



MISSING KINGS  
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## **TRANSLATION: NARU-KUN / K – PROJECT WORLD**

### **PROLOGUE: IN DRESDEN**

The Dresden Slate, a mysterious relic found in Dresden, Germany during the war. The "Slate" brought to Japan after the war chose the seven kings of supernatural powers.

The "Silver King", a watcher with unchanging power.

The "Golden King" who controls destiny and brings prosperity.

The "Red King" who harbors a fiery flame of destruction.

The "Blue King", guardian of order and justice.

The "Green King" who plans to change the world.

The "Grey King" who protects the weak.

And the Joker "Colorless King" who knows what he will bring.

The "kings" led groups of people with supernatural powers who shared their own power, sometimes bringing people happiness, sometimes spreading terrible death and destruction, sometimes fighting, sometimes uniting, disappearing and being reborn.

In 2012, after the death of the "Colorless King" Ichigen Miwa, who worked as a mediator of "kings", the new "Colorless King" who appeared as a dangerous king of chaos, produced a battle involving the three kings, "Red King" "Blue King" and "Silver King".

As a result of that incident, known as the Gakuenjima Incident, the "Colorless King" was destroyed by the "Silver King" Isana Yashiro and the "Red King" Suoh Mikoto, but Isana Yashiro's whereabouts were unknown. Suoh was killed by Reisi Munakata, the "Blue King", just before his Sword of Damocles fell.

Yatogami Kuro and Neko, who became members of the clan of the "Silver King", known as the Immortal "King", believed in the survival of their king and continued to search for his whereabouts for almost a year.

In a world where multiple "Kings" have disappeared, a new gear of fate begins to turn.

## PROLOGUE: IN DRESDEN

"Oh, My God." She rolled her eyes and stared at him.

She was a woman with beautiful silver hair and blue-gray eyes. Her movements were smoother than other humans, and he could see that she was trying to treat him as carefully as possible.

After looking at him, she directed her gaze to a long, silver flying object that suddenly appeared above his head, slightly above her line of sight.

"To think that a new individual EX- $\alpha$  would be born here. Furthermore, the shape and emission color of sword-like Kouki are different from blue and red... Silver..."

Her fingers gently stroked the hair on his back.

"I wonder what kind of features he has."

She rolled her eyes sadly.

"Actually, I was doing a different investigation now. If one day I were to decide that this path was wrong... I would like to find a way to go back..."

She was worried that her fingers would be cold while they were still attached to his back, so she brought the tip of her nose closer. She smiled slightly, perhaps because that tickled her palm.

At that moment, the sound of a bomb exploding was heard from the ground.

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Sitting on a bench on the banks of the Elbe, Izumo Kusanagi gazed vaguely at the river's surface under the blue August sky.

"Well... that's not going to work..."

With a sigh, he talked and he ate the sausages he bought at the stall. It was an aromatic sausage grilled over charcoal that was sandwiched between the bread. The large sausage protruded from both ends of the small bread, and when he nibbled at one end, his mouth filled with delicious meat juices. The mustard had a mild spiciness and the aroma of herbs and garlic kneaded into the sausage spread gently.

It was delicious. But Kusanagi didn't come to Germany to enjoy sausages.

"At the moment, the place where the hit occurred has been reversed. What am I going to do now?"

The reason Kusanagi came to Germany was Anna Kushina, a girl who was the only female member of "Homura" and someone Kusanagi should protect.

About half a year ago, Anna, whose eyes were trembling with anxiety and hesitation, said something to him. Kusanagi decided to try to do something about the situation that happened to Anna.

First, he visited the Mihashira Tower, the residence of the "Golden King". However, he was unable to find the "Golden King" Daikaku Kokujoji and was unable to obtain any information. According to the "rabbit" that replied: "We don't even have a plan to respond to your request."

Kusanagi, who had already lost his way in the fight, crossed the sea with a ray of hope.

Dresden, the old German city.

Known as Florence on the River Elbe, it is a city of culture lined with historic buildings in the Baroque style. During World War II, it was once destroyed by heavy bombing, but after the war, the urban landscape, which was reduced to a mountain of rubble after the war, was restored and revived, turning it into a city like a phoenix.

And it was also the place where the "Slate" was once discovered and studied.

Kusanagi was walking around this town looking for information about the "Slate".

With the help of "Scepter 4", he was able to meet the doctor who was once involved in the "Slate" research along with the Weismann brothers. The elderly doctor, who was also a survivor of the bombing of Dresden, recounted many memories of the war, but he still did not have the answers Kusanagi was looking for.

Through his connections, he visited everyone who had the slightest involvement in the "base" research (although not many of them survived), and visited the church where the "base" lab was located. He went to see the ruins (although there was no trace of the research institute anymore), he flew to Berlin once, settled down and found various research materials left by the German army at that time related to the "Slate". He too was looking for something to do.

But the result was all in vain.

"In the first place... all the information about the "Slate" was stolen by the "Golden King"... from the beginning, I knew there was little hope, but..."

Kusanagi sighed deeply.

After eating a sausage, he leaned on the bench and looked up at the sky. The summer sky was blue and wide. Four months had already passed since he arrived in Germany.

"That's why I don't have time to take it easy."

In a low voice, Kusanagi muttered.

Since Totsuka and Suoh died, half of the season has already passed.

"Homura", which was started by the three of them, was no longer in the form it once was. Even so, Kusanagi had intended to continue providing a place for everyone to stay until they naturally started leading different lives, but the matter of going to Germany made that impossible, and as a result, he had to expel the "Homura" members from the bar.

Kusanagi sighed again, remembering Yata's tearful and frustrated face.

At that moment, he heard a small cry.

Looking up at the bank of the Elbe River, in front of the bench Kusanagi was sitting on, a small white mouse stood on its hind legs and looked at Kusanagi.

"Hello...?"

Kusanagi couldn't help but greet him because he looked terribly human when he stood on his hind legs, and because his eyes met his round, intellectual eyes perfectly.

The white mouse chirped again as if he were responding.

For a while there was a strange silence.

After a tense time, the white mouse touched the ground with its front paws and began to run as if nothing had happened.

In front of Kusanagi's gaze, thinking that it was a strange mouse, the figure of a running white mouse suddenly took on a dim glow.

"Eh...?"

Kusanagi blinked and looked carefully. He thought it was the reflection of sunlight, but after looking at it again, he could only see that the mouse itself was emitting light.

The way it glowed was similar to the way people with supernatural powers displayed their powers, so Kusanagi suddenly stood up and ran after the white mouse.

If he got into the ditch, he would have escaped, but the white mouse ran into the corner of the road. Driven by a strange premonition, Kusanagi continued to chase the little mouse without hesitation.

(What am I doing? Am I like Alice who wanders into Wonderland chasing the White Rabbit?)

Thinking so, he ran on, passing through the old city with beautiful and solemn buildings, passing a tram, and further on, the white mouse entered a large building.

Taking a deep breath, Kusanagi entered the building without even asking what it was, thinking that he had come this far.

"Here... is this the library?"

Inside, the entire wall was lined with bookshelves, and various people walked back and forth between them, or opened books at the desks lined up in the center. Kusanagi glanced at the scene and searched for the white mouse he was chasing.

A little, he caught a slender tail at the edge of his vision.

When he turned his gaze to him, he was no longer visible, but he could see the stairs to the basement beyond the rope that barred outsiders from entering. If he wasn't mistaken, the white mouse should have gone down there.

"...I apologize for now."

Kusanagi stealthily climbed up the rope and down the stairs.

That basement room was more like a storeroom than a closed-stack library. There were a few shelves and books, but most of the room was filled with simple shelves and old boxes of various sizes were lined up.

Without turning on the lights, Kusanagi illuminated the room with the light from his PDA and looked around. He couldn't see the white mouse.

Each shelf had a label with a name on it. Books and letters donated by someone, relics excavated somewhere, etc. were described.

It was like a storehouse of items that had probably been donated to the library and were worthless or undetermined, or held without the effort to determine them.

Kusanagi walked slowly between the shelves, looking at the nameplate. The year of the gift grew older as he went further in, and in one corner, the nameplate itself was old and the lettering faded.

Kusanagi slowly translated the characters on the plaque, which were like scribbled notes without the name of the donor, into Japanese and read them aloud.

"Articles of unknown owner excavated at the site of a large air raid."

His heart was shaking.

The great air raid, the Dresden bombing raid that triggered the awakening of the "Silver King". The "base" laboratory was destroyed by bombing.

The boxes lined up on the shelves were covered in a thick layer of dust like snow. That must have slept there for many years. When he gently lifted the lid of the box in front of him so that the dust wouldn't fly, he discovered that the inside was crammed with books

and documents that weren't even organized. In addition to the boxes, the shelves were also loaded with bags and luggage that were brought in just as they were discovered.

"This thing... is there a chance that it is a hidden treasure?"

Kusanagi raised the corners of his tense mouth into a smile.

"That is, in this warehouse, every time the city is remodeled, the remains of old basements and bunkers are still collected, whose owners and contents are unknown."

"I see. There's a good chance that something will come out of here, rather than just casually asking questions or roaming the ruins of a research facility, I suppose."

Kusanagi immediately informed Awashima, who was in Japan, that he had finally found a clue. Awashima's voice on the other end of the phone was nonchalant, but he could sense a faint hint of anticipation in her.

As an example, he was allowed to use the name "Scepter 4" for the on-site research of the large-scale academic library that functioned as both a university library and a state library.

The presence of "Scepter 4" and Daikaku Kokujoji, the heavyweight behind it, was also effective in Germany.

Awashima was cooperating with Kusanagi in that investigation because she also wanted the information that Kusanagi wanted.

Kusanagi wanted to help Anna. And Awashima was seeking as much information as possible about the "Slate" for Munakata, who had taken the burden of killing "King" Suoh Mikoto into his hands.

However, what he found was only a "sign of a clue", and he had not yet reached a clue. From now on, he would have to inspect one by one the large number of miscellaneous items that were not organized and pushed around as much as they could. Naturally, most of the items were relics from ordinary people who had nothing to do with them, and until he could conclude that they were unrelated, he would have no choice but to spend time examining them one by one while deciphering the German language. It was a daunting task.

"Are you yelling for joy? It's the edge of the cloud you finally grabbed."

Kusanagi smiled wryly at Awashima's response to Kusanagi's complaint.

Still, he was sure that he was finally beginning to see the shadow of the real in the story that seemed to catch the clouds.

Kusanagi's visits to the library continued for a long time.

He moved his quarters closer to the library just for convenience, and he spend every day working day and night in the dimly lit basement.



At first, the library staff, who had an eye for shady things, gradually grew to appreciate them as Kusanagi cleared the shelves and sorted the items while conducting research. The students thought that he was a young war researcher from Japan, greeted him normally, and the number of acquaintances increased. He also got acquainted with delicious cafes around the library.

He kept in regular contact with Awashima to report on progress and heard from Awashima about the current situation in Japan, including what "Homura" was doing. Without that, Kusanagi himself would have been under the illusion that he was a researcher living in Germany.

On the day that summer passed and autumn began to deepen, Kusanagi ate breakfast at his favorite cafe as usual before entering the library storage room.

"Well. Today's part is..."

In a dusty warehouse that felt like his own lair, Kusanagi lifted a heavy box from the shelf and carried it to his desk. When he opened the lid, inside was a large amount of paper that had turned yellow.

"The contents of this box are all paper? No wonder it's heavy."

He picked up the top sheet of paper and looked at it, but even Kusanagi, who was completely used to German, didn't know what the document was because there were so many words he didn't understand. As he frowned at the number of difficult words, he heard the cries of small animals under his feet.

"Eh?"

When he looked down, on the ground a few steps away from Kusanagi was the white mouse that he had chased that day.

No, he couldn't tell if it was the same mouse. Now, he didn't give off light like he did that day, and he stand still like an ordinary mouse. However, the figure standing on his hind legs still looked human.

"....."

Guided there, he thought for a moment what to do in the situation where he might meet up with the lost white mouse. However, Kusanagi thought that his catching behavior would be different, so he slightly raised his hand towards the white mouse.

"Thank you for bringing me here."

The white mouse looked at Kusanagi with round eyes that seemed intelligent and chirped.

Kusanagi returned his gaze to the paper inside the box.



Postponing the reading carefully, he picked up the documents one by one and looked at them.

There were several notes that seemed to be transcribing thoughts and considering them.

It was very difficult to read because it was crossed out with double lines and what appeared to be another idea was written below it. In addition, there were many articles with complicated calculation formulas written down and articles that simply wrote down some numerical values. They looked like a physicist's research notes or something.

As he carefully rummaged through the pile of disjointed papers, looking at each sheet carefully, he found a neatly arranged pile of papers from the bottom.

Seeing what was drawn on the topmost piece of paper, Kusanagi's hand jumped up.

An image that he could understand at a glance, even if he couldn't make out a sentence full of difficult words.

It was a photo of the "Slate".

A circular geometric pattern ran through the center of a stone block cut into squares. Kusanagi vividly recalled the shape of the "Slate" enshrined under the floor made of tempered glass in the corridor on the top floor of Mihashira Tower, which Suoh had entered several times.

Kusanagi suddenly looked at the white mouse. The white mouse was no longer there.

"No way..."

He remembered what the old doctor, whom he heard for the first time after arriving in Germany, said that he was doing research with the Weismann brothers.

The mice are said to have been used as test subjects in the "Slate" research at the time.

Several of the mice placed under the influence of the "Slate" that activated, had a unique ability similar to the "King" known as EX- $\alpha$ , which Kusanagi and the others knew about, and that caused the synchronization of abilities with any living creature around it.

That was almost seventy years ago. Considering the lifespan of a mouse, an enormous amount of time had passed.

However, if there was a mouse that woke up as an individual with a characteristic similar to the "Silver King", an unchangeable characteristic, it wouldn't have been impossible even if that individual survived that amount of time.

Even if he had intelligence and tried to guide someone, he couldn't say that it was impossible.

"Danke schön (Thank you)."

That was what Kusanagi whispered to the white mouse that had disappeared.

Kusanagi took his PDA. With his fingers slightly trembling with anticipation, he called the number of the elderly doctor who was involved in the "Slate" investigation. It was not possible for Kusanagi to judge whether the discovered material was significant or not. He wanted a detailed translation of the material, as well as an explanation of what it meant.

He felt the edge of the cloud he grabbed take shape in his hand.

As he listened to the ringtone, he quickly flipped through the materials and found a signature at the bottom.

Klaudia Weismann.