

# KONOSUBA: AN **EXPLOSION** ON THIS **WONDERFUL** **WORLD!**

BONUS  
STORY

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A  
**KONOSUBA:**  
**GOD'S BLESSING**  
ON THIS **WONDERFUL**  
**WORLD!** SPIN-  
OFF!

**1**  
We Are the  
**Megumin**  
**Bandits**













































































































































































































































































































































It was bold of her to assume that there would be anything left after I was done.

“When you cast the spell, some of them are sure to come this way. Let me handle the ones that do! Today, I am your shield, boss!”

I felt like this girl was the one most worthy of protecting. Oblivious to such things, Iris stood behind me on my left, sword held in her hands.

“Then I will help you from the back! I’ll heal you nice and slow if you get hurt, so make sure you let me know!”

Everyone smiled unconsciously at Cecily, a woman who was unwavering, even in this situation.

Chris drew her dagger to cover me.

“Well then, I guess I’ll get serious, too. I’ll show you what a Thief can do. All right, Megumin, let’s do this!”

Maybe we could come together as a thief gang a little later—yes, like after the Demon King was defeated and peace had returned.

“Look, I’ll let you do the honors, so go all out, boss,” Yunyun urged provocatively.

In response...

“*Exploosion—!!*”

I unleashed my spell with all my might...!

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After my mana recovered enough for me to walk, I plodded back home to the mansion.

“Welcome home! Listen to this, Megumin! We’re having speckled crab for the first time in a while! Reminds you of when we first moved here, doesn’t it?!”

Aqua welcomed me back with a big smile as she made the pincers of the crab in her hands go *snip-snip*.

“Well, that is a treat. I never thought I would get to eat speckled crab again in my life.”

Dragging my languid, mana-deficient body along, I collapsed onto the sofa.

“You seem even more exhausted than usual today. I heard the boom all the way from here, but it felt a bit different. I didn’t see it with my eyes, but I’ll give today’s Explosion ninety-five points,” Kazuma said excitedly from where he was seated at the table.

“Speaking of, Megumin, you look kind of pleased. Did something good happen?” Darkness asked with a kind face as she placed a boiling pot on the table.

“Well, today it became very clear what I want to do more than anything. That must be the reason.”

“There’s something you wanna do besides cast Explosion?”

Kazuma put a damper on my enthusiasm with an unnecessary interruption.

*I wish he’d finally stop thinking of me as just an Explosion girl.*

All I did today was take everyone to the noble’s mansion and cast Explosion to help the people there, as monsters attacked them for some reason...

“...Wait, was casting Explosion all I did today?”

“What’s up with you all of a sudden? Anyway, isn’t it a little late to be asking that? All you ever do is use that spell, right? If you took away that spell, the only thing that’d be left is the loli part of you.”

I looked Kazuma up and down. He was pouring booze into a glass with a *glug-glug*. This man had just called me something disgusting.

“Then you are a loli-lover for coming on to me every now and then. I’ll let everyone at the Adventurers Guild know about Loli-ma.”

“C-cut it out—don’t take me down with you. You’ll be officially known as a loli yourself.”

Ignoring us, Aqua wasted no time putting the crabs on the grill.

“Sheesh, what are the two of you thinking, arguing with amazing food in front

of you? Can't you live like me, calm and relaxed?"

"Didn't you just cry when you stubbed your toe on the sofa, after you jumped around all thrilled about getting seafood from Darkness's dad?"

I was about to wash up for dinner when Darkness came to lend a hand after she put the pot on the table.

"I don't know what happened, but you seem especially perky. Why don't you tell me what you did today while we eat? Seems like you've been having a lot of fun recently, Megumin," the blond woman said with a laugh.

...In the end, the noble we'd helped had been, in a word, awful.

After we'd eradicated the monsters, a young lady of the house had appeared. She was about our age and had apparently fled from the mansion by herself.

She'd promptly told us she hadn't even asked for our help, despite us not asking for thanks.

If I hadn't been completely dry on mana and unable to move, I probably would've found myself assaulting her.

*Why was that place being attacked to begin with?*

Chris had said we'd have the answers sooner or later, even if we were left with questions now, as the Silver-Haired Thief Brigade also had their eye on that noble's residence.

I'd been curious as to how Chris could've possibly known that. Probably through some sort of bandit information network.

"Well said, Darkness. Actually, I've been wondering what Megumin's been getting into, as well—probably up to some nonsense again." Kazuma spoke without taking his eyes off the sizzling crabs.

"I know," Aqua said. "I heard from Cecily. She said she'd thought up some way of earning easy money by using pretty little girls."

Kazuma and Darkness gave me a look that said they couldn't believe I'd been roped into something that sketchy.

"Do not worry—I will tell you all what I was doing. It wasn't anything

unsavory... I mean it, okay?! You don't have to look at me like that!"

After I gave a flustered explanation for myself, I recalled the day's events. The result had been lame and a bit frustrating, but I couldn't help but feel it was all good as long as the heroic thieves I admired so deeply took care of things for us.

If things went as I hoped...

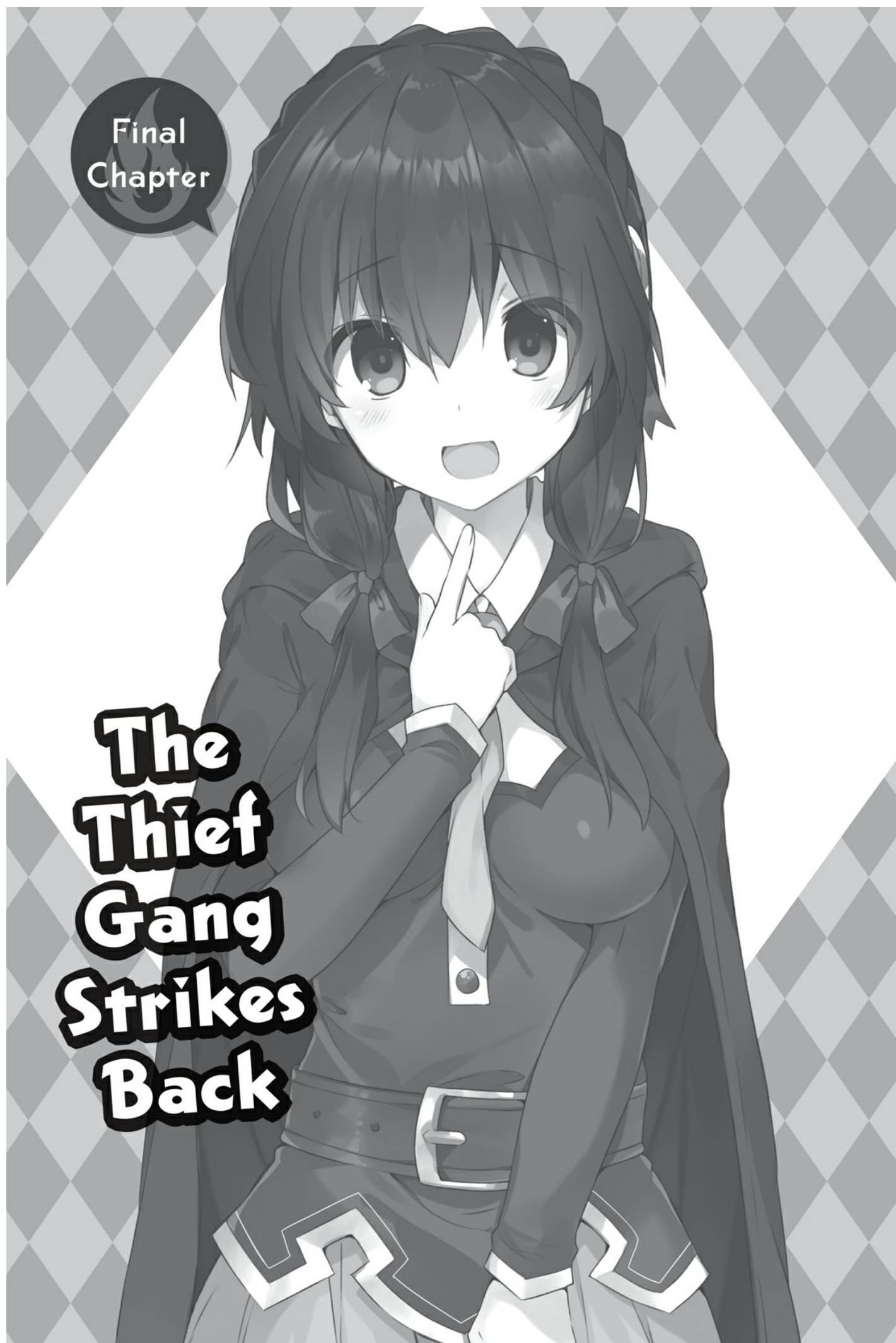
"Everything started on the night of the fireworks show. I escaped the clutches of the police, and as I was heading back to the mansion alone..."

*If only I could meet those people I look up to, even just one more time...*



Final  
Chapter

# The Thief Gang Strikes Back





It happened the day we set out for the neighboring country of Elroad. That was some time after returning to Axel after a bunch of stuff had happened.

“So this is the Donnelly residence. I don’t know why they built it in the middle of nowhere, but it seems like a pretty nice place.”

We’d come to the home of a noble family. The structure was built right in the middle of a forest near the town of Axel.

I looked up at the manor, muttering. Darkness, who was all dressed up to meet the nobles, nodded gently.

“The Donnellys have been involved in commerce for years. They may not be as prestigious, but they beat my family financially. I don’t like the girl who heads the family, though. Every time we meet at social events, her words are dripping with disdain for my house, calling us penniless plebs, even though she’s an upstart! Kazuma, there might be something more to this quest than meets the eye. Be careful, all right?”

Darkness was, apparently, not overly fond of these nobles. Aqua, who’d also been forced to wear a dress, likewise raised her voice in anger.

“I know about the Donnellys! When my pocket money ran out and I went to borrow from a lender they operate, they kicked me out, saying they don’t lend to Axis followers!”

“You did that when I was gone? ...Geez. As if Darkness trying to take my virginity by drugging me in Elroad wasn’t enough... You both need to learn from Megumin’s recent good behavior.”

“?!”

Megumin jumped in surprise at my words.

“...Hey. Did you get up to something recently?”

“No.”

As Megumin's flat, eye-averting denial convinced me she definitely had done something, Darkness said, "K-Kazuma... I'll apologize for drugging you, so can you just forget about it and pretend like it never happened already...? I mean, we're both embarrassed and ashamed, right? Yeah? I'll, uh, buy you some nice wine when we get home, so..."

"Hey, Kazuma, this family won't do; let's turn them down! Nothing good can come from a family that's prejudiced against Axis followers!"

Ignoring the nosier members of the group, I knocked on the mansion door...

...A letter had arrived for me.

It was a quest, addressed to the most famous adventurer in Axel.

I understood why someone would want to depend on me after I'd made a legend of myself again over in Elroad.

I was something of a busy man, however, training body and soul for the confrontation with the Demon King.

Previously I had refused such requests, but this time it had come from a nobleman.

I already had lots of connections, but as I had only just recently learned how wonderful power was, I decided that having new ones couldn't be all that bad.

With that in mind, I had accepted the quest, but...

"Nice to meet you. I am Karen, the head of the Donnelly family."

It was a young redheaded girl, just a little older than I was, who came to greet us in the drawing room.

Close to my height, she was a beauty, possessing the slender figure of a model.

"You are Mr. Kazuma Satou, yes? Thank you very much for coming today to hear about my family's requ—"

The person calling herself Karen froze as she looked my way.

No, it was as she looked at Megumin, who was hiding behind me.

"...Excuse me, please wait one moment."

“C-certainly... I don’t mind, but...”

I grabbed Megumin, who was still huddled at my back, by the scruff of her neck and went out to the hall for a moment.

“What happened between you and that Karen chick? Out with it.”

“What are you talking about? Nothing happened; I have never even met her before... All right, I will tell you, so don’t Drain Touch me! I won’t be able to cast today’s Explosion if you do!”

Megumin had been acting suspiciously ever since we arrived at the mansion. She spoke while keeping an eye on my right hand as it came closer to her.

“...Actually, my companions and I helped this family out when they were getting attacked by monsters before...”

I had no clue why Megumin had been in the middle of a forest like this, but it didn’t really seem like she was hiding anything as she spoke.

“Seriously, I thought you were gonna add on a bit about how you destroyed part of the mansion when you killed the monsters with Explosion, or that you obliterated their guards along with the monsters.”

“No, nothing quite like that, but...” Megumin was still being a little evasive for some reason.

“Shouldn’t you be more confident if you have nothing on your conscience? What, are you worried because you were killing monsters behind our backs? It does concern me, but from what I hear, your companions or whoever aren’t weak, right?”

“Yes, a fairly strong grunt and a friendless Crimson Magic Clan member. There’s also an Axis Church priestess and a Thief.”

It was a bit of an odd party composition, but the friendless Crimson Magic Clan member must’ve been Yunyun, and if she was with Megumin, there wasn’t much cause for concern.

“No problem, then. Getting EXP is important, after all—I’ll even go with you when I have free time.”

“All you ever have is free time. Well, since you’ve offered, I guess I will let you

in, too. I am sure you will be surprised.”

Megumin wasn’t really making sense, but at least it sounded like she was having fun.

With Explosion Girl in tow, I opened the door to the drawing room once more, and...

“Apologize! Apologize to me for kicking me out because you refuse to lend money to Axis followers!”

“M-my apologies. I, er, do apologize for that worker...”

Aqua was forcing an apology out of Karen, while Darkness hid her bright-red face with both hands. Honestly, I just wanted to leave right then and there.

2

“...You want us to eradicate monsters wandering in the mansion’s vicinity?”

“Yes. With your skill as famed adventurers of this town, we feel assured in requesting this of your party, Mr. Satou...”

After quieting the sulking Aqua with tea cakes, we were given the rundown.

“Well, that’s true. It’s quite a high reward, though, isn’t it? Can I take that to mean you think highly of us?”

“Mind trying to be a little humbler? Besides, I told you in the beginning, didn’t I? Be careful, since there might be more to this family’s request than meets the eye...,” Darkness whispered, elbowing my stomach as I listened to Karen with a straight face.

Considering our accomplishments, our reputation up until now was undeserved—this was the right way to treat us.

As for Karen, at my small display of confidence, she suddenly grasped my hand with both of hers.

“Of course, Mr. Satou—I have heard such good things about you. With your various skills and wonderfully quick wit, they say you have made a fool of many of the Demon King’s generals. I have also heard that your companions are all

advanced classes like Arch-priest and Arch-wizard...!”

“Well, that’s true. If I hadn’t been here, who knows what would have happened to this town...?”

Embarrassed though I was as Karen held my hand and looked up at me while she spoke, I did my best to seem even more self-assured.

Appearing disgusted, Darkness said, “...Hey, I belong to Kazuma’s party, too.” The blond woman spoke bluntly and with a distant, angry stare.

“Oh dear, I thought you had just come along in a cheeky attempt to keep me from taking this cordial gentleman away... I suppose the rumors that you were playing adventurer were true, Miss Dustiness. It must be very hard to be from a family with no money, and whose only saving grace is their social standing.” Karen laughed while she slipped her fingers out from mine.

“Huh, that’s a funny thing to say. Just as I’d expect from an upstart noble, it looks like you have no manners or modesty. Unlike an obscure, irresponsible social climber who’d probably sell their body for money, my family is prominent enough to have what you’d call aristocratic obligations. I put my body on the line as a shield for the people.”

Totally unlike when she was curled up and poking me with her elbow, Darkness straightened her back slowly and smiled, emanating an aura of refinement and dignity.

*...Uh, what? This is scary.*

“Oh, goodness me, just as I would expect from you, Miss Dustiness. It moves me to think you would live in such poverty as to reuse the same dress over and over at social events for the sake of these so-called obligations. If you do not mind my hand-me-downs, why not take a few of my dresses?” Karen said. There was no smile in her eyes.

“Just as I would expect from a family who throws away dresses after one use, you’re generous both in belly and spirit. But don’t worry—it wasn’t that I didn’t have any money; I just liked wearing my mother’s old dress. Besides...” Darkness crossed her arms in front of her chest. “With one of your dresses...I don’t think my boobs would fit.” The blond adventurer’s mouth was twitching

while she replied.

She hadn't even used a metaphor! Things suddenly felt really awkward.

*...What? This is seriously scary.*

I just wanted to go home.

Pounding the table with a *wham*, Karen stood up suddenly.

"Try saying that again, Dustiness—your body is the only thing you've got! All the gentlemen prefer slender women like me!!"

"Huh, even occasionally attending social events, it seems like I get more looks from men than you. Is it just my imagination? It's hard fixing a dress every time your boobs get bigger, you know. Is that not why you buy a new dress every time, too, Miss Donnelly?"

Darkness stood up as well; she had her arms folded across her midsection to accentuate her bust.

"Ahhh, they're so, so heavy... If I didn't have an adventurer's muscles, I wouldn't be able to support them, they're so heavy."

"Y-you little!"

Gnashing her teeth, Karen glared at Darkness, who made a show of furrowing her brow and appearing troubled.

"You're looking at these so jealously, Miss Donnelly, but there's nothing good about them being big, you know? They're so heavy, they make my shoulders ache, and I can only wear certain clothes. I have to get armor specially made, and they draw the eye of many gentlemen, just like... H-hey, I thought you were gonna look, but you don't know how to hold back at all, do you...?" The blond woman backed up a bit as I stared hard at what she presented.

"Ow! H-hey, what was that for? I wasn't trying to provoke you, Megumin...! I'm sorry, so stop pulling my hair!" Seemingly a bit satisfied at seeing Megumin starting to pull Darkness's hair from behind for some reason, Karen sighed.



“U-ummm... Well then, will you accept my quest?” she asked me, putting on a smile.

3

The next day.

Having decided to take the job, we had gotten our equipment in order and come back to the site of the mansion.

We had agreed to eradicate the powerful monsters lurking nearby, but...

“But why are these tough enemies only spawning here? I wonder if there’s tasty food growing here or something. Anyway, I’ve got a bad feeling about this. Why don’t we go home and do this another day?”

We were patrolling the mansion vicinity, on the lookout for monsters.

“Didn’t you say you had a bad feeling the other day, when it was raining and I tried to get you to go shopping for dinner, and then you played games, saying you weren’t going outside? Do monsters even change their habitats? We accepted the quest, but it just vaguely states the targets are powerful monsters in the vicinity of the manor. If they were undead, I’d have the perfect bait to lure them in, but...”

“Hey, just asking, but that bait’s not me, is it?”

Aqua tugged a few times on my sleeve, but naturally, such a question didn’t need answering.

...However.

“I didn’t think you’d say something like that,” I said. “Your title as a well-mannered young noblewoman finally vanished in an instant, huh? What was it you said, ‘It seems like I get more looks from men than you,’ or something? What’s that about? I guess you don’t mind getting ogled like that at social events, huh?”

“N-not like tha—! No, events like that have a sort of nobleman’s diplomacy that involves such gazing...,” Darkness said, panicking at my words.



“Indeed. And that was the first time I saw you acting so provocatively, Darkness, with all the chest thumping and breast swaying. I see. So we just did not know you were capable of that. How did it go again? ‘Ahhh, they’re so, so heavy... If I didn’t have an adventurer’s muscles, I wouldn’t be able to support them, they’re so heavy,’ was it? You looked so smug, too.”

At Megumin’s follow-up blow, Darkness turned crimson and quickened her pace.

Drawing the sword at her waist, she sliced away at the forest underbrush, as if to take out her anger.

That was when...

“Hmm? Hey, wait a second.”

A faint presence triggered my Sense Foe skill and I tugged on Darkness’s mantle...

“What, Kazuma? If you wanna humiliate me any more than you already have, then I’ll—”

Mid-sentence, the blade of Darkness’s great sword flew into the air with a resounding metallic *clang*. If she’d gone any farther, she’d be where the sword was now, herself. Realizing as much, Darkness cast aside the broken hilt and spread out both her hands to protect us. There was no sign of anything hidden in the brush ahead, however.

At times like this...

“It’s coming from above! Watch out!”

As I turned my head upward, I shoved Darkness away...!

...I was in a white room that I was all too familiar with.

In front of my eyes stood Eris, looking troubled, like she had something to say.

“...Ummm.”

“...Sorry. Can you please just not say anything right now?”

I sat down where I was, hiding my face as I hugged my knees to my chest.

Recalling the moment I’d declared loudly and straight-faced that it was

coming from above, I just wanted to die of embarrassment.

...Well, I really had died, but still.

“I swear it’s usually from overhead...”

Yet, when I’d looked up, there had been nothing. Nothing ahead and no sign of anything to the sides. With no other options, that meant...

“You’ve gotta be kidding me; it came from below? I really hate this world...”

When I had shoved Darkness away, some antlion like monster had suddenly crawled out from the ground, and I...

“...Lady Eris. Are you by any chance trying not to laugh? You can just let it out.”

“—No! I am not stifling anything; it’s fine! Wait, saying ‘it’s fine’ doesn’t make sense, either—I would never do something so imprudent when someone has died!”

Getting attacked from the opposite direction that I’d warned everyone about loudly was utterly mortifying.

Eris expertly kept a straight face, although her shoulders were twitching.

“Well, whatever... Anyway, why do you think something that strong is near the town of Axel? I’m a decently leveled adventurer, but I got one-shot.”

At that, Eris’s shoulders suddenly stopped trembling.

“About that... Kazuma, are you free this evening?” she asked, gazing at me with a placid expression.

“Free? Well, I am free all the time, every day. What, you want to sneak into my chambers? We can take care of that right now if you want.”

“No, I am requesting your assistance in finding a Sacred Treasure! Teasing a goddess means you’re gonna get smote, you know?!”

*Again with that?*

“That’s fine, too, I guess... Wait, could the treasure have something to do with...?”

Eris shook her head slowly at my somewhat disappointed words.

“No, we cannot be sure yet... However, there is something that worries me.”

...A lord called Alderp was the one who'd originally possessed the Sacred Treasure.

An item that allowed control of randomly summoned monsters, the Sacred Treasure was supposed to have been sealed away by Chris at the bottom of a lake, but...

“I had thought no one would be able to live near the lake where the Kowloon Hydra had made its lair for some time. The area had lost its magic, after all... However, for some reason, the magic and vegetation recovered sooner than expected, and people started reclaiming the land; they even started living there. Thus, I tried to dredge up that powerful item from the lake bed. I'd hoped to move it before the townspeople found it, but...”

“It was already gone.”

“Yes...”

Eris, who was normally all sweet smiles or business, looked deflated.

*I see. So that brings us to the current commotion with the sudden appearance of powerful monsters.*

From what I'd heard, that Karen girl had loads of money, so there was a strong possibility the object in question had fallen into her hands.

It was reasonable to think she'd set up an estate in the forest, away from town, and was summoning monsters like you'd open loot boxes. Any she didn't want, the young woman would just release into the wild.

...I felt like the timing of the treasure's disappearance and of Karen's forest mansion construction didn't match up, but this was a parallel world with magic. A magic mansion, created as easily as instant food, could have been used to make that house. Exactly like what Darkness had shown me on the way to Elroad.

Unlike another, useless goddess, it was rare for Eris to make mistakes. Even so, she was my boss, the one person I respected and admired in this world.

“Very well. Basically, you’re going to investigate if the artifact is at that Karen girl’s home, right? I’ll help you.”

Eris’s face lit up when I accepted. Then she made a face a bit like a kid who’d thought up a prank for some reason.

“Tonight, I will bring along another who will help us, Kazuma. As for whom... it’s a secret,” she said and playfully put an index finger to her lips.

4

“...It’s coming from above! Watch out!’ Pretty choice last words to say right before you got killed by something below you, Kazuma. Welcome back!”

Aqua gave me a cheery smile right after my resurrection; I wanted to smack this goddess who only ever made mistakes.

Apparently, my head had been on her lap. Getting up, I surveyed my surroundings.

“Oh, you’re awake, Kazuma. Er...thanks for saving me back there. Really, I’m supposed to be the shield. Sorry.”

Darkness, breathing heavily under her dent-riddled armor, knelt down next to me.

When I looked, an antlion-like monster was lying with its sharp jaws broken, crushed as if violently strangled.

To think a girl who looked like this was capable of such a thing...

“I’m glad you tried to protect me, but trust my defenses a bit more next time... Wh-what are you looking at me like that for, Kazuma? I mean, what kind of face is that?”

Darkness looked puzzled at my slightly disturbed gaze.

“No, I was just thinking maybe you should forget weapons and go barehanded already. Yeah, you’re an advanced attacker-type class and at a high level, to boot. I bet you could strangle a bear to death with your bare hands by now.”

Darkness was startled at my still-disturbed words.

“N-no, Kazuma! Even I can’t strangle a monster as tough as that to death with mere strength alone! Aqua cast an extra-powerful support spell to avenge the gruesome way you perished!” the blond woman said in a panic, apparently not wanting to be thought of as a muscle-bound girl.

“The horrific way I died—exactly how did I go this time? It happened so fast, I don’t remember.”

“You were torn clean in two, from the top of your head down to your crotch...”

“I can’t hear you; I can’t hear you! Hey, wait a second—my death was that gory? ...Ah, I was wondering why my clothes were fine despite being torn in half—somebody changed them!”

*Wait, who did that?*

Darkness and Megumin hastily averted their faces when I looked their way.

*What kind of reaction is that? Who was it?*

It was then that Aqua smiled genially as she watched me squirm.

“It’s fine, Kazuma; don’t worry. As a goddess, a divine being, I don’t think anything of seeing a mortal like you naked.”

“Shut up! Don’t smile there all goddess-like when you never actually act like one!”

...We’d defeated only one monster so far, but since there had been a death, the group decided to call it quits for the day.

The extermination quest was by volume—completely based on how many monsters we could slay.

The per-enemy rate was extraordinarily high, so when we’d first accepted the job, I’d thought it would be a piece of cake, but...

“Only...one?”

Karen’s eyes widened at our report while we all sat in her drawing room.

“Yeah, one monster. Sorry we couldn’t be of more help. However—”

Karen held up her hand as Darkness tried to speak.

“One monster? Even with the renowned Lady Dustiness, just a single creature?” she said mockingly and suddenly burst into laughter. “Ah-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha. With all your big talk, that’s the best you could do? The party with Axel’s best adventurer, rumored to have defeated one of the Demon King’s generals, and you couldn’t do more than that?”

This woman was really getting on my nerves. Suddenly, the recipient of the noblewoman’s abuse stood up.

“If you have something to say, then say it! I know you don’t like me, but I’ll be damned if I let you insult my companions!”

“I have tons to say! As the acting lord, you and your family put so many restrictions on lending that it’s hurt profits! We were able to make plenty of money when Lord Alderp was in charge. Where did he go?!” Karen spoke insistently, standing up as well.

“Who asked for your opinion about me? I’m asking if you’ve got a problem with us killing one monster! Fine, though—if that’s how you think, I’ll settle this here! Lending is an important job, so I won’t tell you to stop. But your interest is too high, and the way you hound people for money is disgusting.”

“Girls like you are too ignorant and sheltered to understand. As long as people want to borrow at high interest, that makes it a consensual agreement. And you say we’re too ruthless about collecting? When they come groveling to borrow money and then have the nerve to get mad about paying it back, what’s wrong with squeezing it out of them?! People like that always ended up running off when Lord Alderp shouldered them with debt and forced them to marry him!”

*Ah, even I know Karen just said something she shouldn’t have.*

“You have some nerve saying that, you lower noble! You’ll pay for that. I’ll kill you!”

“Y-you think you can? J-just try it, then! You’re all talk anyway, Dustiness... Dustiness? Wait a minute, I’m no commoner. You’ll be in big trouble if you harm me, you know?!”

“Neither the government nor its people would care if a crooked, upstart

lender like you disappeared! For the sake of the world and its people, I'll get rid of you! There's no problem as long as I go quietly to jail or wherever... What, Megumin? Don't stop me. I'm going to deliver justice to this punk."

Karen was on the verge of tears while Darkness grabbed her. Megumin had interrupted by tugging gently on the blond woman's mantle.

"Darkness, that's enough. We basically failed the quest, after all. Kazuma's only just recovered, so why don't we go home?" Megumin, normally the most short-tempered of all, muttered quietly.

5

That night.

Collecting one monster's worth of pay from our now-very-flustered employer, we went straight back to the mansion and were relaxing after dinner.

Megumin said she had something to discuss with everyone. The explanation was a bit...

"...Sorry, can you start from the beginning again?"

"Well, I guess... Ummm, I formed a crew of bandits on a whim, but by the time I knew it, I had over a thousand applicants. Once I'd made the best manor in town our hideout and obtained some supporters, it was the perfect time to go raid a noble's home—that Karen girl's."

My body stiffened unconsciously.

*What does she think she's doing?*

Darkness, who was similarly frozen, looked about nervously and spoke. "Now that you mention it, I did hear someone had gotten their hands on the best mansion in town..."

*Stop it.*

"Yes, my grunt flaunted a bit of her power, and we were granted use of it."

"Hold up. I'm sure even the power of the Dustiness family couldn't snag that manor so easily. Hey, Megumin, might that grunt of yours be...?"

*Hey, stop, don't ask that—there won't be any going back.*

“Speaking of, Megumin, on the way to Elroad, you were calling that Iris girl your grunt, weren't you?”

“Stop it, Aqua. This is no time for an utter dimwit to be asking such questions! We heard nothing and know nothing. Got it?”

“Don't be ridiculous! C'mon—what's this about? Did you rope Lady Iris into a shady group and attack Karen's mansion with a bunch of weirdos you met somewhere?!” Darkness asked, dripping sweat and looking ready to cry.

“‘Bunch of weirdos' is a rude way to put it. It was an ignorant grunt and a friendless Crimson Magic Clan member, plus an Axis priestess and one Thief—everyone else's enrollment is on hold for now.”

I probably knew everyone except for the Thief she'd mentioned at the end.

Why did my companions always go and get themselves into trouble the moment I took my eyes off them?

“Besides, technically we just went to her home *planning* to raid it—we didn't get to execute the plan. I told you about this the other day, didn't I, Kazuma? That we helped the people at the mansion by killing the monsters attacking them.”

I felt just a tiny bit relieved at Megumin's words.

No, there were lots of questions still in need of answering.

“Still, why did you make such a dumb group? Why can't you lead a more peaceful life?”

Despite the question being as sincere as I could muster, Megumin looked at me like she didn't understand at all.

“You should know that already. I will never forget—it was the day we all got to eat speckled crab again. While everyone was stuffing their faces, I gushed about how I'd met the Silver-Haired Thief Brigade, and how I admired them and their way of life. That's the reason I assembled my crew.”

At this point, I couldn't admit I had been too engrossed in eating crab to listen to anything she'd been saying.



“And though I did not explain at the time that I’d made a thief gang, I told you I had gotten people together and acquired a hideout in Axel and that we had found some work, right?”

“Y-yeah, you did...of course...?”

Seeing Darkness looking around nervously, I was convinced she’d been too into the food to listen, either.

Jittery myself, I also glanced about the room. Next to me, Aqua was scratching her head.

“Sorry, I was too into the crab to hear what you were saying,” came her shameless response.

*...Are Darkness and I on the same level as this girl?*

“...So after you helped her, you didn’t even get a thank-you, much less a reward?” I asked to make sure I understood, after hearing about all the trouble with the noble girl.

“Yes, the reason that Karen girl was surprised to see me must have been because she remembered the time before and felt awkward about it. It would have been one thing if I had helped as a passerby, but I really only came to their aid after I went there to raid and saw monsters attacking...” Megumin hunched down, embarrassed.

“You felt too guilty to be pushy about money and left?”

“Yes...”

At my final question, the Arch-wizard dropped her shoulders dejectedly, likely reflecting on what had happened.

Megumin herself probably didn’t want the money that much. She seemed to be worried about getting stiffed on payment in front of the other members of her gang, however.

Darkness had been listening quietly but suddenly opened her eyes wide and stood up.

“That stingy, sly little upstart! I can handle her making a mockery of Kazuma or me, but I definitely can’t forgive a noble for running off a youngster like

Megumin. She didn't even thank her!"

"H-hey, I understand what you're saying, but why are you fine with her bad-mouthing me?"

Darkness narrowed her eyes, clearly hearing what I had asked.

"Kazuma, we go tomorrow! Really, I wanna go right now, but tomorrow morning, we're getting everyone together for that raid! That's what Megumin had planned from the start, right? Now you have the approval of the Dustiness family—burn them to the ground!"

"Don't *you* say something dumb, too! Even our hotheaded Megumin thought better than to do that!"

"No, in my case, a pack of powerful monsters had appeared, so I just went along with my adventurer instincts instead of following the way of the bandit."

*I wish you wouldn't sabotage me vouching for you!*

"All of this is sounding pretty intense. I'll mind my own business and drink some booze so this doesn't get even more out of hand."

Why was this the one day Aqua seemed to be the most reasonable among us?

"Look out, Donnelly, 'cause I don't care what happens after! When everything's over, I won't fight a standing trial or whatever other consequences. I'll teach her a lesson!"

I fled back into my room after hearing Darkness give such a foreboding statement.

6

The area had grown totally dark, and the lights of the houses had vanished. There was a soft *knock-knock* at the door of my room.

"I'm awake!" I let them know it was okay to enter from my spot lying on the bed, and in came a small figure.

"Sorry to bother you so late."

It was Megumin.

Though she still hadn't changed into her pajamas despite the time—I imagined she had been feeling down ever since dinner. Yes, this girl had seemed to be somewhat depressed ever since my most recent resurrection.

She'd been pretending like nothing was wrong to keep us from noticing, but with how long I'd known her, that was basically impossible.

"What's wrong? You don't look like you're here for racy talk, and you don't seem like you're in a mood for jokes." I sat myself up as I spoke, knowing this wasn't the time to kid around.

Megumin's shoulders dropped, and her eyes turned to look at the floor.

"Sorry," came her soft apology.

"Er, I don't like how this sounds like a rejection. Especially after you came in here all of a sudden and only said one word."

I encouraged her to continue, and she did, though with her head still down.

"If I hadn't helped that noble earlier and instead raided their mansion as I should have, maybe you would not have died. After all, it is possible that Karen girl herself could be the cause of the monsters spawning around that house..." Megumin blurted out the words.

*Huh?*

Hadn't I heard something like that already?

Megumin continued on as I stayed silent.

"Their home might have a Sacred Treasure that summons monsters. If I had been able to steal it, that never would have happened to you—"

I interrupted her confession-like monologue, saying, "Who on earth did you hear that from?"

I was pretty sure I knew who it was already, though.

Not having expected me to ask for her source, even if I did say something, Megumin cast a crimson glance toward me in the dark.

"It was my crew's Thief, the one I talked about earlier. Um, it is someone you know, but..." There was a hint of a smile on the girl's face.

Sighing, I got out of bed and looked toward the window. They must have been deliberately thinking hostile thoughts, wanting me to notice them. The person in question was probably starting to get cold outside. For a while now, my Sense Foe skill had been telling me someone was waiting outside the window.

Megumin gave me an odd look as I suddenly rose and walked toward the window. I drew the curtains on the window with a *swish*, and...

“‘Thief’ means this person, right?” My words came as though I had known this was going to happen.

It was neither Eris the goddess nor Chris but rather the grunt from a knockoff crew of bandits who entered. Rather, the person waving from past the glass was my currently wanted boss, face covered with a mask.

7

“Phew. I swear, it takes you so long to notice, Lowly Assistant. I was getting really chilly.”

Chris slipped inside when I opened the window for her.

“Well, you didn’t set a time in the first place, did you, Chief? Though we should probably start holding these meetings outside,” I replied, as if this was an everyday thing.

Megumin stood motionless, dumbfounded at our exchange.

“...Hey, Lowly Assistant, Megumin’s not moving.”

“Probably because of your unorthodox entrance, Chief. I mean, a suspicious person entering through an open window is pretty startling.”

We grinned through our irreverent remarks. Of course, we knew the real reason Megumin had gone rigid.

“...rry.”

“Hmm?”

“What’s wrong, Megumin? I couldn’t hear you.”

After her soft murmur before, Megumin appeared to make up her mind about

something and suddenly began to grovel on the floor.

“I am sorry! I cannot believe I, calling myself a fan, could not see who you really were!”

“H-hey, keep your voice down—people will hear you!” I warned.

“It’s fine, it’s fine, Megumin! It’s not even worth apologizing for, so quit apologizing!”

As the two of us tried our best to hurriedly calm her down, Megumin raised her face and stared.

“Though, errr... You called him your lowly assistant a second ago, which means...”

Her red eyes were full of excitement and expectation, making me feel uneasy about playing dumb or evading the question. I looked at Chris, as if to ask if this was okay. She signaled back that it was, winking and giving a thumbs-up.

Chris had come in knowing Megumin was here, so she must’ve meant to reveal her identity.

In that case, I didn’t need to hide who I was anymore, either.

I went to the closet where I kept my thieving clothes and mask...

“Megumin, watch veeery carefully and see the true identity of the person you told me you liked so fervently,” Chris said teasingly. The silver-haired girl grinned like a mischievous kid while she stood next to the closet I’d opened.

Megumin replied, “Okay, I shall. I want to know what the person I like so much has been doing all this time, after all.”

Megumin’s counter had been a head-on fastball; Chris was the one to turn red.

“Chief, this one never pulls any punches, so you’re better off not teasing her. I have taken hit after hit from her myself.”

“S-s-s-sorry. I don’t know what that was, but I’m feeling a lot of damage myself. What is this bittersweet feeling? I’m embarrassed yet want to hear more. Somehow, at the same time, there’s an urge to cover my face...”

Taking stock of our hushed whispers, Megumin looked just a bit sad, saying, “Er, are you guys really close? How long have you two had this kind of relationship?”

“No, Megumin! We only recently started thieving together, and I told you before—I don’t think anything of my lowly assistant! He’s just a friend; I don’t have any special feelings!”

“Wait a second—what have the two of you been talking about behind my back? Why have I been rejected without even knowing about it?”

*What have these two really been talking about when I’m not around? I need to take care to make more inappropriate comments and actions; gotta keep them from holding their gossip conventions.*

While I considered my actions for the future, I suddenly felt a powerful gaze from behind as I changed my clothes.

“I know we just talked about watching carefully and revealing my true identity, but surely this part is a bit...”

The two of them, staring at me with earnest faces, averted their eyes in panic as I put my hand to my pants.

“...A lovely full moon tonight! I know it doesn’t matter for you and your Darksight skill, Lowly Assistant, but for me, nights like this are a great time to get to work.”

Relying only on pale moonlight, we departed from Axel.

Megumin was wearing a rough getup rather than her usual robes. According to Chris, she’d gone to the trouble of getting a mask just for this.

“Er, is it really okay for me to come, too? I don’t have any thief skills, so won’t I slow you down?” Megumin had been following us from one step behind for a while.

“Don’t worry. There’s another person en route to help us out. Anyway, think of me as someone else behind this mask. I am not the masterful adventurer Kazuma Satou but the wanted boss of the Masked Thief Brigade. It only happens on full moons, but sometimes I get this feeling like I can never lose.

And I'm definitely feeling it tonight!" This is what I said to the Crimson Magic Clanner who had joined us on that night.

"Hey, Lowly Assistant, you're not actually some sort of devil or demon, are you? Just a human, right? Also, it's the Silver-Haired Thief Brigade, and I'm the chief, got it?"

Ignoring the real boss's usual rudeness, I hurried on, only slightly bothered by the continuous watchful look from behind me.

After all, tomorrow, a big, raging noble was going to make a move practically at odds with Megumin. That blond woman was already stubborn enough, but once I'd seen her eyes so serious, I had given up on stopping her. Therefore, our only chance was to snatch the object that was supposedly summoning monsters from Karen's house—by morning.

If we could just steal the thing, it would hopefully be enough to keep Darkness at bay. Then we could have that girl tried lawfully for summoning harmful creatures and exposing Axel to danger.

Now that I thought about it, I was a victim myself, having been sent to meet Eris. I'd have nothing to complain about if we actually managed to pull this off.

...

"You know, I really can't stop feeling your eyes on me."

"Ah! S-s-sorry, the mask suits you so well, I just couldn't help it..."

Megumin had been staring at me nonstop while she followed the boss and me.

"Anyway, we'll arrive at the town gate soon, so you put on a mask, too, Megumin. Today, you're a member of the Silver-Haired Thief Brigade, you know."

At Chris's words, Megumin's eyes glowed red with excitement, and she covered her mouth with a mask.

"...This is bad, Chief—her red eyes make her mask practically worthless."

"What should we do, Lowly Assistant? I hadn't counted on this, either."

Even with a mask covering the lower half of her face, the distinguishing feature of the Crimson Magic Clan made it totally obvious who it was. This town had only two Crimson Magic Clan members, so the eyes were a dead giveaway.

I took off my mask and held it out to Megumin, who was unmistakably crestfallen.

“Oh well, wear my mask. I’ll use yours. Tonight, you’re the chief of the Masked Thief Brigade.”

“Hey, Lowly Assistant, let’s make sure we’re on the same page about the name of our group. Also, I call the shots, okay?”

Megumin took the mask from me and smiled, happier than ever.

“When we got the bounty on our heads, didn’t I tell you we should be the Masked Thief Brigade and that I should be in charge?”

“The buzz has died down recently, and I was the one who originally made the thief gang, so we have to name it after my trademark silver hair.”

Such was our exchange as I donned the mask Megumin had handed me.

“I am good at coming up with names. If you like, I could name the gang?” the crimson-eyed girl offered.

““No,”” Chris and I accidentally said in unison.

...Getting through Axel’s main gate was all too easy thanks to the Ambush skill; beneath the moonlight, we pressed on toward the forest.

“Kazuma, it somehow feels so right having this mask on. You might even say it suits a Crimson Magic Clan member more than anyone. Can I have this?”

“I’ve been getting fond of it recently myself, so I’m not giving it to you. Vanir’s place is selling ones just like it, so buy one yourself. Apparently, they’re so popular that it’s hard to get one, though.”

Listening, Chris asked curiously, “Is Vanir that guy who always wears a mask? I only caught a glimpse of him from afar, but he seemed to be an honest person. He was driving crows away from the trash heaps, getting called Crow Slayer and all that.”



*...What is she talking about? Are all the goddesses in this world blind?*

No, as I recalled, he had said something about using a temporary body when coming down to the earth, so maybe that's why she didn't recognize Vanir?

Although it seemed extremely risky, I kind of wanted to introduce Chris to Wiz and Vanir.

"...Oh, I can see the mansion now. Well, Megumin, I guess tonight is your second chance. You were actually pretty mad about that girl's attitude, weren't you?" Chris said, smiling at Megumin, who stared at the forest manor with eyes shining from behind her mask.

"Well, let's go!"

8

Two sentries were standing nonchalantly at the front gate, apparently watching for monsters.

To get rid of them, I activated my Ambush skill and approached quietly from the darkness.

*Covering their mouths from behind and using Drain Touch should work.*

...Just then, there was a rustling sound opposite from where I had been sneaking, to the left of the guards.

The two watchmen, who had been facing the main gate, turned to look, and...

Not missing the opportunity, I approached their backs in an instant, put one hand around each of their mouths, and activated Drain Touch.

Seeing them crumple without a sound, Chris and Megumin emerged from where they were hiding in the brush.

"Well, both of you did great. Actually, you were even better than I expected, Kazuma."

Megumin, who seemingly thought I'd be terrible at this, looked at us with respect in her eyes. The sound that had distracted the sentries was a rock Chris had thrown.

“We are the Silver-Haired Thief Brigade, who broke into the heart of the king’s palace, you know? Something like this is a piece of cake,” Chris said with a grin, as if she had everything under control.

“You were the grunt of a knockoff group until just recently—what are you talking about? Anyway, why do things always get amusing when I’m not around, Chief?”

“That’s what I want to know. My Luck is just as good as yours, after all.”

Speaking of, Chris’s words made me realize something. As good as my Luck was, I always, always got wrapped up in the darnedest things. I thought on that while we circled around the mansion grounds and broke in from the back entrance.

“...Hmm, maybe we aren’t as lucky as we thought?”

“I feel like this isn’t so much good luck as it is drawing the short stick.”

“You two must have a lot of experience to be so calm at a time like this.”

Exchanging looks, we tried to figure out how to deal with the situation we’d suddenly found ourselves in.

“I don’t know who you are, but stop talking and help me!”

Karen stood before us, getting constricted by a human-size, octopus-like monster.

“...Th-thanks for the help. I almost lost my innocence as a young noble girl...”

After rescuing Karen and slicing up the octo-monster with Chris, we realized the room we’d entered was some kind of cage.

There was a door at the far end of the room, but in its middle, iron bars had been set up.

It was probably supposed to be a system for summoning monsters safely from the other side of the makeshift prison.

“Why is the back entrance connected to a jail?”

In response to my question, the recently constricted Karen stood up, clearing her throat in an awkward sort of way.

“That is no back entrance. It is an outlet for releasing unwanted monsters.”

Only now did Karen look at us with any sort of caution; the noblewoman threateningly raised something in her hand up high.

“She said ‘unwanted monsters’ just now, Chief. This girl is totally guilty.”

“Wait, Lowly Assistant. I don’t see the all-important Sacred Treasure anywhere.”

Showing slight annoyance at our calm composure, Karen broke into a shout.

“Who are you people?! You came in here knowing what this place is, didn’t you?”

“The infamous Donnelly home, yes? We’ve come for payback,” Chris said with confidence.

“I see. When in the lending business, you make no shortage of enemies. That’s what you’re saying, right? Unfortunately for you, you’re all going to be test subjects for my new product!” Karen swung the object in her hand over her head, and...!

““Steal.””

Chris and I used the skill simultaneously, and the object was plucked from Karen’s hand.

“Wha—?!”

Ignoring Karen’s yelp of surprise, we checked out our spoils of war.

“I just went ahead and stole it, but what exactly is this?”

“Ah, rats, I lost! Panties again!”

The item Karen had been trying to use had wound up in Chris’s hands, while white underwear had fallen into mine.

“Why is your Steal specialized for sexual harassment, Kazuma? ...Anyway, let me see that for a second. I am sure I have seen it somewhere before— No, not the panties. I mean that stone there!”

Chris gave the object in her hand to Megumin. Meanwhile, Karen held down the hem of her skirt, glaring at me as I wondered what to do with her

underwear.

In the midst of that bizarre situation, Karen yelled, “S-somebody help! We have intruders, thieves!” finally thinking to call someone.

“This is a contraband magical item, processed from monster eggs. It can summon them, but that is all. Once conjured, there’s no controlling them, and the summons are random—it’s treasure, just a regular, dangerous item.”

At Megumin’s insight into what the stone really was, Karen snorted disdainfully.

“Regular? No, it is a wonderful tool for moneymaking. Among the randomly summoned monsters is the possibility of hitting the jackpot with a Duxion or a Gold Ant. The biggest hit I’ve had so far was a baby dragon. That alone made back everything I spent on these things in the first place.”

Several sets of distant footsteps were growing closer. Karen, who had put some distance between herself and us, took a new stone from a shelf.

So basically, this girl was summoning monsters into this bar-covered room, selling off the ones that were worth anything, and carelessly releasing into the wild the ones that couldn’t make her a profit.

Then, when rumors started to fly in town about the monsters, she had solicited help from me, famed as the strongest in Axel, to cull them.

“Chief, this girl is just a punk. She even blabs about her misdeeds.”

“You shouldn’t say such things even if you’re thinking them. Still, this isn’t the culprit. Just when I’d thought I found the one using the Sacred Treasure...”

“That lady can hear the two of you. Her face is bright red.”

Furious at us, who spoke as casually as we always did, Karen readied the stone.

“You may feel quite at ease now, but you’ll have plenty of time to regret your actions in the afterlife! The guards will be here any second—”

““Steal.””

Before Karen could finish, we both unleashed our skill again.

“That makes two wins.”

“Now, hold on a minute. In my mind, I’m happier with this than that stone, so if we’re making it a contest, I count this as a win for me.”

“This boy is vile; he came right out and said such a thing right in front of us.”

Clutched in my hands was Karen’s bra, while Chris had snagged the stone.

“What kind of people are you?! Seriously, what’s with you two?!”

Karen gave a tearful glare as she now held down her neckline in addition to her skirt.

That’s when...

“Milady, what’s wrong?!”

“Intruders! Seize these people!” Karen ordered triumphantly to the guards who had arrived.

...Chris turned to us, the others on this side of the bars, and said, “Lowly Assistant, this person is kind of a lost cause.”

“We already knew she wasn’t worth it to begin with. I mean, she’s like someone who buys loot boxes in a mobile game with this contraband.”

“What are ‘loot boxes in a mobile game’?” Megumin asked. “Anyway, I wonder why she was summoning monsters on her side of the bars. I bet this lady was organizing the shelves or something and dropped that stone, causing a monster to come out.”

As Karen turned bright red up to her ears at what we’d said, Chris nodded in agreement.

“We just got here, but maybe this is our chance? We’ll take this as evidence of illegal monster summoning. Let’s report it to the Dustiness family.”

Hearing that, Karen’s face went from red to pale.

“W-wait! I won’t let you go. I may not look it, but I am a high-level noble myself. I can buy time until the guards make their way around back—”

“Stea—”

“No, sidekick, I don’t think you should do that anymore!”

When I tried to use a certain skill on Karen again, Chris was quick to interrupt.

“I see no problem. Let us leave this girl stark naked in front of her own servants.”

At Megumin’s merciless words, Karen, who knew what was about to happen to her and her one-piece, sank to the floor and backed away, trembling.

I figured it was time to quit while I was ahead; we’d gotten the evidence. As Chris had said, it was probably time to withdraw.

Seeming to pick up on who we were, Karen spoke from where she was on the floor.

“Now that I’ve gotten a good look, that mask seems familiar. You’re the Masked Thief Brigade people are talking about, aren’t you?! Little illegal items like these aren’t enough to ruin my family. Just you wait—you’re going to get an even bigger bounty on your heads... Just kidding. I’m sorry!”

Karen quickly retracted her words and backed away when she saw me thrust my hand toward her.







The next morning.

“Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha! Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha! I’ll teach you a lesson with this, you Donnelly jerk! Good job, Kazuma! Well done! Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha!”

Darkness’s triumphant laughter echoed through the foyer. Having obtained evidence of monster summoning, I bestowed it upon Darkness and gave a rough explanation of what had transpired the night before.

Though she did scold us a bit for breaking in, ultimately her reaction was pretty positive.

“G’morning... What’s going on, everyone? You’re up early today.”

Aqua came down in her pajamas, holding some kind of bundle.

“Not up early—we stayed up all night. I’m going to sleep now, so don’t wake me till evening,” I said.

“Were you gaming again? Sheesh, these NEETs, for the love of...”

I didn’t wanna hear it from a girl who had drunk booze and slept through all the commotion of last night.

And then Aqua spread out her bundle on the table, at which Megumin showed interest.

“What are those, Aqua? They look like stones.”

“Just as I’d expect from a member of the Crimson Magic Clan, Megumin, you have an eye for appraisal.”

*That eye is as blind as a bat—she never noticed who I really was beneath my mask until yesterday.*

I sipped my morning coffee while Aqua continued.

“This here is a collection of funny-shaped stones. You can find some good ones in rivers, ponds, and lakes. I polish them to a shine like this sometimes... Want one?”

“I do not,” Megumin answered.

...Although the monster-summoning commotion was over, the missing Sacred Treasure hadn't been at the mansion, so Chris had decided to keep working on tracking down its whereabouts.

I really wanted to make this goddess, who could never keep her big mouth shut, learn from the more diligent one.

“Speaking of, Aqua, you've been heading in and out of town for a while now—what is it you're doing? When we took our eyes off Megumin, everything got out of hand by the time we knew it. I'm just as curious what you were up to...”

“Darkness, stop treating me like a problem child! Someone at the Adventurers Guild asked me to do a part-time job. Look, I have super-amazing Purification magic, right? They asked me to use that to purify the lake and the area surrounding where the Kowloon Hydra used to be. I really gave it my best!”

I took another slow drink of coffee, absentmindedly watching an all-too-familiar scene. Megumin was standing next to me, clutching something to her chest. She seemed to want to speak, but it looked like the girl was unsure whether it was a good idea.

“S-sorry, Aqua. My bad.”

“Do you really think it's your fault? Then buy something from my stone collection. With the Purification job over, I've got no money.”

Ignoring their prattle, I teasingly said to Megumin, “Is there something you wanna say? Aha, do you want my autograph now that you know who I really am? Or maybe you want me to shake your hand?”

“I do not.”

After I looked about nervously for a bit at her scathingly immediate answer, she said, “...Er, thank you very much. For sort of getting revenge for us.”



*Oh, that?*

“It wasn’t exactly revenge. Besides, it was that noble girl’s fault I got killed. So it was a bit satisfying for me, personally. You guys are our subsidiaries anyway, right? In that case, it’s only natural to get revenge for a grunt.”

While I put on airs, Megumin bashfully said, “Well, from now on, shall I call you ‘boss,’ Kazuma?”

“Sure, I don’t mind. The bounty lists our name as the ‘Masked Thief Brigade.’ So you could say I’m the boss... Oh, don’t tell Chris I said that, okay? She’ll get mad.”

Megumin giggled gleefully at my slight panic.

“Fine. I will keep it a secret, so if I do that for you...”

She gripped the thing she was clutching to her chest tightly for a second.

“Just on occasion, can I come along again?”

As she spoke, she held out what she had apparently been clutching for so long—my mask.

## Afterword

Thank you very much for purchasing *Konosuba: An Explosion on This Wonderful World! Bonus Story: We Are the Megumin Bandits*.

I doubt this is the first *Konosuba* book anyone has read, but I am *Some-Authorlike-Nickname*, aka Natsume Akatsuki.

This book is a spin-off novel that was serialized on Sneaker Web, to which I added text that was previously unpublished.

I already explained how this came to be written in the afterword of *Konosuba*'s tenth volume, so I will spare you that, but I sure learned this isn't something to do on a whim.

I earnestly pray there will never be another character popularity vote.

...Anyway, this volume is a book packed with various untold stories.

Even that Sacred Treasure, which Chris is still hunting for after chucking it in the lake at the end of Volume 7, was picked up by the goddess with a reputation for doing the uncalled for. She polishes it every day without having a clue what it actually is.

Surely Chris will collapse when she probably ends up finding it at Kazuma and company's mansion, after having searched high and low for it everywhere.

If I get the opportunity, I'd like to write such a story sometime, too.

...Well then, by the time this hits the bookstores, the anime should be approaching its second season.

I haven't been able to show up much for the anime's post-recording this time, either, but an author is an animal that makes its habitat indoors, so it can't be helped!

I get spoiled hard when I go to recordings, so I try not to take part—instead,

I'm looking forward to the second anime season as a regular anime fan myself.

Also, next month an art book by the masterful Kurone Mishima called *Cheers!* will go on sale.

I wrote a special story just for that, too, so if anyone is interested, then please do not hesitate to check it out.

I would be happy if you enjoyed the manga, as well, which is being serialized in many magazines.

Well then, as with previous volumes, I would like to thank first the masterful Kurone Mishima, as well as the many people who helped make this publication possible.

And most of all, I once again express my deep appreciation for all the readers who picked up this book!

***Natsume Akatsuki***



AFTERWORD

△▽  
\*  
2017 Kurone  
Mishima,  
2017

—☆  
WHAT A  
CUTE BOSS!!



## A Hardworking Girl Thief



I ran into an unusual pair as I was strolling around town.

“The Axis Church! Please join the Axis Church!”

It was Cecily, shouting the praises of her religion.

Joining her was...

“The Axis Church... Please join the Axis Church...”

Chris was clutching a ton of applications—perhaps forced to do so by Cecily—and was handing them out with a look of resignation.

“Er, what are you doing?”

When I spoke to them, Chris jumped as if she’d been caught doing something bad.

“Ahhh, Megumin! We’re doing some PR, of course! I was just looking for more hands—won’t you help? As thanks, I’ll treat you to lunch!”

“I don’t mind doing it for a bit, but why is an Eris follower like Chris part of this, too?”

The Thief looked embarrassed by my question but nevertheless held out an application to a passerby, saying, “When I was bored and went to spend time at the hideout, Cecily said to me, ‘The Axis Church feels inferior now, thanks to the goddess Eris gracing everyone with an appearance so freely before. Isn’t your goddess a little too thoughtless?’ Then she asked me to help out for just today to show that I felt even a little sorry for them...”



*Why is this person such a pushover?*

“Axis followers’ complaints are fundamentally flawed, so you shouldn’t do what they tell you to. Eris deciding to come down and create confusion doesn’t have anything to do with a believer like you, right?”

“I—I think I’d better help out all day.”

I wasn’t sure why she said that, but if it was fine with her, then oh well.

“Well, what should I help with? Shoving applications into everyone’s mailboxes or something?”

A smile made its way across Cecily’s face after my question.

“No, since you’re here, Megumin, let’s finally do you-know-what again!”

...On Axel’s main street.

Loudly, I cried to the passing people for assistance.

“Please, won’t someone help me?! My pet cat is on the verge of death after a passing Eris follower attacked her!”

I was cradling Chomusuke—who had been brushing up happily against my legs—with both hands to prevent her from struggling.

With eyes glazed over like she’d given up on everything, Chris said to me, “M-my Eris-follower senses tell me that cat is eviil. All I did was exact justice in the name of my goddess, so I’m not soooorry. If you really want to save her, you’ll have to join the Eris Chuuurch.”

Chris’s monotone speech was the cue for Cecily to appear; the priestess pushed her way through the onlookers.

“That’s enough, wicked Eris follower! Persecuting a poor little girl’s pet cat in a scheme to get her to make a big donation to the Eris Church if she wants you to heal its wounds? Even if a police officer was to forgive you, Lady Aqua and I cannot!”

The people around us whispered to one another upon seeing our little play.

“Isn’t that Megumin from Kazuma’s place? Is this some kind of new game of hers?”

“Chris too—what is she doing? She seemed like such a respectable young woman...”

“Hey, don’t look them in the eye. They’ll try to talk to you.”

Hearing that, Chris covered her face with both hands and collapsed. Apparently, she couldn’t take it anymore.

“Just great, you and Chris are so famous that I can’t use the usual trick! There goes my perfect plan, where a beautiful priestess revives the kitten with a miraculous Heal, and you’re so moved that you join the Axis Church in tears. Then the onlookers are lured into becoming believers one after another...”

“I said I would help, not that I would join! Besides, I cannot do acting *that* advanced!”

And just then.

Suddenly feeling a presence behind me, I turned around, and...

“What’re you doing?”

Kazuma and Darkness were standing there; they’d gone out to buy dinner.

The two of them had most interesting expressions on their faces. They looked on at Chris with pity in their eyes.

“N-n-n-no, Darkness! Listen, Lowly Assistant! This is my apology to the Axis followers for the inconvenience they suffered when Eris appeared or something like that...!”

Darkness placed a kind hand on Chris’s shoulder while the poor girl made a panicked excuse. Next to her, Kazuma grinned.

“Chris...,” Darkness started. “If there’s ever anything that’s troubling you, I’m here to listen, okay? You can lean on me a bit more instead of doing something this dumb...”

“Er, if there’s anything I can do, I’ll help, too. I’d rather you not lower the number of people around here with common sense. It’s low enough as it is.”

“No! Both of you, this isn’t what you think! I’m begging you; stop looking at me like that!!”

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