



K

RETURN OF KINGS  
SUZUKI SUZU / GoRA

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

### CHAPTER 10: THE WORLD REVOLVING

Sukuna Gojou hates Fushimi Saruhiko.

He hates his face and attitude. He doesn't like his background. He hates his abilities. Everything Fushimi does makes him angry. He didn't even want to breathe the same air, but as a Ranker, he was there and was allowed to be next to Nagare.

However, Iwafune...

"This is your first junior, right? Please be nice."

With that, he pushed Sukuna's back.

Sukuna pouted, but he still followed Iwafune's words. He didn't mean to be nice to him, but since he was breathing in the same place, he had to confirm the other person's "standing position". For what purpose did that man come to "this place"? It is Sukuna's responsibility as a J-Ranker to know that.

Fushimi stood motionless outside the "secret base". In front of him is consecrated the "Dresden Slate", a relic that is a source of supernatural powers and signifies the victory of "Jungle".

Sukuna shouted a provocative voice behind him.

"What do you think? It's the "Slate" that your former king lost and we took."

Fushimi looked at Sukuna for a moment, then immediately looked back at the "Slate". He responded vaguely.

"Not at all. He has nothing to do with me."

He was irritated by the nonchalant response. Sukuna stood next to Fushimi and looked him straight in the face.

"It doesn't matter. Now that you've become a Ranker, you're also a player and one of the operators of this game. Ah, but don't get carried away, okay? Just because you beat my record for fastest rank promotion and you rose to the ranking in a short period of time..."

Fushimi snorted. When he looked back at Sukuna, there was a hint of contempt for the boy.

"Oh, what? Are you upset because your score has been changed? You're a very troublesome child."

Blood rushed to Sukuna's head.

"What...?! What do you mean?!"

He must have been a figurehead. However, Sukuna's shyness refused to acknowledge that with all his might. He gritted his teeth so hard that he made noise and looked at Fushimi.

"You were able to get this far quickly because you used Hirasaka! I don't like playing games that depend on people like that!"

U-Rank Douhan Hirasaka and Sukuna had some kind of connection. Sukuna was able to promote to Ranker thanks to her help. He did not trust Hirasaka, who often betrayed him, but even so, Sukuna did not dislike her.

He did not like the fact that Hirasaka had fully supported Fushimi's promotion in rank.

Whether he knew Sukuna's subtleties or not, Fushimi maintained his natural tone.

"Who trusts people? But if it's a "tool", then I'll use it. I used to use dark weapons."

Sukuna realized that strength was gathering around his temples.

When he woke up, he was in front of Fushimi with a long staff. Sukuna said with a smile on his face.

"Hey, why don't you play against me once? Let's bet 10,000 points. I'll give you a big handicap."

"Huh? It's troublesome..."

The surprised words were cut in half.

Sukuna's long staff produced an electric blade. Anyone can see the battle posture. Nagare and Iwafune are behind them, but there is no sign of stopping them. It is still within the expected range. Or did he anticipate what would happen and try to persuade him to talk to Fushimi?

"I won't kill you. We're mates, right?"

In the end, the reason why Sukuna was not convinced was because he doubted Fushimi's strength.

"Jungle" is a world of the law of the fittest. Strong players rise, weak ones crawl to the bottom. That's clear.

Fushimi Saruhiko is probably a "good" player. He scored points efficiently and reached the top of the leaderboard as the fastest. But if he wants to stand shoulder to shoulder with Sukuna and the others, he will need more proof than that.

A test of strength.

Tension ran through Fushimi's body. Seeing that, Sukuna smiled. A frail but well-behaved boy is beaten and falls to the ground. Nothing is more pleasant than that. To see that, Sukuna put strength into the hand holding the scythe.

"Hey! What are you idiots doing?!"

At the same time as his sharp voice, a severe pain rained down on his brain.

Sparks spread in the depths of his eyes and he barely stopped his faltering consciousness. When he turned his tear-filled vision forward, Fushimi was also crouching with his head in the same way.

The man who hit the two of them, Mishakuji Yukari, put his hands on his hips and spoke in a tone like that of an older brother scolding his younger siblings for being messy.

"Stop fighting among yourselves. Internal disputes are not beautiful."

"Why... did you even hit me?"

"You and your damn brute force, Yukari..."

Fushimi and Sukuna complained, but Mishakuji responded with a wink.

"It's not that fights between friends are prohibited, but now is an important time, so I want you to be a little more aware."

Sukuna looked at Mishakuji resentfully, but said nothing more. He knew in his head that what he said was true.

Mishakuji looked at the "Slate". Silently, but surely, the relic pulsed. Just as the heart pumps blood, the "Slate" creates, sends and circulates unknown energy. Mishukaji said as he looked at the situation charmingly.

"Soon the slate will bloom. At this rate, it should be close."

"The new stage created by Nagare is about to begin. I am ready."

"So be careful, Sukuna-chan. Besides, wouldn't it be more spectacular to fight in the next scenario?"

"Hmm." Sukuna snorted, still, he was convinced. It was just as Mishakuji said. It's okay to let Fushimi understand after moving to the next stage. When the time comes he will clarify the matter.

"You saved my life."

Muttering softly, Fushimi looked at Sukuna with irritated eyes. Still he didn't say anything. His sullen silence is proof that he understands the power difference between him and Sukuna. Feeling somewhat satisfied with that, Sukuna turned on his heel and walked towards Nagare, who was silently watching over them.

As he looked at that, Fushimi let out a silent sigh.

"Sukuna-chan is a boy after all."

Mishakuji said that while he laughed.

"But he is strong, you know? He is still far from being a sophisticated beauty, but in terms of power, he is on par with me, or even stronger. Even if he asks you to fight him again, refuse."

Fushimi looked at Mishakuji with dull eyes.

"...Don't worry. I don't have any hobbies that make me sweat in vain."

He then directed his attention to Sukuna, who was talking to Nagare.

While he is having a friendly conversation, Sukuna nudges Nagare on the shoulder. Kotosaka spreads his wings and shouts something, while Iwafune watches with a wry smile. Fushimi has belonged to several clans, but this is a sight he has never been able to see in any of them.

"Two kings, two clansmen, and a bird. However, they interact with each other equally, even with the two "Kings". It's a strange place."

The "King" is special. Although there are differences of degree, everyone respects them and that is why they keep their distance. To Fushimi, that was what a "King" meant.

That's different with "Jungle". The "King" is powerful, but he is just one of your allies. Sukuna and Mishukaji treat them as equals and the "Kings" naturally accept it. The J-Ranks were strangely friendly to the top of the green clan, who struggled for profit and sometimes got into trouble.

"Really? From now on, that kind of era will come. It's time for each and every one of us to have our own power and live from our own strengths and responsibilities without being controlled by anyone."

Saying that, Mishakuji smiled as if he could see Fushimi's heart.

"I think that suits you, right?"

Fushimi then looked away. Mishakuji is much more troublesome than Sukuna, who wants a showdown. Hiding that thought, he also turned on his heel and began walking in a different direction than where the "Kings" were.

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And then the "King" finished his calculations.

Scattered around the room are all kinds of blank papers, notebooks, copybooks, and straw paper. No, it would be more accurate to say it was a blank slate. The pieces of paper were

filled with countless symbols, formulas, and memos, reminiscent of a paranoid madman's hospital room.

The "Silver King", Isana Yashiro or Adolf K. Weismann, tapped the last mathematical expression with the tip of his pen several times and then threw the pen away.

Resonant hammer effect according to the second law of the basic theory of research in physics W. Research continued privately by Claudia Weismann, a researcher who was once touted as a "two-headed genius" along with Adolf in the Third Empire. Shiro interpreted it, arranged it, and came to a conclusion.

"...This is the only option, eh?"

He meditated, no one heard the murmur. Kuro and Neko were gone. That's why Shiro could talk to himself without hesitation, looking at the sepia photo on the dining room table.

"Lieutenant, sister... I'm sorry."

Shiro... Adolf's firm decision is to put an end to a dream.

70 years ago. Dreams they shared together.

The dream that Adolf, Claudia and Kokujoji started together, and that they had together, will end with their own hands.

Shiro closed his eyes and endured the pain in his chest that little by little came out. That pain will probably never go away. He will continue to live with that pain. That resolution was already set within Shiro.

The method of happiness they once found.

Therefore, he will destroy it.

Just as he was thinking that, the intercom rang.

".....?"

Shiro stood up and headed towards the door. Kuro and Neko wouldn't have called the intercom, and Kukuri should be in class right now. He opened the door wondering who had come.

The girl standing there looked at Shiro with red eyes and muttered.

"Hello."

Shiro rolled his eyes and asked the girl, Anna Kushina.

"Anna? Why are you here?"

Eyes that seemed to see through everything darted to Shiro's face, then to the back of the room.

"Because I felt like I should come."

Just from that, Shiro understood why she had come here.

"...Thank you."

"No."

Shiro then invited Anna into the room.

There was nowhere to step in the room, which was full of documents, but without changing her expression, Anna bent down and picked up one of them. Anna probably couldn't understand the notes, which were a mix of Japanese, German, and mathematical formulas.

Still, she stroked the paper and muttered to herself.

"Destroy it."

Shiro nodded silently.

"Yes. I thought about it a lot, but it seems like that's the only option."

"Yes."

Anna said nothing and stared at the paper that described how to destroy the "Slate".

Seeing Anna makes Shiro feel suffocated.

The "Slate" has disrupted many lives. The "King" would be the best example of this. Reisi Munakata. Suoh Mikoto. And if Anna Kushina had not existed in this world, her lives would have been completely different. He doesn't believe she could have lived a normal life, but at least she could have lived as a human being.

If the "Slate" had not existed, Anna would never have awakened to her supernatural powers. A man who tried to wake up the "King" took her family. She should have been able to live an honest and modest life.

What changed that definitely was the "Slate", and it was Shiro who discovered it.

Shiro tried to open his mouth. He felt that he had to apologize to Anna. Nothing will come back like this. But, at least if he didn't do that, he wouldn't be satisfied.

At this moment, Anna murmured.

"There were good things and bad things..."

The look on Anna's face as she silently stared at the paper seemed nostalgic for something.

"...Thanks to the "Slate".

"....."

Shiro held his breath for a while, then made up his mind and asked.

"Isn't it because of the "Slate"?"

"There is that too."

Anna recognized it easily, but she still gave a slight smile.

"But I'm sure that a lot of things happened even without the "Slate". That's why I don't want to blame anything or anyone. I think we should think for ourselves and live our lives to the fullest. That's why I came."

With that, Anna straightened her back and lowered her head towards Shiro.

"Thank you for finding the "Slate". I'm sorry it had to be destroyed."

Looking into Anna's sincere red eyes, he felt the pain in his chest suddenly ease.

He thought his dreams were sins.

He was convinced that he had committed a great sin that twisted the lives of many people.

It was still true. The past cannot be changed with a girl's impressions. What he has done is before his eyes and Shiro must take responsibility for it.

Still, Shiro was certainly saved by Anna's words.

Adolf, Claudia and Kokujoji aspired to people's happiness. He could think that the days the three of them spent together in Dresden were not a mistake at all.

"...Thank you."

Saying that with a hoarse voice, Shiro also bowed his head. Anna nodded and then silently looked back at the note he had written about his dream and how to destroy it.

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"What do you mean?! I can't believe you're going to fire the Captain!"

Slapping the desk, Awashima raised an angry voice.

Prime Minister's Office. Normally, the moment a voice like this was raised, the SP would intervene and restrain the owner of the voice.

Awashima also fully understood that the other party was the leader of a country and that such an attitude was not appropriate for her.



Although she understood, Prime Minister Samukawa's weak smile irritated Awashima to the point that she made her lose her sense of reason.

"Hmm." Exhaling deliberately through his nose, Prime Minister Samukawa folded his hands on his desk.

"It literally means that. Munakata-kun took responsibility for the incident that occurred at Mihashira Tower on Christmas Day and I made him resign from his position as head of the department. In other words... he is fired!"

The proud expression on his face is characteristic of politicians who have defeated his political opponents.

"Guh.", Awashima gritted her teeth. Although she knew that it was useless to say it now, she couldn't help but say it.

"Prime Minister, what authority do you have to do such a thing...?!"

"I have authority. The enforcement authority that "Scepter 4" has was granted to the "Fourth Branch of the Family Records Division", a division of the Office of Legal Affairs. After all, you are all public servants. We have the obligation to obey the orders of the State."

"But...!"

Prime Minister Samukawa looked pitifully at Awashima, who was still trying to reason with him.

"The reason why he has been able to look so proud until now is because of the great power of Kokujoji Daikaku's "Tokijikuin" clan. It seems that Munakata-kun had intended to take His Excellency's place without realizing it, but what was the result? The secret treasure that "Tokijikuin" had been guarding for almost 70 years was stolen in just two months after being placed under Munakata-kun's control. I would have to say that he is not qualified."

Awashima remained silent.

The loss of "Scepter 4" was a foreseeable future. With the passing of the "Golden King" Kokujoji Daikaku, who created the "System of Seven Kings", the privileges of supernatural beings were slowly being usurped by most others. It's going to be bad. Munakata's defeat will only accelerate this trend.

His place is gradually being erased. Feeling as if her feet were collapsing, Awashima clenched her fists.

"Munakata-kun has already accepted his dismissal as boss."

Prime Minister Samukawa's next words left her breathless.

"That's all..."

"He also seemed to know exactly when to retreat. In that sense, he is truly a "King". If you are a confidant, why don't you sacrifice yourself for the "King"?"

Prime Minister Samukawa's smile clearly contained mockery, but Awashima didn't see it.

If Munakata had wanted to resist, he could have done so. Although he has lost his power, the "System of the Seven Kings" lives on. There is no doubt that "Tokijikuin" is responsible for maintaining the system. If he had wanted to avoid the humiliation of being fired from the boss's position, he could have done so.

Munakata did not. Awashima still didn't know what that meant.

"The other members will wait until further notice. This is your order."

Prime Minister Samukawa held out a piece of paper with a proud expression on his face. Awashima accepted the paper with trembling hands, it was clearly written as "Standby Order".

"This piece of paper..."

"This paper is important because I value formality."

After saying that, Prime Minister Samukawa laughed out loud.

At the same time, inside the Scepter 4" camp.

"Damn, what do you mean they fired the Captain?"

Domyoji shouted as he kicked a chair in the bathroom.

Just five minutes ago an email arrived from the capital's upper echelons announcing Munakata's dismissal and the order to stay away. "Scepter 4" was definitely a state-owned organization, but was actually allowed to operate as a semi-independent unit. Although he worked closely with the capital and the country, he never gave up taking orders. Furthermore, the dismissal of the head of the department was an unexpected event.

"The Captain hasn't shown up... Can you forgive me for something like this?"

Akiyama admonished Domyoji, who was still in bad shape.

"Calm down, Domyoji."

Benzai analyzed that calmly as he crossed his arms.

"So far, the government has never interfered with "Scepter 4" in such a forceful manner... but does it have anything to do with the fact that the top government seems to be in contact

with the Greens? Now that Fushimi-san is has allied itself with the Greens, things I don't want to believe are happening one after another..."

"What are the Captain and Fushimi-san thinking?!"

Undirected anger is probably the flip side of anxiety. This was a feeling shared not only by Domyoji but by all the members present there.

Since their defeat at the Battle of Mihashira Tower, opposition to "Scepter 4" had become visibly stronger. In contrast, the Green Clan has expanded to the surface world and is now showing strength to reach the upper levels of government. Simply put, "Scepter 4" is becoming a "loser".

However, amidst all that, there was one feeling that the members shared.

"I don't think the Captain will get rid of his responsibility. Maybe he has his own reasons for doing so?"

It was Kamo who muttered to himself. Enomoto, who was next to him, nodded his head.

"Oh, that's right. Until now, the Captain has always solved problems in ways we never imagined. I'm sure this time too..."

"Yes, but... what kind of method is that?"

There is no one who can answer Domyoji's counter question.

It is thanks to Munakata's leadership that "Scepter 4" has been able to overcome so many difficulties. His transcendental perspective, however, is so transcendent that his subordinates often do not understand him. Munakata's move was beyond the comprehension of those who were not kings.

Still, even though it was difficult to understand, Reisi Munakata was the "King" of them.

Akiyama looked at the other members and said clearly.

"I don't know what the Captain is thinking, but "Scepter 4" and Reisi Munakata will not end like this. The time to act will definitely come. So let's wait until then. I think that is the meaning of the Captain's silence."

There were no words, but the members of "Scepter 4" nodded silently.

They have their cause, even if it is humiliated and repressed by the State. Only they knew that there was nothing shady about it.

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Anna looked up at the blue sky and let out a quiet sigh.

The winter air is cold and her breath is white. However, Anna's eyes cannot capture that color. The blue sky and white breath blend with the monochrome background, making it impossible to see anything but a vast ocean of color.

Anna's color blindness is something she was born with. She can't recognize colors other than red. Her family was distraught about it, but Anna was fine with it. Precisely because she couldn't recognize other colors, the red color reflected in her eyes was particularly vivid and beautiful.

If it weren't for those eyes, wouldn't she have been chosen by the "Slate"?

If it weren't for the "Slate", she wondered if she would have been able to see the most beautiful red in her eyes.

With that in mind, Anna opened the door to enter HOMRA.

"Ah, Anna. I'm glad you're home."

Kusanagi, who was on the other side of the counter, let out a relieved voice, and Yata, who was sitting on the couch, asked.

"Anna, where have you been?"

"I went to see Yashiro and the others."

"I would have accompanied you if you had told me. There is a lot going on right now!"

Anna felt a little surprised by Yata's dissatisfied words. She is now the "Red Queen". "Jungle" won't mess with her unless there's something really wrong.

Maybe in his mind, even though she is the "Red Queen", she is still a helpless girl who lost her parents, left her aunt and came to this place. Anna is part of his family, the youngest child they must protect.

Then Anna smiled slightly and said.

"I'm sorry."

"Mmm... oh."

Yata was probably aware of that too. He scratched his cheek in embarrassment and turned to the side. Then, Kusanagi said.

"By the way, Anna... Munakata-san, it seems that something terrible has happened."

"Yes."

She heard the news from Shiro that Reisi Munakata had been fired as head of "Scepter 4". She doesn't know much about politics, but she could intuitively understand that things

were not going well. The weakening of the social power of "Scepter 4" means that "Jungle" is on the offensive.

"I never thought that a "King" could be fired by his country. This sudden incident seems to have caused quite a stir within "Scepter 4". The members have also been told to wait and it is unlikely that they will be able to leave their base. It seems that the most important person, the boss, has not shown up. I hope Seri-chan is okay."

Kusanagi sighed softly. The current brain behind "Homura" is definitely Kusanagi. His eyes probably see a more detailed perspective.

"At the party Seri and I attended, hosted by "Jungle", there were quite a few people who looked like they were government officials. I guess the government chose green over blue. If this continues, the world will turn green."

"I guess that's why."

It was Yata who muttered to himself. His expression was depressed, as if he was thinking about something. However, Anna could feel dark red anger swirling deep in his chest.

"Yata-chan?"

"So Saruhiko abandoned the sinking ship and betrayed it again, this time turning to the greens."

He clenched his fists tightly and the words he spat out were tinged with deep anguish. Yata and Fushimi knew each other before joining "Homura", and their relationship was off limits to other people. Not even Anna knew how Yata felt about Fushimi, who had betrayed him repeatedly.

"Misaki..."

Yata looked back at Anna, who looked worried. He then slowly got up and walked towards the exit of the bar.

"...I'll go look around again."

After watching Yata leave, Kusanagi sighed and changed the subject.

"Anna, what happened to Shiro-san?"

Isana Yashiro's investigation to counter the "Slate" stolen by "Jungle". Now that "Scepter 4" is out of power, his research could be said to be the only trump card against "Jungle".

Anna hesitated for a moment before telling him the result.

"Anna?"

Kusanagi murmured in disbelief, and Anna took the step and opened her mouth.

"...Yashiro's investigation has been completed."

"Well, then..."

Anna nodded resolutely in Kusanagi's eyes.

"He will destroy the "Slate"."

Those words were serious and little by little they permeated the silence of Bar HOMRA.

The destruction of the "Slate". They knew this was his trump card. It is also said that only Shiro who is the researcher who discovered the "Slate" can do that.

However, both Anna and Kusanagi were unsure if it would really be possible. For them, as supernatural beings, the "Slate" is something that "exists" there unwaveringly, just like heaven and earth. Is it possible to destroy heaven and earth? What will happen? It is still difficult to predict.

But it has to be done. Otherwise, the world will be plunged into chaos that will resemble destruction.

Kusanagi murmured slowly, as if he was fully aware of the weight of his words.

"...I see. Shiro-san finally found a way to do that."

"Yashiro has decided to destroy the "Slate" which was the shape of Yashiro's dream."

Kusanagi looked at Anna in silence.

"Anna, are you okay with that?"

Anna put her hand on her chest and mumbled a little.

"This red is important to me."

Anna's eyes can no longer capture the red that lives inside her.

It was something that once resided in a certain man. A red flame that burns silently while containing the power to destroy everything. The red color reflected in her eyes was so beautiful she could stare at it forever, and the warmth she felt when she touched him was surprisingly soft.

Kusanagi is also one of the people who was attracted by that warmth. She lowered her eyes and nodded.

"... Yes."

"The "Slate" took a lot from me, but I still love this red. This red saved me."

There is nothing false in the words she conveyed to Shiro at that moment. The "Slate" took her family from her and then gave it to her. If it was thanks to the "Slate" that she was able to meet "Homura", then it must have been a blessing.

"Anna..."

Looking at Kusanagi who looked worried, Anna said resolutely.

"But it's okay to lose that."

Images of the members of "Homura" appeared in her mind.

Some of them were people she would never see again. Every day she spends with them is a treasure for Anna. Memories never fade and remain beautiful forever. However, what will happen if the world is exposed to unprecedented chaos due to the "Slate"?

Those who are present will also be caught in the confusion. And the memories are only in the past. Whatever future she has with them will disappear.

"For a long time, the only thing I could do was "see" my destiny. But now it's different. If the destiny of the "Red King" is destruction, then I will destroy the destiny that will harm the people I care about."

Anna believes that is her mission after awakening as the "Red King". Anna Kushina's role was discovered by herself, not because anyone told her.

Seeing Anna's determination, Kusanagi also nodded silently.

"...I see. I guess I've been waiting for this moment ever since I found those documents in Germany."

"Yes. All that's left is..."

Just as she was about to say that, the doorbell rang.

When she turned around, she saw a young man standing at the entrance of the bar. His casual clothing, a simple shirt and pants style, was something she had never seen before. Is this a sign that he has gone from being a public figure to a private person? Anna spoke the young man's name.

"...Reisi."

Reisi Munakata, the man who had broken away from "Scepter 4" and had come to be known as the "King of the City" gave Anna a slight nod in return.

"Hello."

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It was a scene too strange to be considered a dialogue between two "Kings".

Two "Kings", a girl and a young man, are at the same counter. Blood orange juice was placed in front of Anna and champagne in front of Munakata. He didn't know what they were trying to celebrate. It's not like they were trying to congratulate him on his retirement.

After taking a sip of champagne, Munakata spoke.

"What's the point of calling me "Red Queen" out of nowhere?"

"I wanted to talk with you."

A red marble shined in Anna's hand. It was thanks to that that she was able to contact Munakata, who was active in the Battle of Mihashira Tower and whose whereabouts were unknown. The fact that Munakata also continued to possess that means that he perhaps expected something like that to happen one day. After taking a deep breath, Anna spoke clearly.

"We will destroy the "Slate"."

Even after hearing this, Munakata remained unmoved. He took a pack of cigarettes from his pocket and put one in his mouth.

"...I see. Without a doubt, that is an option that can be taken to overcome the current situation."

Kusanagi handed him a lighter while he searched for a light. He said with a slight smile in his voice.

"Are you a smoker?"

"I smoke very rarely."

Munakata transferred the light that Kusanagi had lit to a cigarette and slowly inhaled the purple smoke. He slowly let the ashes fall into the ashtray placed in front of him.

"For you, the "Slate" is like Suoh Mikoto's enemy."

"...I'm sorry. But it's not even that simple."

Suoh Mikoto. A former "Red King" and Kusanagi's best friend. If it weren't for the "Slate", he and Kusanagi would have lived very different lives.

But there's no point in even thinking about it. Even if he imagined a future that never came, reality won't change anything.

"The "Slate" made him live and let him die. That gave us and took away many things. I have no intention of destroying the "Slate" and giving up. However, I also think it should be destroyed."

Munakata exhaled smoke and responded.



"I agree that the "Slate" is a dangerous thing. However, the current development of this country is due to the "Golden King" and the great enlightenment of the country. In other words, the "Slate" system has profound roots in this country. We cannot afford to lose it."

"There's no point in saying something like that. Hisui Nagare is trying to unleash the power of the "Slate" and grant supernatural powers to all humans. If that happens..."

"Yes, we must stop it at all costs. However, if the "Green King" wishes for change and the "Red King" is determined to destroy it, then I, as the "Blue King", my goal is order. The power of the "Slate" must be exercised in an appropriate and orderly manner."

"In other words..."

Kusanagi looked directly into Munakata's eyes and said.

"Are you saying you want everything to go back to normal? You should back off and I'll take care of it this time."

"....."

Munakata did not respond. Kusanagi and the others cannot predict what his clear mind thinks. However, he had no choice but to make a judgment based solely on the materials he had.

That is to say...

"I don't think you can do that now."

Munakata's eyes flashed with a slight smile.

"Oh?"

Munakata, however, stopped the comment with just his voice. Does that mean that words that sound like those of a clan member are not enough to reach people? In that case, Kusanagi spoke from a different direction.

"Anna is worried about you too."

Munakata looked at Anna who was sitting next to him. The "King" girl watched Munakata attentively, without saying a word. Everyone already knows that her eyes capture more than just physical phenomena.

"...Your sword is already dangerous. If you overdo it, it will fall."

The blue "Damocles Down" means death and destruction. This also worried many people with supernatural powers. If the underlying cause is Suoh Mikoto, "Homura" cannot help but be related to Munakata's discomfort.

Suddenly, Munakata cleared his throat and laughed.

"Did you laugh?"

Munakata gently shook his head while Kusanagi narrowed his eyes and showed a hint of anger.

"No, excuse me. When I thought I was in the opposite position, it became a little funny."

"Opposite position?"

"I once scolded the "Red King" in the same way. It ended up being a waste of effort."

"....."

Reisi Munakata killed Suoh Mikoto.

If he had to say it objectively, it was probably the "right" thing to do. At this moment, Suoh's "Sword of Damocles" was also approaching his limit. Then, when Suoh himself took down the "Colorless King" who was acting behind the scenes, disaster finally struck. The only person who could stop the fall of the "Sword of Damocles" was Munakata, who was able to take Suoh's life.

If Munakata hadn't killed Suoh at that time, they would have died. Suoh would have been annihilated and Tokyo would have become a gigantic bay that would have swallowed millions of people.

Therefore, Munakata's actions were "correct."

If you can understand everything just because it is "right", there is no need to worry.

"Do you think you will be like this too?"

Kusanagi asked in a low voice. This sage seemed to be objectively contemplating even his own destruction.

A sinister premonition dominated Kusanagi's heart.

If the Sword of Munakata fell, who would have the role of stopping it?

"Reisi."

Suddenly, Anna opened her mouth. Munakata looked at the little "Queen" sitting next to him.

"What do you want?"

"You're not like Mikoto."

Munakata's eyes widened slightly as Anna spoke slowly.

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It was a windy night.

That night there were two groups of people breathing. The group on one side had uniforms painted solid blue and formed an unbroken formation. On the other hand, they were a group of beast-like people, each dressed in faded red clothes and emitting a ferocious aura.

"Scepter 4" and "Homura" are two clans that come into conflict and fight each other.

The trigger was something trivial. A Strain, who committed a robbery in Shizume, escaped and was eventually captured by "Scepter 4". "Homura" did not approve of that and demanded the handover of him, but there was no way for "Scepter 4", a security organization, to grant that request.

Until then, it could have just been a skirmish, as usual.

What was different about that night was that the "Kings" of the two clans, Reisi Munakata and Mikoto Suoh, led their respective clans.

When both sides found out about this, their tension increased. A battle between "Kings" will lead to destruction. Although they knew that, neither Munakata nor Suoh took a step back. They walked straight through the windy night.

And, naturally, it happened.

Munakata let out a cheerful voice.

"Stop, "Red King". This matter is under the jurisdiction of "Scepter 4"."

Suoh still had a cigarette in his mouth and smiled with one cheek.

"I don't know."

"Homura's" personnel officer, Izumo Kusanagi, who was attending next to him, spoke to him as if to intercede.

"I'd like to ask the Strain you captured earlier a few questions, that guy did the same thing in our territory, so I'm wondering, could you give him to me?"

He had a gentle demeanor, but the serious eyes shining behind his sunglasses told her that he had no intention of backing down either.

"Scepter 4". Vice Commander Seri Awashima looked at Munakata as if she was asking for an order.

"Captain."

"Of course, I can't just say yes. They're as annoying as ever."

Munakata said in deep annoyance as he pushed up his glasses.

Suoh smoked a cigarette, exhaled and threw the butt at his feet. He muttered casually as he put out the fire with the sole of his shoe.

"Burn them."

"Uoooh!"

The ten or so subordinates of "Homura" let out a battle cry all at once. Raising fists, stamping feet, and shouting in unison are the very voices of warriors on the battlefield.

"No Blood, No Bone, No Ash!"

Every time they scream, the red aura around them becomes stronger. It is because of this momentum that "Homura", who relies on their individual military strength and is far from being controlled, sometimes overwhelms "Scepter 4". With a fierce spirit in their bloodstream, the determination to fight until the end of their lives spreads through them like a fever.

At this moment, Munakata silently took a deep breath and muttered.

"We will advance with our sword in hand, for our cause is pure."

"Everyone, draw your swords!"

"Akiyama, ready!"

"Benzai, ready!"

Vice Commander Awashima and the soldiers standing behind Munakata drew their swords almost simultaneously. Unlike "Homura", whose power source is fierceness and drive, it was his righteousness that controlled "Scepter 4". The power known as supernatural power must be kept under strict control, and it is his responsibility to never allow it to spill over and disrupt the world. That's the power source of "Scepter 4."

"...Munakata, ready."

Munakata drew his saber a moment after his soldier and threw the tip directly at Suoh. Suoh let out a small laugh again at this act, which could be interpreted as a provocation. Keeping his eyes fixed ahead, he called to the young man next to him.

"Totsuka."

"I understand."

Tatara Totsuka responded with a soft voice that was not suitable for this tense situation and took Anna's hand. Anna turned her worried eyes towards Suoh as she evacuated to a nearby building, guided by Totsuka.

Suoh clenched his fist.

At that moment, an overwhelming magma-like aura surged from all over his body.

"Ha!"

It was an aura so dark, hot, and destructive that Awashima couldn't help but cover her face from it. If the two bright red fists hit you directly, your body will be reduced to ashes in an instant. Like the instinct of a creature that hates death, agitation ran through "Scepter 4".

Pressing down on that aura, Munakata took a step forward.

The randomly roaring red aura was stopped by Munakata's blue aura, and scattered aimlessly into the night. Munakata's appearance reminded him of a precision machine that takes everything, processes it in an orderly manner, and returns it to his ideal state.

Suoh slammed his fist into the palm of his hand.

Munakata prepared his saber.

Which one fell to the ground first?

When the people around realized it, the two "Kings" were already colliding head-on. Two colors, red and blue, collided, eclipsed each other and created a whirlpool while canceling each other out. Both clans began their own battles, centering on a transcendent battle that raged like a storm.

Totsuka and Anna watched the war between super humans from a distance.

The red marble that Anna looks at reflects what she wants to see using her sensory abilities. What is now reflected there is the image of the "Kings" engaged in a particularly fierce battle. Even though he was covered in wounds from fighting with fists and saber, Suoh was still smiling.

"Mikoto."

As Anna murmured anxiously, Totsuka next to her said in a carefree voice.

"Hey, it's okay. It's like a "hello" between kings."

Anna shot an accusatory look at Totsuka.

"Tatara, be serious."

"Ahaha, I'm sorry. But I don't think you should worry. King and Munakata-san are probably exchanging words by throwing their powers at each other like that."

"Words?"

"Yes. There's something about those people that only they can understand. They both understand things that not even me, Kusanagi-san, and Anna understand. That's the kind of relationship they have, I'm sure."

Hearing Totsuka's words, Anna looked at the marble once more.

Only a "King" understands another "King". Exchanging words and exchanging swords are the same in the sense that they clash with each other's existence. Anna was too young at the time to understand that. The young "King" egg, which had just hatched, could only observe his "conversation" through the marbles.

Fists and sabers clashed and, after a second, they separated. Landing on the roof of the building, Munakata let out a silent sigh and shook his head.

"You are a truly unpleasant man. I can't tell you how many times you have annoyed me since I became the "Blue King"."

Suoh clenched his fist and laughed.

"Ha. That's my line."

"Our power as kings cannot be used in vain as it is now."

"Who decided that?"

Munakata shrugged in response to Suoh's mocking words.

"It's not about deciding or not making a decision. It's about those who have power being responsible for that power."

"Considering that, you seem to be having a lot of fun too."

"Please don't joke."

Munakata told him to finish and raised his saber again.

"Disorderly use of force. Running without end. Destruction without regeneration. The "Fire King" certainly suits you. It burns and burns for no reason. In fact..."

"My chest is very tight."

Munakata smiled at Suoh who followed his words.

"Yes, that's it."

"Ha. That fits well!"

Screaming, Suoh kicked the ground. The saber and the fist collided again.

"The title "King of Order" suits you well. Trying to get into other people's lives with your long, boring sermons. So..."

"You make me sick."

This time, Munakata accepted Suoh's words. Suoh snorted.

"Oh, that's all."

Neither Munakata nor Suoh could remember when that started happening.

Probably from the first glance. Each denied the true identity of the other. Munakata could not accept Suoh's reckless use of the "King's" power, and Suoh did not like Munakata's attempt to impose a set standard on him. From the moment they met it was decided that the two would fight.

However, in reality, neither Munakata nor Suoh had any intention of killing the other.

No, there wasn't that. To be precise, he understood that "there is no way for this guy to die at this level". Even if the saber is swung without hesitation or the fist is thrown seriously, the opponent will not die. His opponent was a "King", a transcendent being like him. Only then could they fight with all their might without worrying at all.

Neither Munakata nor Suoh would ever admit that. However, they certainly liked the other person. Someone who wouldn't die even if he did his best.

The words they exchanged during their discussions were certainly tinged with joy.

"You always behave well, don't you feel uncomfortable?"

"Of course not. I'm not like you."

"Ha. I guess so!"

And they started again. Hit each other without the opponent dying. As they danced, scattering twin flashes of red and blue, they colored the night sky like two stars together.

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A sound was heard and the melted ice fell into the blood orange juice.

It must have only been a few seconds that Munakata looked Anna in the eyes. However, the past reflects that there is unequivocally something that once existed. Munakata certainly remembered even the few words he exchanged with that man.

Anna repeated it, as if she was tracking him.

"You are different from Mikoto."

A sarcastic smile appeared on Munakata's lips.

"I never thought I would be the one to be reprimanded. I thought his methods were very foolish."

Suoh Mikoto sacrificed herself for his way of life.

He never forgave the "Colorless King" for killing his subject and friend, and took his life. He did it even though he knew it would lead to his own destruction. This is how Suoh Mikoto lived his life. He did what he wanted. This is how that man described his actions.

And now he was trying to do the same.

Keep the "order". That's his way of life. Even if destruction awaits him in his destiny, Munakata continues his path without hesitation.

He just does what he wants.

"Reisi."

Munakata murmured as if to interrupt Anna's words.

"Either way, the "Three Kings Alliance" is no longer valid."

Kusanagi, who was on the other side of the counter, turned around and made a suspicious sound.

"What do you mean?"

"Yesterday, I was fired from the position of boss due to a notice from the government. From now on, I will no longer be able to work with you as clan boss."

Kusanagi looked accusingly at Munakata.

"Even if you're no longer the boss, you're still the "Blue King". The boys in blue are at a loss right now... what are you going to do with your clansmen?"

Munakata didn't have the words to answer that.

"Scepter 4" came out of his hands. It is within the framework of law, formality and the State that both the "King" and the clan are allowed to exist. Being an organization united under that belief, it was natural that it followed the orders of the State.

Munakata, as a private citizen and as "King", must do what he must do from now on. They will too. If you are a member of the Blue Clan, you should do what you think is right.

Munakata stood up. He ended up staying a long time. It was probably because Anna's words that stopped him made him feel unnecessary feelings.

"Reisi!"

Anna also stood up and called Munakata to stop him.

However, Munakata did not turn around. The time for exchanging words is over. Munakata knew that from now on only swords and power would be exchanged.



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In front of the tea table, Kuro was sitting with his arms crossed and a worried expression on his face.

Shiro is sitting in front of him, arms crossed and a serious expression on his face. Neko next to him did the same, crossing her arms with a perplexed expression on her face. Well, in Neko's case, she was probably imitating them. There's no way she could understand what Shiro was talking about.

However, the same goes for Kuro. Schwert control, second methodology, Weismann criticality prediction, Von Dreyf's extraordinary physics, Maelström's inertial guidance... Most of the technical terms and equations written in the large number of documents scattered on the tea table are incomprehensible. Still, he realized what Shiro was trying to do.

"This method will destroy the "Slate"."

Kuro frowned. That's because he knew firsthand that the method Shiro proposed was extremely dangerous.

"Is that really possible?"

"Until now, the destruction of the "Slate" was thought to be impossible. So this is a move that not even the "Green King" would have expected, and it is a comeback."

Shiro's words can be trusted. After all, he was the one who discovered the "Dresden Slate". If Shiro could be considered a leader in research, then they could do it.

But...

"But isn't it dangerous to do something like that?"

When Kuro said something that he didn't even need to ask, Shiro laughed as if he was worried.

"I guess the only thing I can do is get them to believe in me as a researcher."

Kuro stared at his face.

He thought that didn't answer the question. Shiro never said it wasn't dangerous. If we want to understand the underlying meaning of what he is saying, he is probably saying: "It is dangerous, but we have no choice but to do it."

Kuro doubted for a moment if he should accept that as his clan member and friend.

"Yes! Yes! Wagahai believes in Shiro!"

Neko raised her hand as if she were going to jump. Shiro gently stroked her head.

"Thank you, Neko."

"Ahem!"

Kuro tried to compete with Neko who proudly puffed out her chest.

"I believe in you too!"

The two blinked and looked at Kuro.

After feeling uncomfortable and clearing his throat, Kuro straightened his back and continued.

"I believe you. You will do what you have to do and go home with us."

That last word was all Kuro really wanted to say.

Hearing that, Shiro's eyes widened slightly. Then he smiled softly.

"...Yes. It's okay. It's a plan that includes making sure I return home alive."

Kuro's expression softened. It seems that Kuro's feelings have been properly conveyed to Shiro. If he was thinking about it that much, he probably wouldn't do anything unreasonable, so Kuro nodded his head.

"Ah, that's right. There was something I wanted to give you two."

He suddenly remembered something and took something out of his jacket pocket. He placed it on the table.

They were three coins that shone silver.

"What is this?"

Neko grabbed one of them and stared at it.

"You know, we didn't have a clan name or a clan mark. I felt a little jealous of other clans."

"I see, this is the mark of our clan."

"Wow... it's so bright!"

Neko's eyes shone, holding it up to the light as if it were the most precious treasure of all. Kuro also took the coin and held it tightly. It would be hard to say that it was proof of the bond between the three of them, but considering that Shiro put a lot of thought into doing it, that felt much deeper than it seemed.

"I would like to give the clan a name, but Kuro, could you give it one?"

Kuro's eyes widened at Shiro's offer.

"Oh, me?"

"Yes, I would like something nice."

Although confused, Kuro thought carefully. He has almost never given a name to anything, but if it is his duty, he will do his best.

"It's okay. That's right... When it comes to what we deserve..."

He looked around the room. Scattered documents and memories that Kuro and Neko gathered from all over the country. As he watched them, Kuro directed his attention to the kitchen.

The first thing that caught his attention was the rice cooker.

"...White rice."

"Eh?"

Kuro muttered to himself and Shiro tilted his head. By then the name had already been decided. Kuro turned to Shiro, picked up the coin with a determined expression, and placed it on the table with a click.

"Our clan name is "Hakumaito"!" (White Rice Party)

After a moment, both Shiro and Neko trembled at the same time.

"Eh, yes!"

However, Kuro was completely satisfied with his naming sense.

"Hmm. White rice is the center of food and the foundation of a healthy body. Bright white rice has been a symbol that has existed in the center of our hearts since ancient times. It is truly unchangeable. And above all, Shiro, this is your favorite food, right?"

"Uh, well..."

Shiro seemed confused for some reason, but Neko seemed to like it. She exclaimed happily as tossed the coin.

"Hakumaito~!"

Nodding, Kuro took out a recorder filled with some words. He wanted to know what his former teacher would think of that name.

When he pressed the button, a soft and familiar voice rang.

"Happiness is wrapped in white rice."

Kuro looked at Shiro with a smug expression on his face.

Eh, Shiro laughed. He could see in his smile as if he had given up on something, but he still nodded.

"In fact, it may be perfect for us sitting around the chabudai. Very well, we, "Hakumaito", will work together and do our best!"

"Yes, I will do my best!"

Shiro looked at Neko with kind eyes as she raised her hands innocently. He put his hand on her head and said softly.

"Hisui Nagare called Neko "Ameno Miyabi"."

At that name, Kuro gasped.

Neko also widened her eyes and stared at Shiro.

She never talked about what Neko and Nagare talked about that day. Kuro and Shiro didn't dare to ask about it either. The fact that Hisui Nagare offered something to Neko and Neko rejected it was enough. Neko is her friend, a member of the Silver Clan. He didn't need to know anything more than that.

But still...

Shiro may have had some sort of responsibility. They held Neko. Therefore, it is possible that Neko has lost something.

"He must have researched and learned about Neko before she became Neko. If you ask him about it..."

At that moment, Neko tightly squeezed the hand that was placed on her own head.

"Shiro."

She called out loud and her shoulders moved. Neko's smile was as bright as the sun, in contrast to the anxious expression on her face.

"Wagahai is a cat! Shiro's cat!"

That's what she screamed.

At those words, Shiro blinked as if he had just woken up. Then he laughed lightly.

"I see. That's right, I'm sorry."

Kuro nodded as well and placed his hand on theirs.

"Neko and I are here as your friends. That's all that matters. This time, we will follow you to the end. I will not be an obstacle in your way."

"Wagahai too!"

At that moment, neither of them could follow Shiro.

A fight between "Kings". He was sure it will happen again this time. Even so, they will continue to follow Shiro. They already had a shared destiny. The three coins must never be separated again.

Shiro narrowed his eyes and almost nodded.

"Yes. Let's all go. To do that, we first need to find the location of "Jungle's" headquarters."

At that moment, something like an invisible shock ran through him.

Kuro and Neko could feel it too. However, it was Shiro who reacted the most sensitively. He instinctively held his head and fell on the table.

"Grr...!"

"Shiro?!"

"W-what happened?!"

During that time, the shocks were repeated again and again. Kuro was beginning to understand what were the waves that made the air tremble.

This is a heartbeat.

Heart beats. Blood pulse. Something is trying to send "power" while maintaining a certain rhythm.

To the "King", to the supernatural... No, probably, the objective is...

"...It's the "Slate"... it's Hisui Nagare!"

Holding his head, Shiro turned to the window and groaned softly.

"Finally, are you planning to start...?"

Kuro and Neko also looked out the window, as did Shiro, and saw him.

A gigantic column of light rose above the distant horizon.

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The pulsating waves became stronger and stronger.

The members of the "Jungle" clan watched with bated breath. Sukuna Gojou, Mishakuji Yukari, Kotosaka, Saruhiko Fushimi, and Tenkei Iwafune... all the J-Ranks were watching the scene.

The "Slate" is about to wake up.

The shackles that had kept it contained for more than half a century had been removed, and the "Slate" was screaming with joy.

Sound, light and power continued to pulse in harmony.

"So the time has finally come."

Iwafune's words seemed as if he had given up on something.

On the contrary, Hisui Nagare was trembling. It was as if his entire body was bathed in the heartbeat of the "Slate", absorbing it to his heart's content. He closed his eyes and felt the rhythm of his soul.

"Yes. It is here. The "Slate" will be released. We will be free. Finally..."

At that moment, a torrent of light erupted.

Explosive power surges from within the "Slate" and explodes as magma. Just as a seed grows into a bud, a bud into a shoot, and a shoot into a giant tree, the power it originally possessed is released and absorbed by the heavens.

The column of light rises from underground to the sky, shining brightly. It was a symbol of liberation and chaos. Yes, that's exactly what Hisui Nagare wanted.

"It's a revolution!"

Hisui Nagare exclaimed with excitement.

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Reisi Munakata watched silently.

The light emitted from the earth passes through the clouds, reaches the sky and rises even higher. It was a symbol of liberation. It was proof that the country's usual path of chaos had been contained and that the reality Munakata had been trying to avoid had finally arrived.

"Has it started yet? It saved me the trouble of searching, though."

Munakata turned on his heel and faced the column of light.

Many enemies will be waiting for him ahead. Now that he has revealed his whereabouts, Hisui Nagare must be fully prepared to defend himself. What Munakata had to defeat was "Jungle" himself.

On the other hand, Munakata is now alone. As a lone "King" without a clan, he must face him.

It was a battle that could not be won. "Jungle" is not only made up of ordinary clan members. The clan has two "Kings" and powerful Rankers that are comparable to them. It would have been suicidal for Munakata to fight alone after suffering defeat once.

But...

"I don't know how far I'll go, but I'll try to run to the limit."

Muttering that, Munakata stepped forward.

"That doesn't seem right, Munakata."

He heard a voice he shouldn't have heard.

He opened his eyes and looked back, but there was no one there. Fiery red hair and a calm beast look, nothing. Things that weren't supposed to be there were nowhere to be found.

He let out a self-deprecating smile.

"Absolutely."

If that person had existed, or they had stood together in front of that pillar... Those meaningless thoughts came to his mind. Munakata thought that his current self was not "typical" after all, so he began to leisurely walk on his account.