

# Dragon Horn

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"Haaaah..." I took a deep breath. My journey seems in vain. I am Maryanne Fransisca Annabelle Weiltzhoffer, the only daughter of the 12th generation of the Weiltzhoffer Noble family in the Deitzh Archipelago Country, in the northernmost region of Vandaria. This country is just a small country led by King Eizwell. The palace was built on the largest island of the State of Deitzh, the island of Arzch. Nobles who swore allegiance to the King rule the surrounding islands. The Weiltzhoffers themselves occupy the island of Ezhia, east of the island of Arzch. Due to the King's policy, the Country of Deitzh decided not to get involved in wars between the surrounding countries and remained neutral.

So what journey am I doing now? It all started from a council between Nobles in the palace. Because of the ridiculous thing I said there, I had to do this now.

"Thank you all for your willingness to attend. Now, the council between Nobles will begin," said the King's adviser. "Our agenda today concerns offering the part of your income as proof of loyalty to the Kingdom. Among you there are some whose offering did not go smoothly. Let's all discuss together the solution."

"Hey, everybody here already knows right!!! The problems definitely come from the offering of Weiltzhoffer family!!!" Lord Herich stood up.

"Yeah, these few months, they haven't given anything at all," Ariadh replied.

It is true.

Our family hasn't handed over any treasure to the palace recently. But, we have a reason. Our gold mine collapsed so it cannot functions anymore, that is our main income.

"Sorry, gentlemen." My father, the aristocrat Edrichk Franz Weiltzhoffer, tried to explain.

"That is not our will. Recently there was a disaster at our gold mine so that our income decreased drastically."

"That's no excuse!!! If you are a Noble, you should be able to solve your own problems without begging for help from other Nobles!!!" shouted Herich.

"Wait, there are two things that can be served as proof of loyalty to the King." Lord Luchas, an old friend of Father's, tries to help. "Give some part of the income to the King, or doing something that benefits the Kingdom and showing proof of our abilities to the King. For example find an unexplored area and making it the Kingdom's territory, eradicating riots in Kingdom's territory, or something else."

"Of course. But, can Weiltzhoffer do it? Weren't they not knights from the start? They're just lucky farmers because they have gold in their gardens!" sneered Ariadh.

"HA HA HA!!!" Lord Herich laughed loudly. "Right! By mere luck and coincidence they can be here!!! During the war, they must have died first or fled first!!!"

GOD DAMN IT!!! How dare they!!! If it wasn't in the Palace, I would have beaten them to pulp!!!

"Father, please give respond to their insults! Are you okay our family is insulted like this?" I whispered to Dad.

"Come on, Maryanne... Just ignore them," my father replied.

"Why are you whispering Miss? Try to provoke your father??? It's useless, coward will stay as coward," Ariadh keep insult us.

I can't take it anymore!!! I stood up and shouted, "ALL OF YOU, LISTEN!!! I WILL SHOW MY FAMILY STRENGTH TO THE KING AS PROOF OF OUR LOYALTY!!!"

"What a loudmouth!!! How will you do it, li'l Weiltzhoffer?" Herich mock me again.

"By defeat a Dragon and bring back it's horn!!!" I immediately screamed without thinking because I was carried away by emotion.

Everybody's expression changed. Silence fell, followed by loud laughter.

"HAHAHAHAHAHA, RIDICULOUS!!!" Ariadh laughed loudly. "Dragons have disappeared since 8000 years before the IV calendar!!! How can you beat something that doesn't even exist?"

"I Can! I will find and defeat it, wherever it is!"

Wait! What did I just say??? Shit!!! I got carried away and say an impossible thing!!!

Herich shouted, "Hey, don't get cocky, Miss!!! Big mouth! But, interesting... I'm curious to see you trying!!!"

"Sure, I'll show you right away! In 6 months I will bring it!!!"

"But, we must have a penalty. Let's do this! If you fail, you guys must be prepared to give up the Noble title of the Weiltzhoffer family, how about that?" Herich grinned slyly.

Damn! Why the situation become like this??? Herich give a tough requirements! But, how can I take back my words??? It will stain the face of Weiltzhoffer family!

"Okay, deal!" I said it aloud.

"For Heaven's sake!!!" I thought to myself, "Why did I agree to this? I'm doomed!!!"

"Hahahaha, waiting for your promise, little Weiltzhoffer! Lord Counselor, you've heard about it too, so you're willing to be a witness, right?"

The King's advisor nodded, then said "Very well, the Weiltzhoffer Family. Your sanctions are suspended and your debts will be cleared, if you can provide your loyalty to the King by hunting dragons or whatever. But if you don't, your Noble title will be revoked. That's all for now, I hereby closing the Noble Council!"

Outside the palace building, my father let out a long sigh, then scolded me.

"See! I told you, just ignore them!!! See the consequences? Just because you got emotional!!!"

"Sorry, Father..."

"It can't be helped, it's too late now... Then, are you really going to go look for the dragons?"

"Yes! I will do my best not to embarrass the Weiltzhoffers name!!!"

At home, after discussed with Father and Mother, I immediately prepared to go and took my spear. My father and mother stand in front of me to see me off. Suddenly someone tapped my shoulder. It turned out to be grandpa Erezh, an old wizard who became my family's adviser.

"Are you going to look for the dragon, Miss? Beware, I sensed a dark aura... There will be something harmful in your journey."

"Yes, I'll be careful, Gramps. I'll go now... Father, Mother, See you again!"

"Be careful! Take care, Dear!"

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That's it. Damn big mouth!!!! Due to my own actions, I have to find and defeat a dragon in just 6 months. I look around all over the place, but there's absolutely no clue...

For the name of my family, I must wandered around, search of something that absurd. In 3 weeks I've asked people around, but it's useless. In all the places I've come, nobody knows. Rather, many people laugh at me. Haaah, does the dragon really gone?

Now I arrived in a forest. I drooped and leaned against the rock.

"I'm thirsty..." I drank up my water supply. "What a meaningless journey"

Suddenly I heard a voice nearby.

"What's that?" I rushed towards the sound, and found a person fall.

"What's happened?" I thought. "He fell on his own? Was it because of fatigue?"

That person was wearing a long robe with a strange pattern. From his clothes, looks like he's a wizard.

"Ple... please..." He's talk. "May I have some water, please?"

He turned around. It turned out that he was a tall and slightly thin young man, his hair was short.

"Sorry, I just drink up my water. But, I've seen a spring nearby. Want me to take you there?" I said.

"Yes, thank you," said the young man.

Then I carried him to the spring I saw earlier. There, he immediately gulped down so much water as if he's not drink in days.

"Aaaah, come back to life!!!" shouted the young man. "Nice to meet you. I am a wizard who is wandering in search of something. If I may ask, who are you, my nice helper?"

"Nice to meet you... I am the daughter of the 12th generation of the Weiltzhoffer Noble family, my name is Maryanne Fransisca Annabelle Weiltzhoffer."

"Goddamn long!!!" suddenly he shouted. "What a troublesome name."

"Ha?! Why bother?! And what's your business with it??!!"

Damn weird due, I just met him and he immediately complained about my name.

"And what about your name?"

"Gran. Short and simple name, right?" he answered with a proud face.

What's that? Weird. Really proud with just a simple name.

"Aargh, I don't care about your name! By the way, what's the thing that you are looking for?"

"Sorry, hard to say. Abstract and difficult to express in words," he said.

"And you? What is a woman doing alone in the woods?"

"I'm hunting Dragon horn. Now I'm looking for information about it's whereabouts," I replied.

His expression changed after hearing what I said. Then, he laughed out loud.

"HAHAHAHAHAHA!!!! Everybody knows, dragons haven't appeared in a long time!!! Why are you looking for horn of creatures like that???"

"This is for the honor of my family!!!" I shouted loudly. My emotions peaked after remembering so many people laughing at me. "Who asked your opinion??!!" I left.

"Wait..."

"What?!"

"I didn't say it was weird. I'm just surprised with your unusual goal. Can I go with you for awhile? Sounds interesting." He shouted enthusiastically.

"Ha??? Then, what about your own goals???"

"No matter, it could be anytime."

What should I do? Just refuse? Or should I'm agree with this weirdo's request?

But, it seems for fighting dragons, two is better than alone. Maybe I'll need some help later.

"Alright. Just don't bother me." I accepted his request.

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"Ha\_\_\_\_\_ah, I'm boreeed!!!" Gran complained.

"Why??? Weren't you the one who said you wanted to follow me???"

"Well, yeah... But to think we'd be wandering around the forest for days like monkey..."

"Think with your brain!!! How could a dragon hanging around in the middle of city!!!" I can't take it anymore, what a grumbler!!!

"Hooahm, let's find a place to stay, it's already late, do you seriously want to spend the night in the forest again?"

"So Noisy!!! You're a man, but more spoiled than woman? Weak!!! Even I never have problem with that!" I said fiercely.

"What's wrong with it? Besides, there's a village nearby," he answered while looking at the map.

Wait, map? He have a map?

"THAT'S MY MAP!!! When did you pick it up???"

"Just now, from your luggage..." he replied calmly.

"You thieves!!! RETURN IT!!!"

"No, until you agree to go the village..."

Arrrrghh, he's so annoying!!!

"Alright, okay!!! But, give back my map first!" I'd trying to take it back.

"No, because you maybe will broke your promise as soon as your map returned. I will return it when we reach the village." Gran kept the map away from my hands.

"Fine!!! You win!!!"

Damn, I must spent extra money for the inn. Even though I didn't want to stay because I only have a little money. Remember, my journey started from my family's financial crisis.

After a long walk, we saw a village.

"There it is!" Gran shouted excitedly.

Aah, my money may running out. "Hey Gran, you must pay for the lodging by yourself, okay?"

"Why? Ooh, don't have much money huh? Hehehe," teased him.

"Yes!!!! I only have a little money you know!!! That's why I don't want to stay in the village!!!"

"Hahahaha, okay, I'll pay for you too..."

Embarrassing!!! Noble family must be treated by stranger. It can't be helped though, must save my money, there's still a long way to go..."

"Okay! Don't forget your promise!"

"Wait, something's weird..." said Gran while looking at the village.

"Yeah... What's the fuss over there?"

"Let's find out..."

We approached by hiding in the bushes. We saw village people being threatened by a group of people.

"Please, have mercy on us!!! This village is being hit by a drought! We don't have anything for you to take..." said an old man.

It turned out that a group of people were robbers targeting the village.

"Who cares!!! We're not businessmen!!! We're robbers!!! Hand over all your valuables, or we will use violence!!!" said a robed man who seemed to be the leader of the robbers.

"It's bad!!! We have to help the villagers!!! I'm getting ready to come out of the bushes.

"Wait, let's see the situation first." Gran held me back.

"But, they..."

"Calm down... Observe the condition before act."

Suddenly one of the robbers looked to our direction.

"Get down!!!" Gran immediately pulled me down.

Did that person see us? Crap, he came!!!

"Hey, what are you doing there???" his friend called.

"No, nothing..."

That man turned around.

Huff, thank goodness...

"So? Are you willing to hand over your valuables or not?"

"Sorry, it's not that we don't want to, we don't have anything else..."

"Don't lie, geezer!!!" the robed robber kicked the old man. "Okay, so you prefer violence! Everyone, search for all houses and take all the valuables, keep an eye on all villagers! If they dare to mess with us, kill them!!!"

"Remember, if we find any valuables thing in your house, that means you have lied to us. Get ready for the punishment!!!" He stepped on the old man's hand and laughed loudly without caring about his scream of pain.

Damn it!!! I can't take it anymore!!! I'll beat them to pulp!!! I came out from the bushes.

"Wait!!! Don't be rash!!!" Gran tried to hold me. Too late. I've been seen by them.

"Who are you???" asked the robed man.

I answered loudly, "My name is Maryanne Fransisca Annabelle Weiltzhoffer, the 12th generation of the Weiltzhoffer noble family!!!"

"Hey, enough!!!" Gran suddenly interrupted me.



"What else??!!"

"Your introduction is too long! Why go such a length to introduce yourself to enemy!!! What if he suddenly attacks while you're saying those stupid speech???"

"Stupid??? SAY IT ONCE AGAIN!!!!!!!!!"

"You're underestimating us huh??? We don't have time for fool's joke!!!" the robed man shouted loudly.

"Fool? How dare insult me, lowly robbers!!! Come on, I'll slaughter you!!!" I challenged them.

"HAHAHAHAHAHA!!! So cocky!!! What if we use 'shield' like this??? Still want to attack???"

Shit!!! They drag the villagers and took them as hostage!!!

"See! This is what I'm afraid of!!! That's why I said wait!!!" said Gran.

"So what should we do?"

"There's no other choice then..." Gran took out some sort of scroll.

Oh yeah, according to the stories I heard, human magicians in the world of Vandaria don't have natural Mana, so they need to use magic tools. Is that scroll one of them?

"Is that a scroll to strengthen your magic?" I asked Gran.

"Just see..." he smiled. He cast a spell and the air become cold. The scroll shone brightly, and the light became wind that blew toward the robbers. Unbelievable, the robbers who were touched by the wind got freeze! However, the villagers who were taken as hostages didn't get freeze.

"So this is your magic, Gran? Ice magic?"

"Yes..."

"Why don't the villagers get freeze too? How to?"

"Because I gave the order that my magic attacks people who holding weapons, the robbers only then."

Gran snapped his fingers and shattered the ice that had frozen them.

"Now I'm still being merciful! Get lost and never come back!"

"God damn it! We, the Skeleton Gang, will seek revenge! Our leader will finish you off!!!" the robed man threatened as he dashed away.

"Humph, coward... Okay, they've been gone. Let's help the villagers," I approached the old man earlier.

"Don't touch me!" he hit my hand.

"Right, you know what you've done???" the other villagers shouted.

"W-what you mean?" I asked in surprise.

"You've made them angry! They will surely come back to destroy our village! All because of you!!!"

"Wait, we only meant to help!!!"

"Who asked for help??!! You guys know nothing!!! If we obey and don't fight back, we won't be harmed. But now, look at the consequences of your actions! We will all be slaughtered!!! "

"Quick, get out of this village!!!" the villagers drive us away.

"But...!!!"

"Give up, Maryanne... it's true that we're just strangers who know nothing..."

"Alright..." I nodded.

We're left. The villagers keep cursing us from afar.

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"Hey, Gran..."

"Hmm?"

"I'm worried. We're the one who challenge the robbers. The villagers have kicked us out. But, what about the robbers who don't know our situation? They will still attack the village right?"

"You're so kind huh. Still care about the people who kicked you out..." Gran quipped me.

"Of course!!! There's no way I can stay silent when someone is going to get hurt because of my actions!!!"

"Well. But what are you going to do? Wouldn't you just be kicked out if you went there again?"

"Yeah, that's why we must think of a way. How about intercepting them and beating them up in the forest before heading for the village?"

"Not a bad idea. But, do you know where they're coming from? After all, the forest is their territory. We'll have disadvantage if we fight there."

"That's right... Must intercept them near the village gate then..."

"Okay, let's rest. We don't know when they'll be back, so must rest while there's time," Gran suggested.

"Yes..."

We spend the night in the forest. Amidst the silence, I kept thinking, whether my actions were correct or not. The search for dragon horns must be delayed because I had to focus on fighting the robbers. Then, I fell asleep...

The next day...

"Hey, wake up! It's morning!"

"Nnggg..." My body still feels heavy.

"Oh yeah, what about the robbers???" I asked.

"Relax, they're not appeared yet..." Gran replied.

"Huff, thank goodness..."

"...But maybe soon. Just hear, the sounds of rumbling footsteps..."

"Late!!! Say it earlier!!! Come on!!!" I got prepared.

"Yea, yea..."

In front of the village gate, we prepared to intercept them.

Finally they came. But, there is a new face. From his appearance, it seemed that he was the actual leader. He wear an eyepatch, and he holds a long sword.

"So, you guys are the one who disrupting our business?" said the man with eyepatch.

"Business? Pillage you mean???" I replied.

"None of your business. Now get lost!"

"No! I won't let you do as you please!!!" I pointed my spear at him.

"Fine... Actually I'm also not satisfied if I don't give a lesson to the people who look down on us... Get ready!!! Everybody, attack them!!!"

They attacked simultaneously. But, it's nothing. Me and Gran beat them easily.

"Uuh, they're really strong...!!!" said one of the robbers.

"Should we just run away?" another robber answered.

"Stupid!!! Have you forgotten the power of our leader???" shouted the robed man from yesterday.

"Hmm... Turns out we underestimated you. Alright, I, Jerrson of the Skeleton Gang will be the one who eliminate you..." He drew his sword.

"Come on!!! I, Maryanne Fransisca Annabelle Weiltzhoffer, 12th generation of the..."

DUAGHH!!!! Gran suddenly hit me hard on the head.

"OUCH!!! WHAT THE HELL!!! Hit people's heads as he please!!!"

"Your introduction is too long you know... Noisy..." Gran said nonchalantly.

"Since yesterday you keep complaining!!! My mouth my rule!!!"

"If you keep introduce yourself that long, you may be killed first... Fortunately, this time, our opponent isn't a fan of surprise attacks. If he is???"

"Shut up!!!"

"Hey, how long will you doing chit-chat? How dare you ignore me... Let's fight!!!" The man named Jerrson getting ready to attack.

"Wait..." A voice came from behind him.

"Bo-boss? What are you doing here? Even if I was enough to slaughter them..."

"Let me do it!!!" The voice heard again.

Who's he? So the boss isn't that Jerrson guy??? From behind that man appeared a tall figure. And, when I looked, turned out that his head is a skull!!!

"W-what the hell is that? You're not human???"

Jerrson replied, "Why do you think our gang's name is Skeleton? Because our leader is the actual Skeleton!!!"

"This is a story that often exists, isn't it? A robber looking for a legendary treasure. Unfortunately, the treasure was cursed, and the robber got his consequence... That's what happened to me so I become like this..."

He opened his armor, and it turns out, underneath the armor is just bones without flesh and blood!!!

"Mo-monster..."

"Indeed, I'm a monster... So? Are you puny humans still willing to face me, Jirrak the Skeleton?" The skull was emitting an extremely terrifying aura... The aura of death!!!

"Hey woman, your legs are shaking..." said the skull.

"Jerrson..."

"Yes, Boss?"

"Let me deal with that woman. You go deal with the man..."

"Yes sir!" Jerrson turned his face to Gran. "Honestly I prefer fighting with woman, but this is the order from boss..."

"One more... Don't get in my way!" said the skull.

"Okay," replied Jersson. He took out the chain from under his cloak, and attacked Gran.

"Shit!" Gran's cloak is stuck with the chain.

"Come on in!" Jersson pulled on the chain along with Gran, and they fell into the valley below the village.

"Gran!!!" I screamed as I tried to grab him, but I cannot reach him.

"Don't worry! I'll be back after defeating him! Promise you!!!"

Gran and Jersson disappeared at the bottom of the valley. Meanwhile, Jirrak approached me.

"Humph, can't you fight without your friend around, little girl?" he mocked me.

"I'm not afraid! I will beat you alone!"

I took off my cloak and prepared to attack him.

"My spear will crush you!!!"

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My battle with Jirrak continues. But, all my attacks were in vain... Let alone getting hurt, he doesn't feel anything at all...

Am I fighting monsters??? Is this a dream? Unfortunately no... It's reality... I'm dealing with a formidable opponent who can't die!!!

"HEAA!!!" I stabbed my spear into his armor. However, it only stabbed empty space.

"It's useless!!! You won't be able to kill me, because I don't have any troublesome vital organs like heart or lungs!!!"

"Is that so? I think if your bones are destroyed, you won't be able to do anything more..." I said.

"HA HA HA!!! Try it!!! Destroy my body with that spear of yours, little girl!!! That's if you can, especially with that deep wound!" Jirrak laughed loudly.

Ugh, he's right. Because he has only bones, his weight is very light and so his movement is so fast. His greatsword attack was hard to dodge. Several of his slashes hit me. The most severe wound is in my left waist.

"Dammit!!! Hang on!!! The Weiltzhoffer family won't fall over a wound like this!" I endured the pain and prepared to attack again.

No matter how many times I slash, it doesn't work. My attacks only hit empty space or hard bones.

"Why can't my spear break his bone???" I keep attacking but it's useless.

"Too bad, in exchange for my curse, my bones have become as solid as steel."

Another one of his slashes hit me. This time almost decapitated my head. I managed to dodge, but blood was poured hard from left side of my neck.

"Just give up... Stop your pointless resistance..."

"SHUT UP!!! I won't run away from battle!!!"

I charged at him. But he dodged, and his left hand choked me.

"Don't you understand? You can't kill me! Want to throw away your life so bad?"

"I told you, I won't run from enemies! Better die than run away!"

"STUPID!!!" he threw me. "Regret your stupidity in the afterlife!!!"

He really is tough. Is there no way to beat him? Oh yes! The move my master once taught me, the Spear of Destruction! That move could shatter objects no matter how hard it was, but the user would receive back the damage. Double-edged sword.

Now is not the time to hesitate! Better attack than be killed!

"Get ready! I'll show you my ultimate move!!!"

"What?"

"Spear of Destruction!!!" I pointed my spear at him, charging straight and piercing his armor.

"So this is your ultimate move? Useless!!!"

"Not yet!!!" with the last of my strength, I lifted him up and then pounded him on the ground.

"What? Try using the ground to destroy my body? And you can lift my body with skinny arm of yours???"

"You're just bones, so it's very light!!! But, I'm not finished yet!"

I put all my strength into my spear, and it made the ground cracked. Once again I lifted him up, and smashed him as hard as I could to the ground.

"I'll Crush you!!!"

"Impossible!!! My bones are as strong as steel, why can they break???"

"The Spear of Destruction absorb the user's aura and destroys everything it hits, no matter how hard it is..."

"AAAAAARGHHHHHHHH.....!!!!" Jirrak's screams rang out as his body was getting destroyed.

The move was too powerful, both of my hands were broken and bleeding a lot. The ground cracked, and we fell into the valley where Gran was fighting.

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At the bottom of the valley, Gran still fighting with Jersson...

"Hey, wizard. It turns out that your ice magic is nothing, huh..." Jersson sneered.

"Shit... Could it be what you're using is a flame sword?" Gran asked.

"More than that! It's an anti-magic sword! Magic to a certain level will be neutralized by my sword! Since your magic can be neutralized, then your magic level is low!!! Ha ha ha!!!"

"What??? Where did you get such a rare weapon?"

"Of course stole it!!! By pretending to be a collector willing to buy it at a high price, I managed to rob it from the stupid rich noble's house!!!"

"The world is about to end, this kind of dangerous sword can be traded easily..." Gran sighed.

"Come on! Let's continue!!!" Jersson shouted.



Suddenly the ground fell. It was the result of my fight with Jirrak. Before long, the remnants of Jirrak's bones and I fell.

"Maryanne!" Gran approached me.

"You're off guard! Jersson suddenly attacked and managed to tear apart Gran's scroll. But Gran ignored him and ran, caught my falling body.

"Hey, are you okay?" Gran asked.

"G-Gran? I-I'm fine... I-I'm just a little dizzy after defeating that skeleton..."

"You did it? Great! Now rest, let me finish the rest..."

"I-Impossible... boss Jirrak lost to a woman???" Jersson was surprised.

"Now what? Your boss has lost... Still insist to fight?"

"Hah! That's good! If boss dies, then I am the leader of the Skeleton Gang now!!! Look for yourself! Your magic scroll has been torn!!! What can you do???"

"...You don't know anything about me... I'll show you who I am..." Gran replied calmly.

I didn't have any strength left to watching Gran's battle. My consciousness faded, my eyes closed slowly...

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"Uuuh, where is this place?"

When I woke up, I was lying in bed, my wounds had been bandaged.

"At the Village. One of the villager is willing to lend his room," Gran who sit beside me answered.

"You've been asleep for 2 days..."

"Eh?" I'm still a bit dizzy.

"Wait!!! What about the robbers???" I tried to stand up.

"Worry not, they're already gone... Of course, both of their leaders already been defeated," Gran smiled.

"Oh? So you won too? Thank goodness..." I felt relieved. "But, why do villagers who hate us suddenly want to help?"

"Just ask them..." Gran opened the door, and the villagers entered. They're bowed to us.

"We're sorry we've reject you before" a villager started to speak. "After seeing your fights, we're truly ashamed... Even strangers like you would risk your lives for our village. While we just obey them without try to fight back..."

"It's okay. It doesn't matter, really... I feel bad when you guys bow like that..." I answered.

"But now, thanks to you, we've get courage! Now we will protect our own village!!! Those robbers can no longer touch our village!!!"

"OOOOOOOO!!!!" all the residents cheered.

"Thank goodness..." I whispered to Gran.

"Yeah, it's all thanks to you... You're great," Gran smiled a bit.

"As a token of our gratitude, please stay here until your wounds heal!"

"Thank you!" Gran and I smiled at them. With this one problem solved..

After our wounds healed, we prepared to leave the village.

"Come pass any time!!! We will always welcome you!!!" shouted the villagers.

"Yes, thank you!" I replied.

"Nah Gran, let's continue searching for dragon!!!"

"Huh? You still want to???"

"Of course! That's our main goal, right?"

"Yea, yea..." Gran replied lazily.

"Ah Gran, by the way, how did you manage to beat the robber? Isn't your scroll torn?"

Gran's expression suddenly changed.

"So you see it?" Gran's cold expression pierced the air.

"Eh, y-yes, before I fainted I saw it a little..."

Wait! I remember! Although dimly, I saw the battle to the end!

"After you said 'I'll show you who I am', suddenly came out an intense cold aura. I didn't see it clearly, but suddenly the robber froze and then his body was shattered apart. after that I don't remember anymore... How could you use magic without scroll? Isn't that the source of your magic energy?"

Gran's expression grew even more sinister. "It seems you already know quite a lot huh..."

His cold aura made my body shiver. I ventured to ask again.

"Gran... Who are you exactly?"

"HAHAHAHAHAHA!!!" Gran laughed out loud.

"You mean this? It's just an empty scroll..." he showed his scroll that didn't have anything written on it.

"...Then, how can you use magic....?"

"Because I'm not human. From start, I can always able to use magic without medium. Too bad, I don't expect you to find it out so soon."

"Sorry, Maryanne. Looks like your journey will end here..."

Gran's body released cold aura, then he began to transform and get bigger. He's a dragon!!!

"Yes, I'm the one you've been looking for, my name is Glacier, The Ice Dragon..."

"Impossible! I've never heard of dragon transform into human!"

"...You humans don't know anything about us in the first place..." Glacier spread her wings. He exhaled, and everything that was hit by his breath froze! Apparently, the 'magic' to freeze the robber was just a mere gust of his breath!

How could it be?! His breath alone was that powerful!

"Come on! Don't you want to take away my horn?"

I braced myself and gripped my spear tightly.

"I, Maryanne, will fight! I will beat you for my family!!!"

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This is not even a battle, just a one-sided attack. I couldn't strike back at all, all I could do is just desperately avoid his breath.

"That's all? Show me your strength that can defeated the skull boss!" said Glacier.

The moment I got close to him, I stabbed him with my spear. It doesn't work, his skin is very hard!!!

"Mere human weapons won't work on me..."

"Enough, Gran! I don't want to fight you!"

"Why? Aren't you looking for a dragon? Was it because the dragon was me, that you forgot your goal? How about your family?"

"...I will look for another dragon!"

"You can't even defeat me, how can you defeat other more ferocious dragons? Come on, beat me!" Gran challenged.

What should I do? My weapon doesn't work. Spear of Destruction? But it's hard to target the vital points of a creature this big. And worse, with my wound that just healed I couldn't withstand the damage. What should I do?

Wait! His attack came from his mouth, that means his back is the blindspot! If I attack his back he surely can't attack back! But, how to get up there?

"Why?" Glacier prepared to attack again.

Right! I have an idea! I hid in the biggest tree.

"It's useless, it will freeze too!" Glacier attacked the bottom of the tree.

That's exactly my goal! I hit the frozen tree trunk with all my might until it collapsed, and I directed the direction it fell to his mouth.

"Thanks for making me a bridge!!!" I ran to his mouth through the tree.

After I reach his mouth, I jumped and landed on top of his head, then I went straight for his back.

"Your back is your blindspot right? If I attack it, you won't be able to defend! Spear of Destruction!!!"

"GRAAAOOWWWWW!!!" Gran who was slashed couldn't flap his wings and fell down. Then, slowly he turned back into a human.

"Congratulations, you won..." Gran said.

"DON'T LIE!!!" I shouted angrily. "Why're you holding back??? Dragon's power is not only that right???"

"Hehehehe, so you notice it too... Well, lose is lose. What now? Want to take my horn?"

I pondered, then replied, "No!!! You're my friend! I won't hurt you more than this! The same reason so you didn't attack me seriously right?"

Gran was silent for a moment, then laughed.

"Ha ha ha!!!! Humans are interesting creatures!!!"

"Sorry, I can't give up my horn because it's the source of my power. For exchange, take this! This is my gratitude for not killing me." Gran pulled something out.

"What's this?" I saw a crystal-like thing.

"You'll find out later... I enjoyed adventuring with you. But it's time to part. See you later!" Gran stood up slowly, then walked away.

"Yes! Thank you. I hope we can meet again someday!" I turned around and went in the opposite direction.

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After 6 months. I decided to go home. But I failed to get the dragon horn, what should I tell to father?

At home, father and mother greeted me.

"Maryanne, are you okay?"

"Yes, I'm fine."

"Sorry father, I met the Dragon, but failed to get the horn. I failed to live up to my words..." I didn't dare look at my father.

"It's okay dear. Actually I and your mother have already discussed... How about we leave this noble life, and all of us live quietly in a village?"

"Eh? But, what about our family honor?"

"Never mind, I am indeed not suited to the noble life. The ancestors must understand. After all, in our relatives there should be someone who is suited more to become the successor..."

"But, Father..."

"Sorry to interrupt, Miss..." grandpa Erezh appeared behind me. "Can I see what you brought?" He looked at the Crystal Gran had given me.

"Eh? Gramps, do know what is this?"

"Hmm, no mistake. It's a Dragon scale!"

"Dragon scale?"

"Yes. The source of some Dragon's power is its horn, and if the horn breaks the Dragon loses it's strength until it grows back. However, for humans Dragon horns are completely useless. Compare with that, the Dragon scale are part of the Dragon's power. If humans obtains it, they can use a part of the Dragon's power..." grandpa Erezh explained.

"Now then, we should prove it, Could you put you spear near these scale, Miss?"

"Like this?" I put my spear closer.

A mysterious light radiated and we felt a cold aura. The moment I realized it, my spear became cold and covered in ice!

"Try slashing with your spear..." said frandpa Erezh.

I slashed at the ground in front of me, and the slash mark was instantly covered in ice!

"That's the power of Dragon scale, Miss. You can use his attack. If I may guess, you didn't have intention to kill the Dragon, do you?" Asked grandpa Erezh.

"Y-yes... How did you know?"

"Dragon scale are the 'Symbol of Trust'. A proof that the Dragon trusts someone and willing to lend its strength. I don't think the scale will be given to someone who wants to kill him."

"So Gran gave me something this amazing huh?"

"If I may suggest, you should meet the King. Instead of horns, you can show these Dragon scale as proof of your strength."

"Okay, I'll try..." I said.

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At the Noble Council...

"Weiltzhoffer Family, due to your achievement of eliminating the robber gang and obtaining Dragon scales as a proof of your strength, the King has decided to erase your debts. We hope that you will use your power for this Kingdom. That's all."

Father smiled at me. My effort with Gran to destroy the Skeleton Gang was acknowledged by the King in exchange for my family's debt.

"Hey, little Weiltzhoffer" Herich and Ariadh came over us.

"What?" I asked with stern face.

"Come on, don't be so fierce... We want to say congratulations. I was going to say you've failed because your promise was to bring a Dragon horn. However, you get Dragon scale which is much more difficult to obtain as it's rare for a Dragon to trust human. You have amazed us." Heirich said.

"Yes. And then, our business are often disrupted by the activities of the Skeleton Robbers Gang. We're thankful to you for eradicate them..." Ariadh chimed in.

"Please forgive our insults before... We admit, you are a splendid Noble! The Weiltzhoffers are so lucky to have a successor like you!"

"Th-thank you..." I replied, surprised. Barely see them praise people, they usually always looking for trouble.

"All end well, right Maryanne?" my father said.

"Yes father, thank goodness..."

But, all thanks to Gran. Without him, it would be impossible for me to defeat the Skeleton and restore my family's honor.

"Thank you Gran..." I said slowly while looking at the blue sky, hoping to see him again someday.

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One thing I don't realize yet, the Dragon scale will have an important role in the big battles at the world of Vandaria in the future...