

Chapter 1 - Leon's Family

So, what should I do now? Mother told me to get some more rest, but I don't think I can sleep anymore. For the time being, maybe I should explore the house. Memories and seeing it in person are completely different, after all.

First, let's try to leave this room. With that determination, I was about to get out of bed when I noticed that there were shoes placed next to it. Looks like it is a shoes-on house. When I try to put on the shoes that were placed there, I realize that they are made of some sort of woven grass. It is a bit prickly, but I can endure it for now. There is no way this world only has shoes like this.

So I put on the shoes, got out of bed, and opened the door of the room. There, it was like a hallway, with a dead end on the right side, another room on the opposite side, and a staircase on the left.

First, let's try opening the other door.

"...Excuse me."

I said in a small voice as I opened the door gently. I feel like I am secretly peeping into someone else's house. The room I opened nervously turned out to be a storage room. There are many things placed there. Even if I were to take a look at it now, I do not know what all of this is, so let's skip it for now.

Thinking that, I closed the door and decided to try going down the stairs next. As I nervously went down the creaking stairs, I quickly reached the lower floor. At the bottom of the stairs is a short straight hallway with one door at the very end, two doors on the right side, and one on the left.

I felt someone's presence behind the left door, so I tried opening the door on the right side, and it turned out to be the toilet. Anyway, it was smelly and dirty. While thinking that I didn't want to use it, I decided to forget about it for now and opened the second door.

Behind it was a living room with a desk and a chair. And there was another door at the back of the living room. I found it locked when I approached it, so I unlocked it and opened the door.

Oh, it leads to the outside! There is a small yard and a well beyond that door. It was blocked off from the house next door and the house behind it by wooden fences. There are also wooden fences to prevent people from entering the yard from the road in front of the house. It has a courtyard-like feeling.

There are buckets, washbasins, and other things propped up against the well. A rope runs between the house and the wooden fence, so they probably did laundry here. In Leon's memories, it seemed like they used buckets and washbasins to wipe their bodies with a cloth. I could not stand the thought of doing that. I wonder if there are no bathtubs in this world. If that were the case, what am I supposed to do...? But there must be a bathtub somewhere. I wanted to believe that it was simply inconceivable for there to be no bathtubs in this world. Once I got used to this world, I would have to go find one.

Next, I decided to open the door on the left earlier. I can hear some noise, so maybe Leon's mother or his other family members are in there. Meeting them would be nerve-wracking, but I could not avoid it.

I took a deep breath and summoned my courage before opening the door on the left. The room beyond the door is a kitchen, and Leon's mother and father are cooking inside. When I opened the door, they looked over at me.

"Leon, what's the matter? You should get some more rest."

"Mother, I'm fine now."

As I look at her again, she really is a beautiful mother. She has blonde hair, amber eyes, and is still in her twenties. In Leon's memories, she is a kind but scary mother when she gets angry.

"Leon, are you okay? I didn't know what to do when you fell down the stairs and hit your head."

"Father, I'm sorry for making you worry. I'm completely fine now!"

"I see. I'm really glad."

Father's face relaxed as if a huge weight had been lifted from his shoulders. He has brown hair, brown eyes, and gives off a gentle vibe. In fact, he is very kind and family-oriented.

"Jean, if you don't start moving your hands, we won't make it in time for the opening."

"I'm sorry, Loana. I'll do it right away."

At Mother's words, Father hastily resumes his work. It seems like my mother is the dominant one in the family. Watching their interactions, I could not help but chuckle. However, even though Mother is dominant, it's evident that Father loves her dearly. Despite being scolded, he has a grin on his face.

"Mother, where's Marie?"

I asked, wanting to meet my younger sister in person. As Ryosuke Ichigaya, I had no younger siblings, so I had always longed for a younger brother or sister."

"Marie is cleaning the restaurant. If Leon is feeling better, you should go and help, too."

"Got it."

"Marie! Leon will come and help you!"

Mother called out to the restaurant. The restaurant and kitchen are connected with a counter in between.

"Yay! It would have been tough doing it alone~~~."

Marie's voice could be heard from the restaurant. I returned to the hallway from the kitchen and opened the door at the end. It leads to the restaurant.

As I entered the restaurant, Marie quickly came up to me.

"Big brother, are you okay now? Does your head still hurt?"

"I'm fine now. Sorry for making you worry."

"Geez, big brother, you're so clumsy!"

Marie puffed out her cheeks as she said this. I could not help but stare at her. With her brown hair and amber eyes, she is incredibly cute. Too cute. In fact, I need to be careful not to commit a crime. If she were out on the streets, someone might even kidnap her.

Although she is only five years old, Marie is already helping out with the family business and is becoming quite the star of the restaurant. I made a firm vow to protect her from any suspicious characters. It's like I am acting like a big brother already.

"Big brother, big brother! What are you daydreaming about? Does your head still hurt?"

This isn't good. I must have looked sick while staring at Marie, which worried her. What a blunder.

"I'm completely fine now! Should we get to work?"

"Really~?"

Marie looked at me with a suspicious expression, but when I vigorously nodded my head, she seemed convinced.

"Alright, then you go clean outside, big brother. I'll clean the restaurant."

said Marie, handing me a broom to sweep outside.

"Got it. Then I'll go clean it up!"

Saying that, I picked up the broom and opened the door that led to the outside of the restaurant.

"Wow~! Mmmph..."

I let out a big exclamation as I stepped outside and quickly covered my mouth with my hand. However, I am still amazed. I knew of this from Leon's memories, but seeing it with my own eyes is totally different. It is awesome! Completely different from Japan!

The first thing I saw when I opened the door was the main street where carriages could easily pass each other, with many carriages and people coming and going. The houses are mostly made of wood, and there are rows of two-story houses crammed together. However, just looking at this scene, it could also be considered a time slip.

But that was not the case. It was already proven that this is a different world just from knowing that it has magic in Leon's memories. Even so, I am still feeling excited. The cityscape is not particularly beautiful, and it is less developed and dirtier than Japan, but the excitement of being in a different world made up for it. However... thinking that I had to live here from now on, the excitement faded, and I started wanting to live in a more beautiful place.

But thinking about that now is pointless! I slapped my cheeks with both hands to psych myself up and tried to take a step forward. However, someone walking from my right side collided with me, and I fell on my butt due to the impact.

"Ouch... huh?"

As I endured the pain and looked up to apologize to the person I had bumped into, I was shocked and at a loss for words when I saw who it was.

It was a knight. He wasn't wearing full plate armor but had simple chest plate armor and a sword at his waist. He is a cool-looking person with red hair and brown eyes.

I did not know if there were nobles in this world, but from his clothes and demeanor, he is definitely an important person. So I panicked and tried to apologize by kneeling, but before I could, the man reached out his hand.



"Are you okay? I'm sorry for bumping into you."

said the man. I did not understand what he said for a moment and just stood there looking blankly at him. But then I hurriedly got up and apologized.

"No, I should be the one to apologize. Are you injured, Sir?"

Without thinking, due to my habit from when I was in Japan, I responded politely using honorific language. I wondered if it would seem strange for a child to speak this way. While thinking that, I looked up at the man's face, and he was frowning.

I guess using honorifics was a mistake. As I panicked, realizing this fact, the man opened his mouth to speak.

"Where did you learn to speak like that? You must be a child of this restaurant. I don't think you would have had the opportunity to learn it..."

Could it be that using polite language is not allowed, regardless of whether it's a child or not!? Oh no, what should I do?

"Er... uh... an old man in the neighborhood taught me."

I stopped using honorific language and tried to make up an excuse, but the man still looked skeptical. As I panicked about what to do when I saw his face, the man's expression suddenly softened.

"I see. You're quite something."

The man said that and patted me on the head. I felt a deep sense of relief at his gesture and let out a sigh without thinking.

"My name is Frederick. What's your name? And are you hurt?"

"I'm Leon, and I'm totally fine. Sorry for bumping into you earlier."

I replied as child-like as possible.

"Leon, huh? I don't have time now, but I'll stop by the restaurant next time."

Frederick-san said it with a smile.

"Y-Yes! I'll be waiting."

I smiled back, and Frederick-san patted my head again before leaving.

"Phew, I managed to get away with it somehow."

That was close. I need to be more careful from now on.

Huh? Come to think of it, why was I able to use honorific language? At least Leon would not be able to do it. To begin with, when I think about it, I can completely understand what everyone else is saying as if they were in Japanese, and when I speak, I can speak just as if I were speaking Japanese. Too many incomprehensible things happened, and I was not even conscious of the language, but now that I think about it again, it is strange.

What about writing? With that thought, I crouched down and tried writing words on the ground. To my surprise, I could write the words of this different world's language as if I was writing in Japanese, and I could read them, too.

What's going on here...? At least, according to Leon's memory, he should not have been able to read or write. Hmm, it is certainly strange. None of it makes sense to me.

Anyway, it seems that I can speak, read, and write the language of this world just like it was Japanese. It is convenient, and for now, I'm grateful. But I need to be careful not to get caught.

While I was pondering about this, the door of the house opened, and Marie came out.

"Are you finished, big brother?"

That is when I remembered. I came outside to clean, but I have not even started cleaning yet! So I hurriedly started sweeping the ground with the broom.

"I-It might take a little more time..."

With a dry laugh, I looked at Marie, who was once again looking at me suspiciously.

"Big brother, you were slacking off, weren't you?"

"I-I wasn't! I'm almost done, so go back inside, Marie."

Marie stared at me, but then her expression softened a little, perhaps convinced.

"Well, hurry up then. It's almost opening time."

"I know, I know. I'll be done soon."

Marie listened to my words and went back inside.

Oh no! I have to clean up quickly! I desperately started cleaning, and after a while, I finally finished. I felt pretty tired because I rushed to get it done. But I felt accomplished when I looked at the clean ground. At that moment, I heard the sound of a large bell. This must be the lunchtime bell. I was impressed by the sound of the bell, but then, the house door opened wide, and Marie came out.

"Are you done, big brother!? It's already opening time!"

"I-I'm done! It's clean now."

"Really? Then don't just stand there. Come help inside!"

"I-I got it. I was just about to come inside."

Marie is growing up strong. While thinking that, as I tried to enter the house, I was scolded by Marie again.

"Big brother! Secure the door first!"

"Oh, right, sorry. I forgot."

While saying so, I desperately search through Leon's memories. It seems like I just need to open the front door wide and secure it with a stopper. In this world, leaving the door wide open when the shop is open seems common. There are also shops that do not do this, but it seems to be a habit for the lighting of the restaurant and because literacy is not widespread.

Following Leon's memories, when I opened the door of the restaurant, a customer came right away.

"Is it open yet?"

"Yes! Welcome!"

Marie said with a smile to the customer. The customer looked at her and grinned. Marie is really fulfilling her role as a star of the restaurant. I have to do my best, too! I thought so and went inside.

After that, customers kept coming in one after another. Our restaurant seems to be quite popular. I guide the customers to their seats and take their orders one after another.

Our lunch menu consists of only two sets of items: steak or stir-fried vegetables with pork. The set includes hard bread, soup, and water. Customers can choose steak or stir-fried vegetables with pork as the main dish. It is quite a hearty menu, so there are many male customers, and the steak is ordered more often.

Another new customer came. It was an uncle with a beefy build.

"Welcome! Would you like steak or stir-fried vegetables with pork?"

"I'll have steak."

"Yes, one steak, please!"

In this world, polite customer service, like in Japan, is unnecessary. If you work with a smile, you will get high ratings.

"Leon, the steak is ready!"

"Yes!"

My job is to take orders and serve meals in the order of the customers who ordered first when the food is ready, and to clean the tables. Marie is in charge of the sets' bread, soup, and water, so I just need to serve steak or stir-fried vegetables with pork. The dishes and cutlery are made of wood, so there is no worry about breaking them, but it's quite a challenge with so many customers.

"Leon, I have three stir-fry and three steaks ready."

"Yes, I'll take them."

And so, as I was busy with my work, the number of customers gradually decreased, and the last customer left. Now the restaurant is closed. The restaurant's closing time is not fixed, and it will close when customers stop coming. Therefore, the closing time varies depending on the day, but everyone comes to the restaurant when the lunch bell rings, so there does not seem to be much difference.

"Good job, everyone. I'm hungry."

"Then, shall we have lunch, too?"

"Yay, lunch! I am so hungry."

Leon's family seems to have lunch after the lunch rush. I am also hungry, so I cannot wait to eat.

"Leon, you're going to eat too, right?"

"Yeah! I'm so hungry."

"We have two steaks left today, so we can split them in half and share them."

"Really? I'm so happy since we've been eating stir-fry so much lately!"

It seems that they always eat the leftover lunch from the lunch rush, which inevitably results in a lot of stir-fried vegetables with pork. Indeed, according to Leon's memories, Marie has been saying, "*I'm so sick of eating stir-fried vegetables with pork.*", recently.

And now she is waiting for the steak with a big smile. Father sees this and says with a wry smile,

"Marie, please wait a little longer since I'm going to grill it now. I'll make yours a little bigger."

"Really!? Thank you, Father!"

"Oh my, Marie really loves steak, doesn't she?"

Even Mother is smiling. Seeing their happy faces, I could not help but smile, too. What a wonderful family. It makes me sad when I think of my own family in Japan, but I am glad to be a part of this family.

"Father, I want a bigger one, too!"

"Leon wants one, too? Then I'll make it bigger."

"Both of them are really children."

Father and Mother exchanged smiles.

"Now, go wait in the living room, both of you."

"Okay!!"

Marie and I answered in unison and went to the living room.

The living room has a table and four chairs, and Marie sits in front of Mother while I sit in front of Father. With this arrangement, Marie and I are sitting next to each other. We sit in our usual seats and wait for Father and Mother.

"Big brother, I'm looking forward to the steak!"

"Yeah, me too. It's delicious, isn't it?"

"Yeah. I love steak! I haven't eaten it in four days because there haven't been any left. I was counting the days!"

Saying this, Marie places her hands on her hips and proudly puffs out her chest. Her face is also full of pride.

My younger sister is seriously cute! Too cute! I'm starting to become a doting big brother.

"Good job, Marie. You counted them properly."

I patted Marie's head as she smiled happily. My sister is really too cute. All I can think of is how cute she is. She is so cute that my vocabulary is failing me.

As I continued to gush about Marie's cuteness, our parents entered the living room through the open door.

"Dinner's ready!"

"Here's Marie and Leon's steak."

"Yay~! Thank you!"

"It looks delicious!"

There is a freshly cooked, very delicious-looking steak there. This is my first meal since coming to this world. I hope it tastes good. I was a little worried since it was a meal from a different world, but it smelled really good that my mouth started watering unconsciously.

"We also have bread, soup, and water. Here you go."

"Do you two want to have some stir-fry, too?"

"Just steak for me!"

"I think I'll have a little bit of that."

"Okay, then, this is Leon's."

"Thank you!"

The other dishes also look very delicious. Fortunately, there were no dishes that looked unappetizing. I cannot wait to eat.

"Shall we eat then? Let's dig in."

I was quite surprised to hear those words. Is there a similar phrase to "*Let's dig in*" in this world? Or is it being translated or something? But I cannot think of any other possibilities.

Hmm, well, there's no point in worrying about it now. I do not really understand how it works, but it is convenient, so it's okay. Anyway, let's eat now!

"Let's dig in!"

I started eating a little later than Father and Marie.

First up is the steak. It seems that in this world, there is no custom of using a steak knife, and the steak is already cut into bite-sized pieces. So I held a fork, pierced a piece of steak, and put it in my mouth.

"It's delicious!!"

"Big brother, it's delicious, isn't it!?"

It is really delicious. It tastes the same as the steak I had in Japan. Maybe the food in this world is not so different from Japan. But according to Leon's memories, the repertoire of meals seems to be limited. So maybe the cooking methods have not developed, even though the ingredients are the same. This steak is also delicious, but it is just salty.

Let's try the bread and soup, too. *Munch...* It's hard!? It tastes like very dry French bread. Well, if I chew it well, I can eat it, and it does not taste bad, but it is just hard to swallow.

Now, the soup, *gulp...* Yeah, it is not bad, but it feels a little unsatisfying because it is just salty. Maybe it is because there is no broth.

How about the stir-fry? Yeah, this is just delicious. It is a taste that I am used to, even in Japan. Well, in Japan, we also used pepper in addition to salt, but unlike the soup, I do not feel satisfied with just salt alone. It seems that the key to the taste was the broth. Other than that, it is surprisingly okay.

Anyway, it is just a normal, delicious meal if I do not have high expectations. This is really good. It does not seem too difficult to find something that suits my taste. I will think about more delicious meals from now on.

As I eat and think about such things, before I knew it, I finished my meal.

"It was delicious. Thank you for the meal."

"I finished my meal, too. It was delicious!"

When I looked to the side, Marie had also finished eating and was smiling with satisfaction. Father and Mother were looking at her with gentle smiles. I am happy. I will cherish this family in this different world. That is what I thought.