



K - ONE YEAR LATER:

CHAPTER 11: REISI MUNAKATA'S RETURN (BY TATSUKI MIYAZAWA)

TRANSLATION: NARU-KUN / K-PROJECT WORLD

A year has passed since then.

"Granny, I brought him!"

When David, the third youngest of her seventeen grandchildren, roared through the front door, Mariana Campos Moreno was dozing in an Equipalace chair woven from orchid fiber and upholstered in tanned pigskin.

She fell asleep in the soft breeze that came through the arched windows.

Beyond that, she could see a courtyard filled with blooming marigolds. It was a flower that her deceased husband loved so much, and even now that her limbs have become useless, Mariana takes care of it herself, not her daughters.

For a moment, Mariana thought with a confused head after waking up.

(Oh, yes. Didn't David say he would bring a lifeguard?)

David Moreno was a headache not only for Mariana, but for his entire family. Even after graduating from school, he was dizzy, and on top of that, he started associating with the young gangsters who ruled that city.

Mariana warned them that he wouldn't get better, but as expected, a larger drug cartel took notice of him, kidnapped her and her friends and nearly executed them.

He looks like he was saved by a single man in the middle of it.

To be honest, it was a shameful story, but David was actually alive, and that was the reason why he cut ties with the gangs. It is said that the benefactor had business with Mariana.

In that case, she should at least make use of her modest special ability.

"Here. I'm here!"

In response to David's youthful voice, the rasp in her voice made her smile wryly. It may not be long before "Day of the Dead" turns from mourning to bereavement.

Hearing that voice, David entered the small room where Mariana was.

"Granny! Look, he's the "customer" you were talking about."

Mariana narrowed her eyes.

In contrast to the exterior, which shone pure white in the reflected sun, the interior was gloomy, and everything was covered in gray shadows.

"Sorry. My eyesight is bad these days."

All she knew was that a tall man was standing behind David.

"Hello. It's an honor to meet you, Madam."

The man said in fluent Spanish. Mariana was silent for a while.

"What's up, Granny?"

David said anxiously. Mariana stared at the man, then...

"First of all, let me thank you for helping my grandson. Thank you very much."

At her thanks, the man shook his head at her.

"It was a total turnaround. Not something to be thankful for."

It was an elegant and calm voice.

"I heard from David that you are the best tarot reader in Chiapas."

"Yes, I think I'm in the top three even in Mexico. I've told the fortune of a member of parliament, a soccer superstar, and an international actress. It seems you're looking for something."

"Yes.", said the man.

"I'm looking for 'myself' for a while."

Mariana closed her eyes and smiled.

"Oh."

She just rejected him.

"Such "extraordinarily big thing" is not for me, I can't predict it."

David rolled his eyes.

"Wait! Granny."

"I see. It's a shame."

She could tell by his distant way of speaking. Perhaps David, who wanted to have a relationship with the man, even a little, kind of forced him to come here. The man himself perhaps had not the slightest obsession with divination.

Mariana said.

"Also, I'm really sorry, but when I'm around a ridiculously big man like you, my remaining senses go haywire. I'm sorry, but could you go?"

She said it bluntly. The man showed a funny smile without getting angry at all.

"Haha, sorry about this. Have a nice evening, Madam."

He bowed politely and left the room. At the same time, David angrily approached his grandmother.

"That's terrible, Granny! Even though that person saved my life! Even though it's the first time I've met someone I can respect!"

Then Mariana yelled at her poor grandson.

"You, idiot! You will follow that person until you finish paying them for helping you. You'll never let him out of your sight. Here you go! Let's go!"

David's eyes sparkled. It was the first time that his life had meaning.

He turned and chased after the man, yelling loudly.

"Wait!"

She heard footsteps going away.

"Wait, Sir! Mr. Reisi Munakata!"

Mariana leaned back in the chair. The moment she saw his face, she knew.

"That man was a person with a "fate"."

In response to Slate's call, he became the "King".

He clearly realized who he was.

But now...

The Slate was also lost.

What is his current self?

Who is he?

Where should he go if he is not a "King"?

"I..."

Reisi Munakata wondered, and kept wondering.

At first, he toured the country. He gazed at the twinkling stars on the farthest island, he sat meditating in an ancient temple built in a surprisingly difficult place, he strolled through the dazzling neon streets and slept soundly in the total darkness of the virgin forest.

He met, he broke up, fought and saved many people. Reisi Munakata was just Reisi Munakata and he remained Reisi Munakata, but as a result, many people appeared who were impressed with him, who felt indebted to him, who took aim at his life, and who had love and hate for him.

A promising manager who had a heated argument with him about the future of the world temporarily entrusted the company to his subordinates and followed Munakata.

When a wandering genius violinist looked at Munakata, he came up with a tune, so he accompanied him.

Trying to kill Munakata, an assassin walked behind him trying to find an opening.

Munakata did not reject any of them.

Eventually, the Munakata pilgrimage left that country and spread out to sea.

China, Vietnam, Iran, France, England, the United States and Mexico.

Reisi Munakata continued his journey as the wind blew and his feet followed.

And he continued to be Reisi Munakata in all parts of the world. As a result, nearly 100 men and women of all ages followed Munakata.

A martial artist whose dreams had been shattered. An old man wobbling on his legs. A college student who wanted to become a photographer. There was even a former gangster. A chef who made exceptionally delicious Chinese food. Also rich people and poor people.

Their race, age, and gender were all different, but they all had one thing in common: they possessed some kind of supernatural power.

Munakata and his group finally reached the tip of Cape Horn, the southern tip of South America.

Munakata kept looking at the sea at the other end of a remote area where the wind was blowing. How long had it been?

Suddenly, an old man appeared from a gap in the trees and slowly approached.

"Are you Mr. Munakata?"

When Munakata smiled and nodded as he asked hoarsely,

"I have a letter for you. Look, I give it to you."

He gave him the letter. Then slowly he made his way back into the forest. Curious, Munakata broke the seal and looked inside the paper.

After,

"Listen everyone..."

Munakata looked back at his fellow travelers who had been watching the exchange.

"I have received a letter of complaint. It seems that it is high tide. Let's go back to Japan at once."

It was a somewhat radiant smile.

Fushimi Saruhiko was definitely cornering Kamimori Katsuya, the self-proclaimed Black Iron King, and his group.

Upon capturing Tamaki Genjo, the person who literally covered the organization with a veil of black mist, they lost their Strain ability and intriguing protection.

It was not a difficult task for Fushimi and the members of "Scepter 4" to individually contain the exposed members.

Fushimi and Awashima thought the incident would end soon, though the top favorite Kamimori was still on the run.

Nevertheless...

That expectation was immediately nullified by Kamimori's outrageous actions.

Surprisingly, he attacked the "Scepter 4" garrison with only a few of his subordinates.

An unprecedented outrage in which a Strain attacked a public facility staffed by elite members of the Blue Clan, the headquarters of Strain's anti-crime measures, the source of order.

The reason was simply to help his fellow prisoners.

"Fushimi, how are you now?"

Awashima's annoying voice could be heard from the other side of the PDA.

"I haven't been able to return to the camp yet either. At the moment, I was only able to contact Hidaka once, so I gave him instructions, but I don't know the actual details."

Fushimi's response was filled with a disgust that he couldn't hide.

"Yes. I'll be home in about ten minutes. Fushimi. Let's make those who did something so stupid pay a reasonable price."

"Of course, Lieutenant."

And they both hung up almost at the same time. They both felt their pride as members of the blue clan hurt.

According to Fushimi's style, "Scepter 4" was also underrated.

That was the expression.

The unfortunate thing for them was that Awashima and Fushimi were on duty, and Zenjo, Akiyama, and Benzai, Captain Class, who were excellent at swordsmanship, were also absent.

Currently, Hidaka is the only member of the special forces on the scene and seems to be fighting hard with a small number of members.

When the taxi he was riding in got stuck in a traffic jam, Fushimi finally jumped out and ran the rest of the distance on his own. Then, in front of the garrison, he suddenly had a bad feeling and braked.

That insight struck a chord.

A shelf used to store materials suddenly flew out of a window on the second floor of the building, scattering glass and crashing to the ground right in front of Fushimi, causing him to collapse with a harsh sound.

"Let's do it!"

Fushimi looked up with a dangerous glint behind his glasses. Without hesitation, Awashima rushed over.

"Fushimi!"

She already had her hand on the hilt of the saber.

The two nodded to each other, breathing in unison, and tried to jump out of the main entrance.

And so...

"Oya."

They heard a nostalgic voice behind them and stopped involuntarily.

"It's going to be quite lively, isn't it? I've been sitting in the middle for a while, but do I have the qualifications to participate in this festival from now on?"

Katsuya Kamimori was just a simple man.

Tamaki, the superior officer, had told him to abandon him and escape the metropolitan area in the unlikely event of being captured, but he ignored him and retrieved Tamaki and his friends, boarding the "Scepter 4" base.

It was similar to raiding a warehouse where another group of criminals have a stronghold to help their fellow criminals who have been caught.

However, stupidity had to pay a painful price for the strategy devised by Fushimi and the young members of the special forces who carried it out.

The policy that Fushimi conveyed to Hidaka was simple.

In the first place, they were never to let Kamimori near the underground detention center (where Tamaki and the others were being held).

And until all the allies had the strength to do so, they would avoid starting battles as much as possible and build barricades and besiege the castle.

Fuse and Enomoto first.

Later, when Goto and Domyoji returned to his base, Hidaka finally decided to go on the offensive, neutralizing Kamimori's subordinates one by one and restraining them in turn.

Last time, he used the bitter experience of being pushed head-on by a god who boasted ridiculous physical strength. As a result, Kamimori had lost all of his companions and was trapped in a barricade in the middle of the second floor corridor and was left stranded.

Domyoji, Enomoto, Fuse, Goto, and Hidaka pushed him through the barricade, unable to move forward or back.

The shelf that fell in front of Fushimi had been thrown out of the window by the frustrated Kamimori, who was like a wounded bear.

"Dammit!"

Kamimori barked.

"You are dirty! Fight properly, blue clothes!"

His youthful face was dyed red with anger. Many had already decided. After that, it was a calculation how to reduce the damage and capture the god.

"I'm getting a little sad. I'll be your partner for a while.", Domyoji said.

"No, Domyoji-san!"

Hidaka hastily stopped him.

Although Kamimori has a finely chiseled face, he has a boyish face that could be mistaken for a teenager, with a golden shaved head and a white suit that he stripped off to reveal a bold patterned shirt.

Looking at his mischievous appearance...

"Well, even if he's the Black Iron King, he's actually an older brother who graduated from Yankee."

Fuse whispered.

"Perhaps they were abetted by the scheming Tamaki."

Enomoto nodded slightly. Nevertheless...

"But your reasoning is not completely unfounded. As long as the current measures against Strains don't change, I'm sure there will be more such people."

He muttered that under his breath, and the people around him heard that, his face was startled and he nodded his head.

People in the field felt it firsthand.

Some of the current Strains crimes are not due to malice on the part of the person involved, but rather a lack of social systems.

They were all silent for some reason.

"If you're a man, come right now!"

They were keeping watch as Kamimori yelled.

At that moment...

"Do you want a timer? So..."

They heard a very calm voice. They were all puzzled. A shadow was slowly approaching the scene of chaos, climbing the stairs.

"Let me be your partner."

Reisi Munakata, the "Blue King".

The boss of "Scepter 4", who had been absent for a long time, suddenly appeared with a smile on his face. Furthermore, he wore the uniform without any discomfort, and the sword belt was complete. Everyone was speechless at the sudden development.

With his hands folded behind his back, Munakata calmly passed through the barricade and stood in front of the divine guardian. Nobody had time to stop him.

Kamimori looked taken aback for a moment, but immediately...

"Oh! You are the boss of this place. What is it? Will you be the one with me?"

He said happily. Munakata agreed.

"Just like that."

Munakata immediately stopped Kamimori who was about to attack him.

"Let me ask you one thing. Why are you here?"

"Ah?"

"You should have known the risks. If you escaped like this, at least you alone would have been safe enough."

"....."

Kamimori lowered both fists.

He was silent for a while, then...

"No, seriously, I never thought of that. How can you abandon your friends and run off alone?"

"....."

Kamimori looked directly at Munakata. With a desperate expression that he wanted him to understand something.

"Well, just because I woke up with such a strange power, I got fired from the place where I worked so hard. I was so angry, but I didn't know what to do, so I was alone all the time. But Tamaki taught me what I should do. After that, the number of friends gradually increased and they started to follow me."

He cried.

"I'm a hopeless bastard, but if they call me king once, I definitely can't abandon my comrades, right?!"

"....."

Munakata had a smile on his lips and closed his eyes. And when he opened his eyes again...

"Your words touched my heart very much. It's alright. As the King himself, I will face you with all sincerity."

He put his hand on the hilt of the saber.

"Thanks!"

Kamimori joyfully clenched his fists. Munakata still had a soft expression.

"Munakata."

He drew his sword.

"Batto!"

Kamimori rushed forward without pause. Munakata swung his sword across it.

A moment later, the results came out.

A strange noise resounded and the entire building shook violently. Domyoji was the only one there that he could understand exactly what had happened.

"Oh..."

An admiration escaped from his mouth.

Munakata danced in the world of the speed of the gods, dodging the opponent's attack with a fine line, turning his body around and lowering the tip of his sword to directly hit the god's head.

Thus, Kamimori crashed into the ground, and the ground collapsed due to the impact. Kamimori was completely passed out as he was trapped in the construction material on the floor.

Munakata knelt down next to the unconscious Kamimori with a somewhat happy face.

"I'll tell you more when you wake up."

He patted him on the shoulder.

It was a spectacular sight.

After half a delay, the members of the special forces finally cheered and tried to approach Munakata.

But before that...

"Well done!"

"As expected of Mr. Munakata!"

"Good! Good! Munakata!"

People of different nationalities and ages climbed upstairs, jumped over the barricades and surrounded Munakata.

"Do not enter the garrison without permission!"

Fushimi raised his voice in anger and Awashima with a wry smile did the same.

The others were blank.

After that, Akiyama, Benzai, and Kamo, who had rushed back to their bases with Fushimi and Awashima, joined Munakata and gave a briefing in his own office.

By the way, Domyoji and the other members were busy cleaning up after capturing the divine guardians.

Meeting their "King" for the first time in a long time, everyone who stayed there was deeply moved.

Akiyama had a nostalgic face, Benzai had a smile on his lips, and Kamo had slightly teary eyes.

Awashima seemed relieved that Munakata appeared to be in good health. And Fushimi with a cold expression as if he dared to make up for it.

Munakata began to speak.

"Thanks to everyone, I was able to spend a very significant moment."

Then he added.

"Thank you from the bottom of my heart. I know it's been a burden."

He bowed his head courteously and deeply. On the contrary, everyone panicked.

"No, it's not like that."

"Please raise your head!"

Akiyama and Benzai appealed.

"Oh."

Fushimi took a deep breath and said wryly.

"However, it certainly was a burden."

"Fushimi!"

When Awashima rebuked Fushimi...

"You shouldn't say that to your boss who suddenly comes back to this place after wandering around. Being underboss was the hardest to handle."

"Is that so."

Munakata smiled.

"I made Awashima-kun do a lot of things. Thanks again."

He leaned in again. Awashima also blushed.

"It's my job."

She tilted her head back. Kamo asked when the atmosphere calmed down.

"So, Captain, what did you see and hear during this time?"

Munakata slowly said...

"The state of the world after the collapse of the Slate. The current situation of the growing and diversifying Strains. The changing species of humanity... that's the way it is."

The executives of "Scepter 4" kept their thoughts to themselves and remained silent.

Munakata suddenly remembered.

"Speaking of which, Fushimi-kun. You sent a messenger from Cape Horn to give me a letter. How the hell did you know I was going there?"

Fushimi smiled. It seems that Munakata's somewhat mysterious appearance was interesting.

"Don't you know who the head of the department is? It's easy. The head of the department causes various incidents and troubles wherever he goes, so if you look at the news from the overseas network, you can naturally read the route and date expected arrival."

"That's all."

Munakata nodded.

"Well, I thought the head of the department would definitely like that place."

Fushimi slightly averted his gaze and added that in a low voice.

"You read it, right?"

Munakata said with a smile. Fushimi asked back.

"By the way, you've been away for a while. Did you find what you were looking for?"

Munakata neither affirmed nor denied it.

Fushimi's face was dumbstruck. But before he could say anything, Awashima intervened.

"Captain. To me, the Captain will always be the Captain. That doesn't change, right?"

She looked at Munakata. Munakata accepted that sincere look with a soft smile. Then he turned his gaze to Akiyama, Benzai and Kamo in turn.

In response to that unspoken question...

"Eh..."

Akiyama expressed his personal opinion.

"To me, the Captain is someone to look up to and he leads the cause of this country. It's the same now as it was in the past."

"I respect you. I will continue to follow you."

Firmly, Kamo said that wistfully.

"From the moment you recruited me, my time has taken on new meaning. I pledge my unwavering devotion and loyalty."

Finally, everyone's eyes were on Fushimi. Fushimi looked a bit shocked, but he immediately flashed a fearless smile that was typical of him.

"Well, it's you, right? I laughed so hard. I don't understand why you picked them up. Aren't there about 100 people? Since you're the captain, you'll make a place for them, right?"

Munakata closed his eyes.

He was called by various names along the way.

"Boss. General. Don. Okayashi. Adult. And most of all... King.

In the past, he advertised himself to the Slate.

But now...

"The boss is... our King."

Everyone including Fushimi nodded at Awashima's muffled voice.

Munakata's eyes widened.

"That's right. Now, I finally understand the "me"."

It was the time when Munakata's journey ended.

He traveled, walked, met, talked, fought and traveled the world.

He looked at what the world was like now.

He thought about what the world would be like in the future.

When he got some answers and returned to Japan, he was able to understand Reisi Munakata better than before.

He was naturally satisfied with what he had to do.

Reisi Munakata was just Reisi Munakata.

It was easy.

Munakata, who had reached that state of mind, left his companions behind and headed for the person he should talk to the most.

A building that almost reached the heavens where the "Golden King" who once ruled that country lived.

Munakata smiled and looked up. Currently, a silver-white airship is moored there.

That blimp will never take off again.

It will continue in the twelfth chapter, "The World of the Future".