



## **GROUND ZERO: FRAGMENTS**

### **CHAPTER 5: CHILDREN'S TELEPHONE COUNSELING ROOM**

#### **TRANSLATION: NARU-KUN / K-PROJECT WORLD**

"What is Kagutsu thinking about?"

Soma, who usually did nothing but smoke when asked by a person, paused for a moment... but immediately after that, as usual, an unreadable smile appeared on his face.

"That's the "Children's Telephone Counseling Room"."

"I'm going to ask a serious question."

Choya said without moving his eyebrows. Originally, he had a poor facial expression, but in this case it was a sign of dissatisfaction.

"No, I'm going to answer seriously."

In fact, with a less playful attitude than usual, Soma responded.

Choya "suspected" that Soma was "hiding" something. The conversation between the two of them tended to be a form of belly rub, but a bad deception could lead to useless information. Therefore, he "gave information that could be given, and was hesitant to pry any further". That was Soma's grace to Choya.

"I asked Tendo-san, "What are you thinking? " Adults should ask. "Why did you want to come up from the east?" And, "Are you angry on a sunny day?", for example."

"Don't guess the "Red King" with a superficial understanding..."

"It's not easy. Yes, it is."

"Eh...?"

"Children grasp the world as it is. "The sun laughs" and "a huge mass of hydrogen fuses" are expressions of the same thing. To put it the hard way."

"Ah."

"In that sense, the answer to the previous question is... "Something that he can see, we can see as strange. In his mouth, he has a great feeling. One day he might make a big move.", I think so."

"Is that a "kid's explanation"?"

It was a terribly stupid exchange. If the question was stupid, the answer was stupid too. He didn't expect Choya to say such a stupid thing, so Soma, who was surprised, gave a stupid answer.

However, it was probably part of Choya's speculation, including that. He was trying to survive by assimilating the situation as much as possible with limited knowledge and recognition. He believed it didn't make sense, but he didn't deny it. In the first place, there was no meaning in front of the "Red King".

Soma understood and thought of Choya's actions that way.

— What did he say next at that time?

"Well, there is no mistake in saying "don't guess", but there is also a saying: "What if you look into the abyss?", uh."

"Of course, it's a word from Nietzsche. It's not a saying."

"Anyway, if you think about him too much... you'll burn out your brain."

"What's that?"

"It's literally the meaning. If you're a chive with garlic, you'll be crushed. It's the same thing."

"Is that a warning?"

"That's why I say, it's a story that literally says "the brain is dangerous" when you threaten it."

Soma's missing little finger pointed to Choya's missing left eye.

"When you entered "Purgatory", you did that, right?"

The extraordinary power hit by the "Red King" roars inside the body, concentrating on a point on the body and a point that corresponds to the person's mental trauma, and explodes. Those who survive the injury are recognized as members of the clan, that is the "Purgatory" facility.

The same type of phenomenon was now occurring in his brain. No one "endures" and survives a brain defect.

At that time, some of the deaths that occurred around the "Red King" Kagutsu Genji were unidentified sudden deaths. There was also surrounding testimony that the person's head at the time was "exploding" and "boiling".

"Anyone who has reached a certain understanding of Kagutsu's existence will burn out their brains and die."

It is unknown if it was some kind of "attack" from Kagutsu, or if it was some kind of runaway phenomenon of different abilities.

In any case, it is one of the reasons why it is difficult to go back in time because there is a lack of information about Kagutsu Genji, even in the confusion before and after the Kagutsu incident.

And again, in any case, Soma himself was no longer distracted by the matter.

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At that time, Soma was looking at the collapsed "Sword of Damocles".

The collapsed body lying on the ground was looking towards the "red sword" that collapsed in the heavens.

He was seeing the vision of the image created by the great existence, the great energy, and the great destiny.

"Haha... special seats."

As he told people "don't think" and "don't get close", Soma paid more attention to Kagutsu than anyone else and was thinking about it. Soma's own indivisible darkness may have been drawn to Kagutsu's heat, which burned away all complexity.

As if Icarus in Greek mythology approached the sun and shattered, no, the expression would be too fixed. For those who care about themselves, "summer insects that fly into the fire" are enough. Yes, that would be the true proverb...

Heat was taking over his thoughts.

"Not good... I'm finally here."

His brain burned.

He felt that Kagutsu's existence in his brain was accessing a great deal of heat.

He thought it would come one day, and on that day, at that moment, it finally caught up with him.

At that moment rang the cell phone in his pocket.

There should be a large-scale radio interference going on, no, the cell phone was silent. It was an illusion. Consciousness was beginning to blur.

"Hello, Soma-kun. It's me."

The mobile phone talked by itself without any operation. Of course, that was also a hallucination.

"Congratulations, you're finally here. I think I can tell you the answer... not the riddle..."

"..."Explanation for children"?"

Soma responded without doing anything to the other party.

"The answer you wanted."

"I don't need it. The "answer" I made to be happy."

"Everybody is happy."

"I am a twister."

"I'm serious, you..."

"Anyway..."

"In any case, you played the expected role. Thank you Soma-kun. And goodbye."

Leaving a farewell greeting lawfully, the "hallucination" disappeared.

"Expectations...?"

Of course, it was a relationship that was linked to interests. He had no complaints about being "used".

However, what did he get after all and who was he waiting for?

"In the end... I couldn't understand anything about him..."

A part of his brain was beginning to make noise.

Like an egg thrown into a microwave oven, it was bound to explode with his skull in a few seconds.

"Oh...?"

An unknown vision began to unfold in Soma's mind. It was a continuous stream of information that was beyond all of Soma's knowledge and memory.

"Haha... Oh, that's right. Is that so..."

It may have been a hallucination created by Soma's dying brain. But the truth that can only be understood by the burning brain, if it exists, Soma certainly had a glimpse of it.

"I see... I see, I see...!"

It is said that Icarus died when he got close to the sun due to his arrogance.

However, in exchange for the melted wings, he certainly saw the sun.

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A group of black suits walked among the burned ruins. It was hard to see due to the storm of hot air accompanied by heat, but the decaying red sword floating above them was undeniable.

The "Red King" Kagutsu Genji and the Clansmen of "Purgatory".

Although the first strikes with different abilities and conventional weapons were considered, the "Blue King" Habari Jin rejected them.

"First of all, I want to see his face."

That said, together with the elite from "Scepter 4", they formed a formation in Kagutsu's direction of travel.

The distance to "Purgatory" had already been reduced to about 100 meters.

Kagutsu's W deviation had reached its maximum and a fiery shrine was developing. It seemed like those powers increased with every step they took.

It was as if it was a burning inferno in motion. The demons of hell burn as they walk. He was laughing as he burned. Looking up at the sky, shaking shoulders, burning to the point of laughter, leaving only a laugh, burning one by one.

The only one in the center of the herd, like the same haze of heat, was Kagutsu Genji, who did not tremble, did not stand up and did not laugh.

Kagutsu had stopped. Line of sight was established at only one point, Habari. The clansmen also stopped and...

As Kagutsu smiled on one cheek, a shock wave was emitted accompanied by an extraordinary ripple in all directions.

The members of "Scepter 4" reflexively developed different abilities and strengthened their defenses. A huge red wave swallowed the formation and pierced through, and several people with delayed defense and weak power retreated with full body damage.

Some of the black clothes from "Purgatory" also collapsed. The number of people and individual damage was great because they were so close to Kagutsu. Some people

vomited blood on the spot and fell down, while others breathed fire all over their bodies and fell down.

"It's an unprecedented ending, Kagutsu."

The "Blue King" Habari Jin pierced the tip of the saber sheath into the ground and called Kagutsu into a standing stance. His long hair and the hem of his jacket fanned in the hot air, but as he accepted the influence of Kagutsu's existence with his entire body, his limbs did not move.

"You must not be on this earth. Today I can assure you that I was born to kill you."

Habari's right hand left the stem and pointed up.

"In other words, this is the fate of the "Red King" Kagutsu Genji."

A blue "Sword of Damocles" appeared above Habari.

"Red" and "Blue", two "Kings", the two swords clashed with each other in the smoldering ruins.

Among the "Scepter 4" members, the first to notice the small incident was Shiotsu, an aide who was packing the command vehicle behind.

The black robes around Kagutsu were slightly changing his standing positions. From a bird's eye view, it might have looked like some kind of mandala. The black robes arrived in an oddly ordered radial arrangement centered on Kagutsu.

— Procession, no, formation...? What is "Purgatory" doing?

"Be careful, Habari. There's something wrong with that."

"I know."

Habari responded to Shiotsu's communication with a fearless smile.

As Habari lowered his center of gravity slightly and took a stance, Zenjo and others from the Chainsaw Squad "Sawing Unit" naturally changed his stance and standing position. They weren't even aware of it. Their bodies naturally moved like a living creature with Habari as a brain.

"Purgatory" like a herd of beasts formed a camp, "Scepter 4", who had discipline, aimed at intuitive battle. They were in a situation where they were fearless and fell.

And Habari said happily as he took a forward leaning stance.

"Use the sword to take to the skies, there is no yoke in our justice. "Chainsaw Squad", mission execution!"

Together with the commando, Habari and the five "chainsaws" unleashed their abilities. Each of them carried a blue light and a violent screaming sound throughout their body.

The normal formation of "Scepter 4" was, so to speak, a single sheet of steel. The closely aligned general members produced a heavy and sharp impact force, like a strong metal crystal. The "Chainsaw Squad", on the other hand, was equivalent to a high-energy ionized plasma, especially when "Blue King" Habari led them himself. It was a quick and deadly beam of light and heat. The glowing plasma blade should have been able to easily cut through any formation, just as an arc cutting machine would cut through thick sheets of steel effortlessly.

But...

The only and last "form" of "Purgatory" was Soma's memory and the last trick.

It was not a defensive posture. Its structure and principle resembled an implosion lens that detonates a nuclear warhead, so to speak.

"Haha!"

Kagutsu laughed. For the first time that day, he laughed out loud.

It was a dead laugh. Dozens of black clothes surrounding Kagutsu exploded all at once in response to the explosive vibrations from different abilities.

And the next moment, contrary to the previous moment, the pressure from the explosion of the different skill was received from all the surroundings, and Kagutsu's surroundings were placed in an abnormal state of ultra-high pressure.

Usually some kind of pressure vessel is used to artificially cause a sudden "explosion" rather than an open "burn". A closed high pressure environment creates the conditions for a more destructive reaction.

Normally, neither material barriers nor energetic pressure could contain the tyrant of extraordinary power. The only exception was the Explosion Mandala, which was created by the red genie that originated from the god of gods.

Being trapped in the center of the Mandala and exposed to extremely high pressure and heat, the "Red King's" abilities were about to start a new chain reaction.

"Hahaha...!"

The red "Sword" shattered on top of Kagutsu.

It broke, but didn't fall off. It hung in the air like shards and they were turning into something other than a sword.

"Hey, what's that?!"

One of the general members waiting behind Habari screamed as he looked at Kagutsu, and in the next moment, his head exploded and he collapsed.

"Shiotsu, disconnect communication!", Habari yelled.

"Defense of all members! Close your eyes! Don't look at that! Don't listen! Don't think!"

Shiotsu reflexively cut off the communication. The members also closed their eyes and strengthened their extraordinary defenses, as if they had been hit by Habari's orders.

"So what is that?"

Beside Habari, Zenjo asked.

Zenjo was not thinking of Kagutsu. He didn't believe. However, he asked Habari.

"I don't get it! I don't know, but..."

"That" could be the phenomenon of hatching. Or maybe it's an emergency.

He didn't know if it was being born in the flames of the "King". He didn't even know who he was.

It could be a superhuman. Could be a demigod. The unknown giant reaction of physics W would not explain anything.

But, Habari was confident. There was still a fearless smile on his profile as he gazed at "it".

"That's also... No, that's Kagutsu Genji. My enemy."

"Well, let's cut it down."

Zenjo ran off. It was at the same time as Habari.

Then, the members of "Chainsaw Squat" continued without a break. No one was lost.

The "Blue King" Habari and the five "Chainsaws" turned into plasma blades with a single blow and slid towards Kagutsu's throat as they pierced through the explosive pressure of an extraordinary ability.

With a broken sword above his head, laughing, angry and exploding like a thermonuclear reaction, there was no telling what Kagutsu was about to do. He couldn't even guess.

That's why, before becoming someone, lower your head.

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"I don't care about branches and leaves, whether it's W physics or an overflow of different skills."

The absent "Green King" said that and laughed absently.



"Well, if I will explain to you."