



"SIDE GOLD"

EPILOGUE B: THE GOLDEN AGE

TRANSLATION: NARU-KUN / K-PROJECT WORLD

Large and small shapes were rapidly ascending the grassy hills, swaying in the wind. The large figure leading the way was the "Golden King", Kokujoji Daikaku, and the small figure following him was his attendant, the young Nangu.

The boy did not understand. In the middle of an important meeting, Kokujoji received an urgent message from somewhere and suddenly ran off. The boy instinctively followed, but all he could do was keep up with his strong legs. Standing beside his master on the hilltop, he let out a deep sigh.

"Daikaku-sama, what the hell is going on?"

"We received a report that a German airship had entered our airspace. We cancelled the takeoff, but it happened just as we expected."

Kokujoji, whose breathing and posture showed no signs of alteration, looked up at the blue sky beyond the hill.

There floated a silver airship.

"It seems to be a friend..."

A strangely shaped object passed by at a low altitude and seemed surprisingly close.

If it weren't for the soft sound of the propellers, the scene would have seemed like an illusion.

Young Nangu could guess something about the master's background.

"You mean when you were in Germany?"

"Adolf K. Weismann... He is also a "King". Despite having a brilliant mind, he was a man who only expressed the dreams of a child."

There was something proud and sad in his words.

"In the end, that man also can't let go of the "Slate". Although he despairs and wants to look away from everything, he can't help but see the result of the dream he started."

Young Nangu suddenly realized something.

Kokujoji was unusually talkative, and the way he frowned and stared showed that he was a real man.

"You see, Adolf K. Weismann? I don't have such optimistic dreams like you. I don't think all powerful people choose to dream happy dreams... but..."

Or the head of the Kokujoji family, or the leader of "Tokijikuin", or the supernatural being the "Golden King"... but it was a young man named Kokujoji Daikaku, making a sincere promise to his friend.

"I will become the ideal king. So just watch."

"....."

It wasn't the loyalty he had felt until now, but something else that made the young Nangu kneel down. Although at first glance it may seem contradictory, only in this way could he help the young man fulfill his promise to risk everything for his friendship with him.

"...Daikaku-sama, please add me to your tribe."

Silently, but forcefully, the boy made his own promise.

"To achieve your goal, you will need companions to serve as your hands and feet."

That is also different from the system established by the "Slate", a closer connection.

That was a new form of bond that Kokujoji also held in his heart as part of a larger framework.

Even so, Kokujoji expressed hesitation in putting all his effort into it.

"But... even if you are from a branch family, you are still the eldest son."

"It is such a trivial matter that it is of no importance."

The young Nangu focused on it and dismissed his doubts.

"If the ties surrounding me are an obstacle, then I will throw away my name and individuality here and now. I will proudly become your pawn."

After a moment of silence, Kokujoji spoke.

"...I have received your determination. Together with me, become the foundation of this country."

As the boy bowed deeply, strength welled up within him. As a phenomenon, it was proof that he had been welcomed as a servant of the "Golden King", but to him it meant something much greater.

Then a sarcastic voice came out that sounded both impressed and judgmental.

"Oh, so young master Nangu has finally decided to serve you as a servant."

With an unwaveringly regular gait, the "Blue King", Somei Nazumi, walked up the slope of the hill. He cast a piercing glance over the brim of his hat toward the airship flying through the blue sky.

"Your arrival strengthened your bonds."

"If you make a decision and move forward, there is no reason for others to say anything."

Somei Chika, who was standing next to him, looked the boy in the eyes and smiled.

The boy was also strangely calm as he expressed his feelings in words.

"If I may be so bold as to say... I'd say I'm more of a family member than a servant."

"That's true."

Kokujoji replied briefly and with a hint of embarrassment.

On the other hand, Nazumi found a completely different level of value in those words.

"It's a good name. In a democratic country, the word "servant" is difficult to use, so we had a hard time deciding on the terms. In the documents for America, we translated it as "Clan"..."

"Hey, shining gold!"

As if to cut off the petulant voice, the "Red King", Unno Yutaka, charged after him.

"Don't call someone and then suddenly run off in a panic."

Okuma Tamataro, who was following him, noticed something flying in the sky.

"So that's the reason you ran off. Because of that airship, of course."

"It's a rather ridiculous way again... Chika-san, I had the rice that was served at the meeting wrapped up for me. There's a nice, warm breeze today, so let's eat here."

Next to her, Todokoro Suwako handed her something wrapped in a furoshiki.

The meeting was their original purpose for that day. At Kokujoji's invitation, the five kings and the core members of their group met for the first time since the incident. Of course, this wasn't a casual or leisurely conversation, but rather more important

discussions, but the current situation was a result of the actions of the organizers themselves.

Chika herself preferred a formal style, but now she realized that this would no longer be a formal discussion. However, she couldn't imagine those two casually sitting in the same seat.

"Thank you. But..."

Suwako laughed at such concerns.

"It's okay, it's okay. This useless guy gets excited when he sees flying things."

"Shut up, that can't be true!"

After they laughed at him, Unno made an unpleasant comment, refusing to accept defeat.

However, his gaze was firmly fixed on the airship in the sky.

And finally, in a relaxed voice, the "Gray King", Otono Benji, joined in.

"Well, it's nice to be under the sun from time to time."

Today he was walking especially slowly because he was carrying an accordion.

Miya, dressed in a fresh green dress, was holding his hand.

"I want to bring some food to everyone in the facility..."

The "Green King", Tsunogui Iku, was a few steps ahead of them and called out to them while brandishing the teapot he was carrying.

"Somei Chika, I want souvenirs for everyone."

His movements were so abrupt that his dark green dress fluttered wildly. Both girls were well-dressed, but their messy hair and posture revealed a hint of awkwardness that was still new to them.

Chika found them quite adorable and responded with a smile.

"I understand. I'll ask in the kitchen later."

"Good job!"

"Hooray!"

The two girls jumped around Otono.

"Haha, this thing seems to be having fun, like a bird or a butterfly."

Otono narrowed his eyes and began to improvise on the accordion.

Everyone present, including the two jumping girls, listened intently to the melody that was playing.

Today, perhaps due to the whim of the player, there are no sad tones.

None of the "Kings" present disturbed the sound.

Even if one was missing, even if one was hidden, the six Kings finally appeared together in a single scene, in sacred peace. Kokujoji felt that such a gift was somewhat rare.

"Let's decide quickly before eating."

He hoped that the wind blowing through the grassy hills would carry the sound to the nearby skies.

On that day, January 20, 1949.

Some agreement was reached between the five kings. This is not an authoritarian restriction like that carried out in the name of the organizer, the "Golden King" Kokujoji Daikaku. It was a promise made between comrades who united under the guidance of the "Slate" and together defeated a threat. It continued for subsequent generations with a gradually increasing number of elements added and came to be known as the "Hitofutamaru Agreement" after the date it was concluded.

The First Ruler, the "Silver King", Adolf K. Weismann, continued to travel the skies of Kanto in his airship, the "Himmelreich", contemplating the development beneath him and the ideals and realities his friends were building.

Until a certain incident in the 21st century brought him to Earth, there had been almost no instances of him meeting other Kings, and as a unique existence, he was also known as the King of Heaven and the Lonely King. It is said that he met Kokujoji Daikaku only a few months before death parted them.

The second sovereign, Kokujoji Daikaku, the "Golden King", would shine brightly over the country of Japan and nurture it with great strength for over 70 years. As a ruler, he was selfless and had no interest in personal glory.

His power, combined with the military might of his subordinates, "Tokijikuin", was so great that he was feared as "Imperial Lord" by some government leaders and high-ranking officials; however, he ultimately remained unknown to the general public.

During the same incident that occurred in the 21st century, he passed away, entrusting his future to the "Silver King".

Minamiyagi Taro served as a confidant to the "Golden King", and also contributed greatly to the establishment of the "Rabbits", an elite unit of "Tokijikuin". He himself served on the front lines as one of the unnamed "Rabbits", and continued to accompany his master like a shadow until his death. After his death, he cooperates with the "Silver King", and

amidst the events that cause chaos in society, he strives to maintain the order that he himself helped establish.

The third sovereign, the "Red King" Unno Yutaka, has been wandering around the country since the incident, crushing the chaos of supernatural beings scattered throughout the country. These outrageous and exhilarating antics became the subject of a popular film series called "The Extraordinary Traveling Crow" during his lifetime, and played a role in the rise of Japanese films in the 1950s and 1960s.

Moreover, he stopped going to Tokyo and left the management of the Kagiroyhi Group, including its disposal, entirely in the hands of Okuma Tamataro. He had never been on an airplane in his life.

As "Hanagumo", Todokoro Suwako spends her life chasing Unno Yutaka, only to fall out with him and return to Tokyo. She also appears in all of the films in "The Extraordinary Traveling Crow" series as the main heroine, with a different character for each installment, making that an important role that can serve as a stepping stone to becoming a popular actress. She was never actually officially married to Unno Yutaka, but there is record of them having a daughter.

The "demon bear" Okuma Tamataro continued to support Kagiroyhigumi, a Tokyo group that was abandoned by Unno Yutaka. When the post-war period came to an end, he disbanded the gang, founded Kagiroyhi Sangyo Co., Ltd., and became a businessman dedicated to contributing to the local community. He has also served as a director and advisor to other companies, president of a regional bank, and president of a credit union. In "The Extraordinary Traveling Crow" film series, he is often portrayed as a former friend and a villainous genius.

The third real power, the "Blue King", Somei Nazumi, serves as the Director of the Fourth Legal Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Justice and is also devoting his efforts to formulating the Anomalous Phenomena Management Act. In particular, the expansion of the special clause for "cases where acquired powers have been lost" and the social reintegration program have been of great help to people caught in the natural disaster of supernatural powers for generations to come. As one of the most dedicated contributors to Kokujoji Daikaku's national reconstruction efforts, he also kept his mark relatively in the public eye.

He and his wife Chika had a son and two daughters. Naturally, he graduated on the same day as his wife.

Somei Chika served as the deputy head of the Fourth Legal Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Justice until her later years. Her dignified and valiant appearance is said to have greatly contributed to creating the impression of the "Blue Uniforms" cracking down on supernatural crimes. She also worked hard to improve the skills of her staff, establishing several dojos on the office premises and personally instructing them in martial arts. She

had a son and two daughters with her husband, Nazumi, and neither of them live a life in which supernatural powers are involved.

The fifth sovereign, "The Green King", Tsunogui Iku, studied hard at an orphanage connected to Kokujoji Daikaku. After graduating from university, she achieved outstanding results in the field of mathematics, becoming the first woman in the post-war period to win multiple international awards in that field.

After being taken under protection, there is no record of her publicly using her supernatural powers as the "Green King", and she also holds the extremely rare title of abdicated "King". As she grew older, she lived in lodgings with both the Okuma family and the Somei family, and whenever something displeased her in one, she would move to the other, repeating the peculiar behavior.

After leaving the orphanage, Shimaaura Miya had a variety of work experiences before returning to the facility as its manager. There she worked to expand and improve the facilities and spent her life protecting and caring for the orphans. Neither she nor the other members of the Biribiri gang who have since left the nest have any history of publicly using their supernatural powers.

She maintained a lifelong friendship with Iku Tsunogui.

The sixth sovereign, Otono Benji, also known as the "Gray King", disappeared after the incident. The story of the Kirino City shopping district was only mentioned as an urban legend until the 1970s, after which the rumors died down.

Many kings are said to have had contact with him, but his existence has never been truly proven, and his life or death remains unclear as the time for the appearance of the next "Gray King", Otori Seigo, draws near. Kokujoji Daikaku is said to have confirmed his death immediately afterwards, but there is no clear record of that in the documents.

During the period of rapid economic growth, the small island of Ashinaka in Tokyo Bay was reclaimed and expanded as part of a bayside development project, and has become an artificial island so rich in nature that it is hard to imagine its former state. When "Ashinaka Gakuen" was founded, the shrine, which was the only facility on the island, was moved deep into the artificial forest. This shrine had not received any invitation from anywhere, and the name of the main deity that should have been recorded in the shrine's history was left blank.

The deity enshrined there is an unknown god, whose name and origin are unknown.

Under the mysterious "Slate", numerous kings have appeared and disappeared.

The Seven Thrones have sometimes remained empty for long periods, sometimes been attacked in secret, and sometimes brought about overwhelming disasters... and in the end, their masters have never been reunited. It was only much later that Kokujoji Daikaku

realized that they were not beings who had banded together to accomplish something, but were simply the embodiment of the ever-changing nature of events.

However, on that 20th of January 1949,

At that time, when everyone was trying to rebuild things on the ruins of the burned fields,

It was a golden age for them, when they could dream of a bright future.