it wasn't exactly an erotic sight yet. The system seemed to agree with me, considering there was no experience reward.

"Now, take a deep breath," I even as I put my hands on the biggest wound in her body, looking dangerous despite the scab, and let my magic flow. With the latest improvement of my biomancy skill, it worked even better than I was hoping for, her internal wounds disappearing one after another, her bruises leaving their place to beautiful alabaster skin, though still dirty.

However, as I continued to cure her, I sensed a certain emptiness, like something was missing. Then, I realized that I couldn't feel her mana. It was suspicious considering it had been more than an hour since the last combat, and she must have recovered a bit for now. I decided to test her. "How's your mana recovery?" I asked her.

"Still in progress," she said, but I was still healing her, so it was impossible for her to hide her heartbeat picking up speed. I continued to look at her, still expecting an answer. "Is that really important?" she added.

"Might be, I'm not sure how it'll affect your recovery," I answered, which was partly true. More importantly, I wanted to learn why she wasn't recovering yet.

She stayed silent for almost a minute while I continued to heal her, when, she whispered. "It's a special ability of mine, I can overdraw my reserves until I hit negatives, but then my regeneration slows down until it climbs back to positives," she answered somberly.

"For how long?" I asked, afraid of the answer, dreading the answer.

"The worst until now was three days," she answered, which wasn't the best answer to receive, but still manageable.

Then, I remembered the last scene, where she had overdrawn so much that she wasn't able to cast even as a simple shield. "And, if we compare that time to now, how will it compare?"

Once again, silence ruled the room while I continued to heal her. "This is much worse," she answered in the end, then, continued with a small whisper. "I don't know what I'm going to do."

I gently cupped her chin and raised her head until she was looking at my eyes. "Don't worry, I'm here as long as you need me," I said in a selfless, heroic tone. With the situation I found myself

in, she was the only ally I could trust, and if I was going to stuck protecting her for a while, seduction was a good way to pass that time.

"I..." she murmured as a blush covered her body, even visible through the dirt. "Thank you..."

Her reaction was interesting. Combined with her power and her standoffish attitude, it might be that she never had to rely on others, at least to a degree of total helplessness, and she was reacting it in a very interesting way, promising quite a bit of enjoyment for me. I just smiled in response before grabbing a piece of fabric and drenching it in the small source of water I had created earlier.

She stammered once more as I pressed it on her shoulder, dragging gently, getting rid of the dirt to reveal alabaster skin underneath, making her shiver. "What - what are you doing?" she gasped, trying to look scandalized, but unable to keep her innocent arousal hidden, hinting her lack of experience.

"We need to clean you. Otherwise, you run the risk of infection," I explained.

"But, I'll be..." she murmured, unable to finish the sentence.

I spoke compassionately, though hinted shyness as well. "I know it's hard, but we need to do that. We don't know just how weak your body will be with no mana after all those wounds. What if you get an infection?" She still looked like she was about to argue, so I continued, doing my best to sound hurt. "You don't trust me," I stated despondently.

"No! NO! I trust you," she rapidly answered without even thinking, and rewarded by my best shy smile, unaware just how artificial it was.

"Okay, but feel free to tell me if you feel uncomfortable, okay?" I said before pressing the fabric on her arm. Then, I chuckled.

"Why are you laughing?" she asked, a bit cross. I had no doubt that she would have been crossing her arms pointedly if she could move in her own power.

"We still haven't met," I answered with a chuckle. At this point, revealing my name wasn't exactly a big risk. "My name is Caesar," I said.

"Titania," she murmured, once again shy.

"A magnificent name for a magnificent woman," I said, enjoying the way she blushed as I gently



cleaned her arm. Maybe tending her as she got healed was going to be more interesting than I had assumed.

-----

[Level: 17 Experience: 151150 / 153000

Strength: 18 Charisma: 30

Precision: 13 Perception: 14

Agility: 17 Manipulation: 20

Speed: 15 Intelligence: 20

Endurance: 14 Wisdom: 24

HP: 1309 / 1309 Mana: 1321 / 1836 ]

#### SKILLS

[Master Melee [100/100]

Expert Arcana [75/75]

Expert Elemental [75/75]

Expert Biomancy [75/75]

Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Basic Speech [25/25] ]

#### PERKS

Mana Regeneration

## Chapter Forty-One

For a while, the silence was dominant in the cave while I gently cleaned Titania's arm with a damp piece of cloth. I couldn't help but feel excited as her arm was slowly freed from the ugly cover of dirt, leaving her alabaster skin, shining and supple after my healing treatment. I occasionally threw a glance toward her, but her beautiful gray eyes —lacking their usual hardness— avoided mine.

Understandable, considering she was being forced to receive nursing effort from a man she barely knew, and the huge crush she was starting to develop toward me definitely didn't harm. "Are you comfortable?" I asked as I moved to the other arm, and received only a soft nod in response.

She stayed silent as I finished her other arm including the shoulder, then moved to her legs, starting from the middle of her thigh and moving lower, trying to make her more comfortable by respecting her boundaries. Or more accurately, acting like I was respecting her boundaries while applying the full range of massage tricks on her, helped by the fact that I had spent several minutes carefully healing her body with my magic, figuring a lot of its secrets in the process, sensitivities, blind spots, and how best to awaken her primal desire.

The first break in her tone happened when I finally reached her ankle. A gasp escaped her mouth, one that she quickly hid behind a cough. I acted unawares as my fingers caressed her foot, turning the intensity a notch as well. "May I ask you a question?" she murmured.

"Of course," I said, once again trying to act unaware. I knew that she was asking for the question earlier than she intended, trying to cover for the idea. A good tactic, too bad it would not work against me.

"Why are you here, in Silver Spires?" she asked, her tone focused. It was good, because it reminded me of something I almost let slip during the last hour. She might be acting like a teenager with a crush, but she was still the head librarian that was strong enough to cut through an army, with the wits to back it up. I was lucky that I was dealing with her in her most vulnerable, exhausted, shocked, and devoid of mana.

"I wanted to be free," I answered casually, deciding that it was the best answer I could come up with, close enough to the truth without revealing my biggest secret. And funnily, when I said it, it resonated in me more than a well-crafted lie. It was true, in the end. I was trying to get stronger, because I wanted to be free even if my unusual power source was discovered.

“What do you mean?” she asked. I doubted that she didn’t understand my reason, but my fingers were digging into her soles in a determined assault, bringing her pleasure. And from the way she bit her lips desperately, it was clear that she was struggling to keep her reaction hidden.

“Well, the situation back home is complicated,” I said even as I turned my eyes to the cave entrance, my tone had a deep, husky quality, like I was struggling through a dark memory, playing the mysterious tortured hero. “At first, there wasn’t a lot of hope about my development, they assumed that I already hit my level cap when I was young, so I was sequestered like the family’s little shame. When I was old enough to understand the implications, I could have explained to them the truth, of course, but that would have put me back into the struggle for the family seat. At that point, I was already behind my rivals with no reasonable way to gain other’s support.” But even as I gave my dark monologue, I did my best to give her a mindblowing foot massage while acting absentmindedly.

“Seems difficult,” she murmured, trying to sound serious, but failing to keep the shadow of the moan hidden. “Do you want to return there?”

[+200 Experience]

I acted unawares even as I moved to her other foot. “Not exactly,” I answered. “It was not the best childhood, but I lacked a true understanding of the details. But there’s nothing for me back there even if I take the family seat, which I could easily,” I said, which was very true. With my current strength, it would take me less than a day to take the family seat, but why bother. The last thing I needed was to get stuck in the endless organizational meetings, border disputes, and other innate problems.

“And how come you’re in my school,” she said, even with the arousal and curiosity, a certain edge could be heard.

“When the opportunity came, my family enthusiastically shipped me to Silver Spires, hoping that I would kindly disappear from their view, unaware of my strength. I stayed, because the school gave me the best opportunity to get stronger. And before I knew, it was the only place I could call my own,” I continued as I intensified my massage, forcing a moan of her beautiful lips, of which I acted unawares.

“Is that the reason you’re fighting against the necromancers, that they are threatening your home,” she said.

“In part,” I answered even as I turned to her, with a bright smile on my face. “More importantly, I can’t let them hurt such a spectacular sample of beauty, can I?”

The blush that spread her face was spectacular. This time, I kept my gaze on her face, a teasing smile on my lips, as I climbed upward while cleaning her other leg. When I passed her leg, she was squirming helplessly, and when I arrived the upper part of her legs, enjoying the softness of her inner thigh. I wanted nothing more than parting them open, ripping off her underwear, and take her on the floor.

[+200 Experience]

Pity that it was too early for that.

Caressing her inner thighs with a torturous slowness was decent compensation for the lack of it, especially since she was reacting amazingly to my touch. She was even more inexperienced when it came to the matters of the flesh, I realized. “Let’s focus on your back,” I added as I gently grabbed her shoulder before gently flipping her over, the wet cloth dancing on her back. I would have liked to continue focusing on her thigh, but I want her to be completely clean before I tried my chance with the seduction. The last thing I needed was her to feel self-conscious about the state of her body in the middle of the seduction, ruining my chances.

I focused on her upper back at first, sliding under her bra strap repeatedly to hint her about the possible direction I might take. She managed to stay silent for a short while before a stubborn moan finally escaped her beautiful lips. “I’m not hurting you, am I?” I asked, fake-concerned. “I can reduce the pressure if you want.”

“No!” she answered, far too quick to be a nonchalant response, but she still tried to do that. “I meant, it’s better if you keep the pressure so that we can focus on our plan.”

“Of course, my lady,” I answered gallantly even as my empty hand trailed her spine gently, making her shiver. Her moans become commonplace once I arrived at her lower back, passing dangerously close to her buttocks. I cleaned the edges, but instead of her arousal increasing, she stiffened, so I let it slide for a bit. “Do you feel strong enough to sit?” I asked instead.

Her answer was a pointed, angry glare, trying to conceal the fact that she was feeling self-conscious. Understandable, considering her reputation and power. It was likely that no one had questioned her capabilities for a long while, certainly not something as simplistic as sitting up. I answered with a gentle but teasing smile instead. She avoided my gaze shyly and murmured. “I can handle it,” she said as she tried to push herself up her feet, only to fail spectacularly.

“Nonsense, for the next few days, I’m your obedient and selfless servant,” I said even as I presented my arm to her, helping her to reach a sitting position. She did so, her arms crossed in front of her still-dirty chest, covered only with a bra. However, I caught a glimpse, enough to see her nipples pushing hard against the surface, telling her arousal.

Even when I helped her to a sitting position, she looked like she might topple down at any moment. As a gentleman, I could never allow such a disaster, so I sat behind her, her back pressing against my chest, my arms gently around her waist. “Isn’t it a bit much,” she managed to murmur as she turned her head to face me.

It was a mistake from her end, of course, because it brought our lips almost to a contact point, separated by just an inch, her panicked breath dancing on my lips. She was frozen, and I decided to use the opportunity to focus on her stomach, flat and fragile under my touch. She just stayed there, frozen, while I continued caressing her body, guilt and shock and enjoyment dancing on her face.

[+200 Experience]

I gently hummed even as the fabric I used to clean her beautiful body rode up, dancing just under her breasts. She didn’t react as badly as before but still stiffened, so I used a simple spell to clean the fabric before focusing on her neck and her face. The silence stretched as I slowly caressed her face, revealing her dainty, beautiful frame and her delicious lips.

She stayed silent for a while, before a gasp escaped her mouth. She was getting antsy. In a moment of inspiration, I decided to try something new. “You trust me, right?” I asked, and she nodded, though it was a hesitant one, waiting for the twist. I smirked as I raised my finger. “Suck my finger.”

“What!” she exclaimed, managing to shout in her exhausted state. “Don’t be ridiculous-” she tried to continue, but I silenced her by pressing my finger to her lip.

“Come on, you won’t be disappointed,” I said even as I dragged my finger along her lip, knowing that her shivers had nothing to do with the cold, not with my body draped around hers. She looked at me hesitantly, her heartbeat beating hard enough to be felt on my chest. Then, she took my finger between her beautiful lips, pouty enough to make a courtesan jealous.

Her eyes widened as I let a minuscule amount of pure, and shapeless mana from my finger, making her eyes widen in shock. She bit my finger in shock, luckily not that hard in her exhausted state, but still enough to hurt. I continued to release mana for a while before

stopping.

[-157 Mana]

“What was that?!” she exclaimed, shock and euphoria on her face.

“Pure mana,” I answered, like it was a simple thing. In truth, it wasn’t. The only reason I was able to do was my rather impressive theoretical background combined with the expertise on three discrete branches of magic, giving me an extraordinary awareness of my magic. “How much mana did you recover?” I asked.

“Two points,” she answered, and I couldn’t help but frown. The idea was good, but the efficiency was too low.

“I spent over a hundred and fifty points,” I answered with a frown, making her smile fall as well. I was quick to console her. “That was just the first test, I’m sure that we can find a better way. Even if we can’t, it’ll still help your recovery immensely.” I sighed.

“Yes,” she said with a smile. “Your regeneration is really fast.”

“It’s a pity that that bonus is about to expire,” I answered, and she looked shocked. “Don’t worry, I can trigger it again, but not for now. The conditions are a bit tricky.” She nodded. “Are you ready to continue experimentation, I said even as I placed my finger in her mouth once again, this time, letting mana trickle slower, hoping for better efficiency.

Of course, it wasn’t the only thing I was doing. With her attention on my finger between her hot lips, and the mana flowing from it, it was the best time to move onto some sensual cleaning. The fabric dipped down on her torso once more, this time slipping until it collided her cleavage. She looked like she was about to complain, but I chose that moment to let a huge deluge of magic, filling her mouth, extracting a moan as well.

[-342 Mana]

[+400 Experience]

[Achievement. Tantric Treats. Use your mana to establish a deeper connection with a beautiful beau. +3 Perception, +1000 Experience]

Level UP!

[Select one of the following skills: Master Biomancy, Basic Light, Basic Tantric]

I couldn't help but focus on the selection in front of me instead of her beautiful moan. Biomancy would have been useful, of course, and basic light was intriguing, but not as much as Tantric, especially when mana transfer triggered it. Under different circumstances, I wouldn't have taken it, but enhancing Titania's recovery speed was an advantage I couldn't deny.

The rest, I could discover in the future.

So, I selected before letting my mana flow from my finger once again, the flow already more stable and more effective.

[+100 Experience]

[-121 Mana]

[+2 Tantric]

I looked at her brightening face, happy that she was too occupied to notice the sudden jump in efficiency. Even better, she was too distracted by the flow to care about my hand diving deeper into the sacred area protected by her bra until the wetness of the fabric became too distracting. She dipped her head down, realizing the presence of my hand in her cleavage, stiffening once more. Luckily, my finger was in her mouth, so I distracted her with another jolt of mana, earning a beautiful moan as a result.

[+300 Experience]

[-246 Mana]

[+4 Tantric]

It was amusing to see just how easy was to increase the skill proficiency with a large mana capacity, though not as amusing as watching the impeccable head librarian of Silver Spires squirming in my lap, betraying her utter lack of experience when it came to men. "So, tell me about yourself," I asked with a flirty tone.

"I can't, my secrets are dangerous," she answered confrontationally, but as she stayed distracted by it, she failed to comment as I found her bra hook and releasing it with a flick, finally leaving it bare, limiting herself to a shy gaze instead.

"I need to have better access to properly clean," I answered innocently before moving back to the main topic. "I'm not asking about your secrets, I'm asking about you. Tell me what you enjoy

in your free time, what you don't. What's your favorite color, or what's your favorite food."

"I don't know," she murmured shyly, but also with a hint of confusion. "I have a great deal of responsibilities in my job, and my secret mission takes the rest. I don't have the chance or the desire to explore."

"What a pity," I said even as I dragged my cloth down to her last untouched spot, hidden behind her panties. This time, she was very much aware of the destination, but did nothing to prevent me other than a trembling hand reflexively reaching before coming to a sudden stop, showing I wasn't the only one that was feeling excited about the prospect. I continued speaking as I dragged her panties down, revealing her beautiful nether lips once more, neatly trimmed, while also giving her another dash of mana, the flow even easier than the previous time.

[+400 Experience]

[-131 Mana]

[+3 Tantric]

"Do you at least masturbate," I asked cheerfully at her even as I dragged the wet fabric on her most sensitive spot with torturous slowness, making her moan helplessly.

I wasn't expecting much, but the answer still surprised me. "No," she murmured. "Never."

Keeping the question back took quite a bit of effort. I could have accepted that she didn't masturbate often, as she was still enough around the school to do so. But to never masturbate, one needed to be seriously asexual, and from the responses she was showing under my hands, I was willing to diagnose that she was very sexual.

Which meant that it was something about her emotions or instincts being repressed. It was a wild guess, but it was definitely more believable than my power set, so who could know?

"Really?" I answered instead even as I threw the fabric to the side and placed my fingers to her entrance. "Then, let me have the honor of being the first one to teach you about true pleasure."

-----

[Level: 18 Experience: 153850 / 171000

Strength: 18 Charisma: 30



Precision: 13 Perception: 17

Agility: 17 Manipulation: 20

Speed: 15 Intelligence: 20

Endurance: 14 Wisdom: 24

HP: 1386 / 1386 Mana: 963 / 1998 ]

## SKILLS

[Master Melee [100/100]

Expert Arcana [75/75]

Expert Elemental [75/75]

Expert Biomancy [75/75]

Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Basic Speech [25/25]

Basic Tantric [10/25]

## PERKS

Mana Regeneration

## Chapter Forty-Two

Her reaction to my proclamation was a thing of wonder. A beautiful expression of confusion spread on her face, enhanced further by the blush that turned her alabaster skin to red. She wiggled uncomfortably, but made no attempt to pull away from her comfortable position of leaning against my chest.

Her innocent yet accepting reaction made her impossible to resist even without considering the fact she was the impeccable head librarian, one of the deadliest mages in the country, her name enough to make her foes tremble. And now, she was trying to ignore her own reaction as I pulled her on my lap. She shivered, her shyness obvious, but that didn't prevent her from wiggling on top of my shaft, trying to get comfortable.

A little bribe for her tantalizing obedience was in order, I decided even as I put my finger to her mouth once more, but this time, rather than sliding it directly, I lingered on her lips, tracing the edges even as her mouth opened helplessly, a gasp escaping her mouth. She moved her lips, trying to catch it, but I moved my finger before she could, earning a frustrated growl, enough to make me chuckle. I let my finger slide into her mouth and let my mana flow once more.

[-55 Mana]

[+2 Tantric]

I was happy with the rapid development of my new skill, even though I had doubts about its usefulness. But I wasn't asshole enough to focus on long term goals when I had a fragile brunette on my lap whose work life and ambitions blinded her to the true pleasures of life.

So, while she was distracted, I discarded the washcloth, and let my other hand free on her body. I wanted to delve deep into her breasts, but for her first time, she deserved a more considerate treatment. Instead, I let my fingers drift on her stomach, caressing it with gentle, fleeting touches. Already charged with our earlier play, that was enough to trigger a moan from her, muffled due to my finger in her mouth. I wasn't letting any more mana out —I wanted to regenerate more in case we had another ambush— but she continued to suck it with the same enthusiasm, making my imagination work overtime about other things she might enjoy sucking.

“It feels ... different,” she murmured as I let my hand climb upward, dancing on the bottom of her naked breasts, ideas such as modesty and personal space long forgotten. I reached for her breasts, which, while smaller than what I had been enjoying thanks to Marianne, Helga, and Aviada, were still beautiful in their perkiness and perfect shape. And the way her nipples

stiffened at my touch was more than enough to address the deficiency in size.

She was beautiful. And the fact that she was several times stronger than me just made the moment even more exciting.

I wanted to speak, to tease her about her new experience, but when I saw her eyes closed in an effort to contain the new sensations, I decided to take it a different way. I gently traced her nipple, earning another moan in the process, before letting my fingers dance over her body.

[+400 Experience]

My finger wasn't in her mouth anymore, which allowed me to continue caressing her nipples even as my other hand moved down in a determined journey until it ended around her panties. I thought about sliding in her panties, then I decided to pull them off completely, leaving her naked for my view. She gasped cutely as I dragged them down her toned legs, but gave no resistance. I couldn't help but feel excited at the sight of her most sensitive location, cleanly shaved despite her lack of experience.

"So, let me teach you how to masturbate," I whispered into her ear even as my fingers gave a cursory caress to her lower lips before focusing on her inner thighs, massaging her slowly but sensuously.

"Okay," she murmured dreamily, but from her tone, I could easily see that she was not in a mood to listen, so rather than speaking, I decided to teach her by example. As my fingers started their determined dance on her thighs, however, she moaned once more. "Faster," she begged.

Normally, I would have stretched the moment, torturing my partner deliciously with a bit of delayed pleasure, but I decided to make an exception for Titania. Not experiencing arousal for decades was a true tragedy, something I knew intimately from my own fate. If I could enlighten someone else on the subject while enjoying the moment, I would never say no to it. So, I let my fingers move to the hot zone, enjoying the way her wetness coated my fingers.

[+500 Experience]

"It feels amazing!" she moaned loudly.

"Of course it does, but you haven't seen anything yet," I said to her even as my fingers started moving, her enjoyment displayed by a string of moans that left her mouth. She was truly delicious. I decided to push the boundaries even more. "By the way, I would like to try an

alternative mana conducting method, if you're okay with it," I asked her. Her response was an absentminded nod, followed by another moan. She wasn't in a state to really comment on it, barely understanding the significance of my question.

So, she froze when I pressed my lips against hers, cutting off another moan halfway. I kissed her softly, even as I let my mana flow from my body to hers, in a soft, lingering kiss.

[+200 Experience]

[-128 Mana]

[+4 Tantric]

Mana transfer was a silly excuse to kiss her, so I was surprised when I actually felt it flowing much smoother. I didn't need to ask her about the efficiency, as by now, I was familiar enough with the mana flow to realize mouth-to-mouth transfer was highly superior to delivering it through my finger. Of course, that brought up another question, whether a full-blown sexual delivery would have been even more efficient. I didn't know, but it was definitely a worthy — and potentially very enjoyable— test.

That was for later, however, as there were more immediate concerns that deserved my attention, such as the way Titania was wiggling on my lap even as she neared the first orgasm of her life, the distance between her muffled moans dwindling even further. So, when I finally slipped a finger into her entrance, it wasn't shocking for her to start trembling helplessly as she was struck by her orgasm.

[+500 Experience]

I slid my hands to her stomach, gently caressing her as she tried to process the pleasure, while I maintained a lingering kiss. "How was it?" I asked after a minute.

"It was amazing!" she said excitedly. "I have never thought that it would've been that enjoyable. I missed a lot of time."

"Don't worry, it's not too late, you're definitely beautiful enough to compensate for the lost time and if you want I'm always ready to help."

"Really?" she asked, looking between excited and shocked.

"Of course, that was my pleasure," I answered. Then, I decided to push her a bit. "May I ask you

a personal question?" I said, and she nodded shyly. "You said you've never even masturbated? Is there a reason for it? Weren't you at least tempted to it?"

"I don't know. Learning to use Light Magic took a lot of effort from me when I was young. I guess I never had the time or the inclination," she murmured, which admittedly, confused me a little. She seemed honest in her response, making it a bit of a mystery. Not doing it because of external pressure or some other reason might have been understandable, but not feeling the inclination for it was weird. It would have made sense if she was asexual, but from what I had seen in the last half an hour, she most definitely was a sexual being, though quite deprived. "Is it always that enjoyable?" she asked in a small tone.

"No," I answered, and her shy smile turned into a frown, but before she could say anything else, I continued. "What we have done was just a preview. The real thing is much better than that."

"Really, how's that possible?" she asked, shocked.

"That's just how it goes," I answered, even as I let my hands on her stomach start moving once more, climbing toward her breasts, caressing the edge sensually, something that made her moan. "This was just a prelude. The real thing is something special, even earth-shattering," I said then suddenly caught her eyes with a wide, smug smirk. "If delivered by a person that knows what he's doing, of course," I added.

She smirked back, though it still had a shy edge to it. "And the next thing you're going to say is that you know what you're doing."

"Well, I'm not one to brag but you can say that I have some minor accomplishments in the subject," I said even as I let my other hand slip down to her entrance, circling around her clit to force a moan out of her. "As you can attest..."

"Bastard," she murmured, yet feeling much more comfortable in my arms than before. I said nothing, but let my fingers dance at her entrance slowly, enough to arouse her, but not enough to build her toward another climax. The silence stretched for a while. Well, not exactly silence as her moans rang in the cave in an exciting frequency.

Then, she spoke once more. "Maybe we should explore the alternative ways of mana delivery," she whispered.

Since my blood was mostly in the lower half of my body, it took a moment for me to understand what she was saying. "Of course," I stammered, excited, not expecting her to actually take the recommendation that easily. "It's our responsibility as magical researchers," I said, though as I

said that, I made sure to lean towards her ear, delivering it through a husky whisper.

“Good,” she said as she raised her bottom a bit, enough to pull my pants down. She might not be as strong as me, but she was strong enough to almost rip my pants as she pulled them down, quite excited. She was about to lay on her back, but I gestured for her to stop before laying on my back. “Why don’t you take the seat of honor, Miss Head Librarian,” I said as I smiled in amusement, even though my heartbeat rose significantly. Inviting one of the most dangerous women known to mankind to ride you in a cowgirl position was a rather dangerous thing, after all.

Luckily, she lacked the mana to take offense, and more importantly, her blush and her excited smile weren’t exactly signs of uncontrollable anger. Her legs were trembling as she hovered above me, feeling excited at the prospect. She closed in before turning her back, lowering herself toward my shaft, but I stopped her just as her entrance kissed the crown of my shaft. “What’s wrong?” she whispered, her fear palpable.

“I want you to turn around. I want to get lost in your beautiful gray eyes as we do it,” I said. She turned at me, hesitant and shy. “For the safety of the experiment, of course,” I continued mockingly. “I need to watch your expression in case something goes wrong.”

“I see,” she whispered even as she turned to face me, once again giving me a full-frontal view of her beautiful, tight body, making my shaft throb in anticipation. “It’s good to see you’re careful about the experiment,” she added, trying to replicate my mocking edge, but unable to suppress her innocent excitement.

Then, she lowered herself, slowly engulfing me within her hot grasp. She staggered a moment when I felt the pressure of her barrier, but she didn’t let it delay her for more than a moment, getting rid of it with a stiff push, not even bothering to stop to adapt. Not surprising, considering her prowess, a little bit of pain wasn’t going to stop her from what she desired. However, as she sank lower, her speed slowed down, while her expression twisted in joy and desire.

[+1000 Experience]

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 1%]

I was happy to see the companion tracker ticking once again, though I was not exactly surprised. After all, not only had I saved her from a deadly ambush, but also come up with a totally new way of mana transfer just to cure her deficiency easier. It would have been surprising if she wasn’t feeling a connection with me.

“It feels amazing,” she murmured as she stilled, giving a pause to her task of devouring my full length. I let her move up and down at her own pace, letting her enjoy the experience before I took control. She rose up until only the crown was enveloped in her warmth, before she moved down with a torturous slowness, only to stop when she reached the previous point.

“You’re beautiful,” I whispered even as I maintained eye contact, doing my best to display my sincerity. It was not a hard task, not when her beautiful body lay in front of me in its spectacular full-frontal nudity while she did her best to make my shaft disappear from view despite her discomfort, her beautiful face contorted with pleasure.

Her sudden tightening was a nice surprise.

[+500 Experience]

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 3%]

“Really?” she gasped, surprised, like she had heard it for the first time.

I was about to dismiss that as a ridiculous notion before I remembered that the raven-haired beauty in front of me was also the most intimidating person around back in the school. Even without adding in her unflattering clothes and steely expression there, I doubted that many had the courage to openly flirt with her.

It was a travesty that needed to be corrected, I decided. “Yes, you are,” I said. “The way your raven hair sticks to your glowing face, the way your beautiful lips shine under the flickering lights, the way your eyes sparkle in joy, every part of you is beautiful,” I whispered throatily even as I reached up and put my hands on her body, caressing her sides in a gentleness that wouldn’t go amiss in a marital bed.

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 7%]

“Tell me more,” she gasped, her tone indicating that she was already halfway to orgasm.

“The way you walk is spectacular,” I whispered. “Scary and intimidating, but it still makes me want to pull you into an abandoned part of the library before I rip your clothes off to see what’s underneath...”

Her pacing picked up speed, every repeat forcing my shaft deeper into her core. She didn’t look entirely comfortable with the amount she took, but if she wanted to push her limits, who was I to argue. “And, do you like what’s underneath my clothes?” she gasped even as she looked into

my eyes, though despite her willpower, she was barely able to maintain eye contact.

“Oh, did I?” I whispered. “I found a treasure trove above and beyond even my admittedly ambitious dreams. Your shoulders are beautiful enough to breathe life to a dead man, your stomach smooth enough to make me lay on it forever, enjoying its surface,” I said with a throaty whisper, making her shiver at each word.

[+500 Experience]

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 10%]

“Tell me more,” she gasped even as she picked up speed, rocking her hips recklessly, unaware of the danger that was building up inside me.

“Of course,” I said. “Your breasts are more perfect than a seven node array balanced to trigger,” I whispered, letting some magical theory into our flirting, curious of the effect. It was a nice surprise when she tightened even further, proving that her librarian role was not just for show. “Your hips are beautiful, sculpted to perfection, and your pussy...” I said, lingering a bit before letting out a moan. “Oh, your pussy is the greatest sensation I have ever felt in my life...” I added.

[Achievement: Seductive Sonnet. Woo a beautiful but attention-starved lady through the power of words. +2 Manipulation, +500 Experience]

That seemed to be the last trigger she needed, as her eyes suddenly closed and her body stiffened, giving me the signal of an impending orgasm. Since I was already on the edge and keeping myself from exploding through sheer willpower, I decided to add to the moment through my new skill. I packed as much as mana I could pack into my seed before letting it free.

[-400 Mana]

[+6 Tantric]

Assisted by my new skill, I started spurting inside her like a broken dam, beat after beat filling her completely. It proved to be the last thing she needed to push her over the edge, as she exploded in cries even as she collapsed on my chest, my shaft still inside her, filling her to the brim.

[+2000 Experience]



[Companion Acquisition: Progress 12%]

It took a lot for me to take control of my breathing as well, enjoying the sensation of conquering the most dangerous woman I knew while also achieving a spectacular achievement, Even as she tried to get control of her breathing, I continued pumping into her, wanting to enjoy the moment as much as possible.

But my beautiful plan was blocked by an interesting, and very unwelcome, notification.

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 12%] Progress Blocked!

-----

[Level: 18 Experience: 159950 / 171000

Strength: 18 Charisma: 30

Precision: 13 Perception: 17

Agility: 17 Manipulation: 22

Speed: 15 Intelligence: 20

Endurance: 14 Wisdom: 24

HP: 1386 / 1386 Mana: 624 / 2034 ]

## SKILLS

[Master Melee [100/100]

Expert Arcana [75/75]

Expert Elemental [75/75]

Expert Biomancy [75/75]

Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Basic Speech [25/25]

Basic Tantric [22/25]

PERKS

Mana Regeneration

## Chapter Forty-Three

I was caught flat-footed by the sudden notification, so much so that I was barely able to respond to Titania's lingering kiss before she collapsed unconscious against my chest, her breathing soft and content. I could have slid underneath her, or started walking around the cave to gather my thoughts, to theorize about the source, but I chose to continue lying underneath her lithe body instead, my half-erect shaft still inside her. If I was going to spend some time theorizing about the sudden new challenge, I was going to do that through a delicious distraction.

Not to mention maintaining contact might give me some clues.

Even with the euphoria I was feeling after that spectacular explosion, I couldn't help but be stressed. The notification of my special ability being countered was never a good sign, but the fact that it happened with Titania was even worse. She was the strongest and most influential person I got in contact with by far, and she represented real risk for me. I was feeling comfortable due to her cute shyness and other reactions, but that was before realizing she had a skill that interfered with mine.

I decided to experiment once more. I leaned in for a soft kiss, slipping a sliver of mana inside her, but this time. Even in her sleep, she moaned softly as she sucked my tongue, eagerly allowing my mana into her body.

[+50 Experience]

[-13 Mana]

[+1 Tantric]

However, this time, I did things differently. Instead of letting go of the control of the mana, allowing her to absorb it easily, I maintained the control, letting it slip inside her.

I was rewarded with an incredible finding. I could suddenly feel a familiar yet foreign presence of power throbbing inside her. I hadn't had to turn inward to check the source of the familiarity. It was the source of her power, the core of the system. It was hard to describe, of course, like a blind person trying to describe a dragon after a brief touch. Still, like a blind person feeling the majesty and danger of the dragon by just a touch, I could feel the majesty of her power, dwarfing my current status by a huge margin.

Then, my mana disappeared, so I decided to lean in and give her another kiss for another dose

of mana, to understand her power. Luckily, my mana regeneration was still active, even though I was counting the remaining time in minutes rather than hours. From the earlier experience, it was almost enough to fill my mana pool twice before expiry.

[+50 Experience]

[-16 Mana]

[+1 Tantric]

The second impression I got about her power was marginally clearer. Some parts, I was able to recognize, such as Charisma and Wisdom. I even managed to identify her arcana skill, though the rest was hard to understand. The real clincher, however, was a thick web of white energy spreading over her power core, like it dominated all others. I let my mana touch it, only for my mana to disappear in an instant, absorbed into the web.

It was the same light magic she had been using in the battle.

Suddenly, a sudden inspiration clicked in my mind, proving the usefulness of my extraordinary wisdom and intelligence. I doubted that I would've made the connection that quickly otherwise. Some of the older books I have been reading to discover the root of my powers had snippets and footnotes referring to some metaphysical concepts like actual presences, describing them a bit more holistically than necessary, even giving them personalities and traits like they were real beings, like skills and stats had personalities once upon a time. It was not something I took note of at the time.

The stories and footnotes were by no means comprehensive, but I remembered it talking about the Light like it was pure, but also emotionless and unyielding, driven by logic and perception of justice more than anything, not to mention aloof and hard to connect to. It didn't describe the Titania that blushed with just a fleeting kiss. But it described the peerless head librarian that scared everyone, who worked and lived for her duty.

The difference, her mana depletion.

Once I realized that, it was so clear, especially with the learnings I gathered from my diagnosis. For whatever reason, Light Magic wasn't working like just another skill but affecting her mind, state and thoughts, as well as blocking out her emotions. I didn't know whether it was something unique to her or it would happen to anyone that would take that skill, but regardless, it forced me to change my plans significantly.

Suddenly, I was very glad about not taking that particular skill.

Of course, while considering all those points, I was still inside her, smoothly going back and forth, enjoying her tightness just in case I never had the opportunity to in the future. And even while she was comatose because of exhaustion, her grip was spectacular, and her moans were beautiful. And since I needed one last diagnostic before making a plan, I decided to use the opportunity to my benefit. I continued pumping until I was ready to climax, and then filled her insides once more, using the moment to deliver a burst of mana as well.

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 12%] Progress Blocked!

[+1000 Experience]

[-120 Mana]

[+1 Tantric]

Once again, I maintained the contact with my mana, the abundance of it allowing me to observe the changes in her power much clearer. But in the core of it, I could see something familiar trying to change, only to be suppressed by the cage of light. Something that carried a piece of me.

I was willing to bet everything that it represented the Companion process. I decided to experiment and flooded all the mana I could still control towards it, smashing the cage of light around it with all my might. It cost all of my mana, but it managed to make a crack in it, a crack that the Companion energy expanded just a bit more.

[Ability Countered!]

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 13%]

[Achievement: Rattling the Rival. Use your superior abilities and trickery to get one over on your eons-old rival. +2 to all stats. +10000 Experience]

Level UP!

[Select one of the following skills: Master Biomancy, Basic Light, Advanced Tantric]

I gasped in shock at the achievement I had received. The rewards were incredible, of that there was no doubt. Two points across all stats was an incredible benefit, and even at my current status, ten thousand points of experience was nothing to scoff at.

But it was nothing compared to the description. Until now, achievements were always amusing, sometimes mildly informative, such as the second-biggest library. However, the last one I received came completely unexpected. The rival thing was confusing enough, as even if I squinted badly, I wouldn't exactly put my budding relationship with Titania rivalry. However, the real kicker was the eons-old rival part. I was fairly certain that two decades didn't count as an eon.

It was a very intriguing —and potentially dangerous— mystery considering the spottiness of historical records, which tends to happen when cities and civilizations fall under monster hordes in a surprising frequency. Still I decided to shelve that for the moment, as no matter how intriguing, I had more immediate concerns to address.

Such as the beautiful girl currently on my lap sleeping, or the skill selection from the level up. Though, the latter part was relatively obvious. I just chose Tantric, as it was not only immediately useful, but also it had implications I wanted to explore. Not to mention avoiding Light Magic for the moment was the prudent choice.

The next half an hour passed in a relative calmness, though it required my utmost concentration. I was still inside her, sliding in and out repeatedly while also kissing her, injecting small charges of mana, trying to understand how best to slow down or destroy the encroachment of the Light into her mind and soul. I spent quite a bit of mana, but luckily, with my regeneration still active —with less than five minutes remaining on the clock— I still managed to recover my mana to near-full levels.

During that, however, I used my new Tantric skill to great effect, earning experience as well as improving my control on transferred mana.

[+4000 Experience]

[-420 Mana]

[+25 Tantric]

I decided to wake her up, and wake her up with style, even though it was risky with the Light magic spreading in her despite my best efforts —while not waking her up, making it much more challenging. “Good morning, sleeping beauty,” I cheered even as I used my biomancy skills to gently wake her up, not wanting her to feel groggy. It worked better than the best coffee, her gray eyes shining bright, but her expression was cold, showing that the suppression effect was working greatly.

The confusion on her face was annoying, but also beautiful. It was clear that she was trying to process what had happened, but through her logical, emotionless perspective. Her first activity was trying to pull herself away from me. I decided to make it even harder for her, and captured her lips in a searing kiss, also dropping a lot of mana with my kiss, something made easier thanks to Advanced Tantric, giving me a much better control over externalized mana.

[-80 Mana]

The shock on her face was beautiful, and her attempts to pull back choppy and reluctant, the rush of pleasure enhanced by the mana flow enough to affect even her emotionless state. Only after a minute of kissing, did I pull back, leaving her panting and confused, but my arms were still around her, preventing her escape.

“What are you doing!” she gasped, her hand raised threateningly like she was about to cast a spell. On the surface, her anger was apparent, but I knew that it was driven by her confusion. Thanks to my interference, she was still feeling something, but unlike before, Light Magic prevented her from processing it properly. Or at least, that was my best guess.

“I’m helping you recover your mana,” I said calmly, my subterfuge skill once again showing its worth. Before she could say anything, I continued. “We need to move, and my enhanced mana regeneration is about to expire. It’s for the best if I use the last moments of it in order to increase your mana, in case we come across hostiles. It’s simply logical.”

“Yeah,” she murmured, her tone cold, but her eyes shrouded with emotion. “That’s a very reasonable course of action. Give me your finger,” she said.

“Don’t you remember, we discovered that the finger is a subpar way of delivering mana, and found out a much better way,” I said, doing my best to look calm and collected, but keeping back that smirk was a difficult challenge. “The other way is physically more challenging, but considering the circumstances, it’s a worthy trade-off.”

“But-” she started, a small blush spreading on her face, proving that the interference I had been running while she slept was not wasted. She wasn’t too far gone into the emotionless space.

Her words would remain unfinished, because I slammed my lips against hers, silencing her the best way I could. And when I pushed my shaft deeper into her once again, I managed to extract a beautiful moan from her despite her reluctance.

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 13%] Progress Blocked!

The notification annoyed me, especially since I was afraid that she would realize my fight against her Light Magic. I needed to distract her further.

Luckily, my experiences since my initial discovery gave me an impressive library of actions I could use to distract her. I decided to start with something simple, I flipped our positions so she was laying underneath me, my impressive frame hovering above her as I slammed in as deep as possible, earning another moan.

She looked at me with her confused gaze, desire battling with cold logic. Regardless of that, she looked far too aware of herself. So, I decided to carry things to the next level. Previously, she experienced calm and comfortable sex. Now, it was time to introduce her to pure fucking.

I grabbed her legs, and before she could react, put them on my shoulders and leaned forward, forcing her to bend in a very uncomfortable angle. An angle that gave me a perfect angle to impale her tunnel. I took the chance, and slammed inside her mercilessly.

What followed was pure drilling. I slammed inside her again and again. I kissed her repeatedly to inject mana, but even those carried no hint of tenderness, but pure domination. I used the opportunity to dump mana into her, but just maintained contact. It wasn't time to take action yet.

[-300 Mana]

[+1500 Experience]

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 13%] Progress Blocked!

I was annoyed with the repeated reminders of the progress stalling. Luckily, she was rapidly approaching towards a climax under the unfamiliar sensations, giving me the excuse I needed. We orgasmed at the same time, her juices mixing with mine, as well as a flood of my mana, enough to massacre a small army if applied differently.

[-850 Mana]

[+1000 Experience]

[Ability Countered!]

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 15%]

I could feel her Light Magic desperately trying to reestablish its control, but with her lack of



mana, it didn't have a fighting chance. The defense around her companion core was shattered completely, giving us a chance to establish a proper connection.

Since her emotions were back in the game, I decided to shift back to being gentle as well. I pulled out for a moment, letting her legs fall back to the floor. Then, without wasting a second more than necessary, I then continued loving her in the missionary position, our lips linked together, except for the occasions I pulled back to whisper heated compliments into her ear, something that triggered her as much as the calm and long beats of my shaft invading her again and again.

[+1000 Experience]

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 18%]

"It feels so good," she moaned, as she went through yet another orgasm. "How come I never tried this before!" she added wistfully, her sentiment also proving that she wasn't exactly aware of the emotional restriction her magic was forcing on her. Luckily for her, I was more than willing to shatter those imaginary cuffs, freeing her from her torture. And if I was going to replace those cold cuffs with velvet ones, well, that was a fair exchange for her.

Our tender lovemaking lasted another half an hour as she slowly absorbed my mana. I would have liked to stay in the cave all night long, exploring the details of our new relationship, but unfortunately, there were two things that made it a bad idea. The first one, were we needed to return to the school before her enemies decided to take action in her absence. Luckily, it wasn't yet nightfall, and even necromancers wouldn't be stupid enough to act while everyone was around. The second, my mana regeneration perk had finally expired, making it harder for me to refill her mana while being able to use mine.

[-400 Mana]

[+2000 Experience]

[Companion Acquisition: Progress 23%]

I could have pushed forward a bit more, at least to the point that I reached the first milestone of the Companion process, but I refrained, not wanting to add yet another explanation to an already-confusing situation. "We need to return to the school," I whispered as I pulled out of her, not bothering to hide my regret.

"Yes, we do," she agreed, looking no less enthusiastic about it. "My mana is recovered enough

to be able to avoid an ambush, and I need to be in my library before they try anything else.”

“Makes sense,” I said, then added another thing, no matter how much I didn’t want to. “I think we need to return separately, just to make sure they don’t identify me,” I added, no matter how much I wanted to hang around her, maybe even catching a quickie on the road before the Light Magic turned her cold once more.

“I agree,” she said with a nod even as she sat up, making no effort to hide her naked body, covered with my markings. “For now, they don’t know who you are and where you came from, and your skill set is diverse enough to make it impossible for them to pin your origin,” she added. “So impossible that I still don’t have an idea,” she added with a bitter tone.

I leaned in to steal a soft, lingering kiss. “Don’t worry, we’re going to speak more about it,” I answered. “Make sure you rest for tonight. Tomorrow night, I’m going to visit you in your room and we’re going to have a real talk without immediate danger.”

After a lingering kiss, I quickly dressed, and after one last kiss, I left Titania behind, naked. I didn’t worry about her, because with her mana back and without an extensive ambush prepared, it was impossible for them to hurt her, at least. And if they did, my presence wouldn’t be enough to change anything.

With a sigh, I dashed away, though only after ten minutes of frantic running did I remember the book in my bag. The book that was stolen from her, the one that started everything. I shrugged. I could always give her that back tomorrow, and maybe even use the opportunity to delve deeper in its secrets. Even if it was in a different language, there was a chance I could get some snippets about its source.

The last achievement spooked me a bit. I was in a mystery deeper than I first assumed. Every nugget of information counted.

-----

[Level: 19 Experience: 180550 / 190000

Strength: 20 Charisma: 32

Precision: 15 Perception: 19

Agility: 19 Manipulation: 24

Speed: 17    Intelligence: 22

Endurance: 16    Wisdom: 26

HP: 1653 / 1653    Mana: 946 / 2337    ]

#### SKILLS

[Master Melee [100/100]

Expert Arcana [75/75]

Expert Elemental [75/75]

Expert Biomancy [75/75]

Advanced Subterfuge [50/50]

Advanced Tantric [50/50]

Basic Speech [25/25]

#### PERKS

Mana Regeneration