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RETURN OF KINGS
SUZUKI SUZU / GoRA

TRANSLATION: NARU-KUN / K – PROJECT WORLD

EPILOGUE: THREE PEOPLE

Looking back, the incident that turned all humans into supernatural beings was nothing more than a fleeting dream. Although the disaster affected not only Japan but also other countries, human damage was kept to a minimum thanks to the measures taken by "Tokijikuin". Because it was all over in just a few hours, many people didn't notice anything until it was all over.

The world is still in uproar. The media is strongly demanding an investigation into truth and accountability. Now that the existence of supernatural powers has become public knowledge, it is only a matter of time before the fact that the government has covered it up for more than 70 years after the war comes to light.

However, we will have to wait longer for that to happen.

For supernatural beings, normal life was returning. Every day was like any other: wake up, eat, shower, go to work.

However, the frequency of "work" has increased slightly.

Munakata was waiting for Fushimi when he returned to his base.

He probably didn't go to the front door to greet him. By chance they met. Still, he seemed to understand Fushimi's mission, he turned on his heel and spoke.

"Please, inform me."

Fushimi began to follow him, his lips curled.

"...After receiving a report that a Strain and "Homura" were fighting in Shizume, three members of the Special Forces rushed to the scene. They safely secured the two Strain who had already begun to escape and recently returned to base."

"Hm."

Munakata took a deep breath and shook his head.

"Although 10 days have passed since the destruction of the "Slate", it seems that people's supernatural powers have not completely disappeared. Even when the power of Hisui Nagare, who was connected to the "Slate", and Isana Yashiro, who caused the burst of royal power, quickly disappeared..."

"It is true that it is gradually weakening."

"Yes. Actually, the "Sword of Damocles" has disappeared and the "King" can no longer deploy the Sanctum. However, in that incident, people around the world have temporarily

acquired supernatural abilities. Most of them have lost their power, but I'm sure there are still plenty of them. Especially here in Tokyo, where the "Slate" was located."

Fushimi grumbled in a displeased tone.

"Will our work continue for the moment?"

"It still seems so."

Fushimi stared at Munakata's back as he responded.

Not yet. This means that there will come a time when the meaning of Scepter 4's existence will be questioned.

Munakata is losing his power as "King". For him, the "Sword of Damocles" was falling apart, so that could be considered a blessing in disguise.

However, at the same time, it was a problem that would affect the survival of the clan known as "Scepter 4". Does it still make any sense to serve the "King" who has lost his power? When all supernatural beings, including themselves, lose their supernatural abilities due to the disappearance of the "Slate", is there really any point in keeping "Scepter 4"?

Fushimi is not the only one who has that doubt. He's sure many members of the clan and Special Forces think the same, even if they don't say it out loud.

However, Munakata did not respond to his subordinate's questions.

Does he still not have an answer or does he believe that every person has no choice but to find an answer to that question?

When he thought about that, his PDA sounded.

"Excuse me."

Fushimi reflexively took the PDA and pressed the call button.

It was a failure. What came out of the telephone port was a vulgar and loud voice.

"You bastard, stupid monkey! Why are you stealing from us? That Strain was "Homura's" prey..."

Fushimi hung up the call without saying a word.

Munakata stood still. His face finally turned towards him. Seeing the slight smile on his lips, Fushimi looked away and said again.

"My apologies."

Munakata said jokingly.

"Didn't you say that the Stain had been captured without "incident"?"

"Yes, it's just the extras throwing a tantrum."

Fushimi responded without hesitation, and Munakata simply laughed and looked forward.

Awashima was approaching from the other side of the hallway. When she stopped in front of Munakata and saluted, she said in a crisp tone...

"Captain. The Prime Minister has requested a meeting. He would like to discuss measures to counter the Strains abroad. Do you accept the request?"

"Okay. Let's go right away."

Nodding, Munakata quickened his pace with Awashima in tow.

Fushimi stopped and stared at his back. From now on, it's not his territory. He couldn't do politics or negotiate because he was tired.

Fushimi thought as he watched Munakata walk away into the distance.

Maybe Munakata has all the answers. What will happen to the world in which supernatural powers have been revealed? How will the clan that has lost its supernatural powers change from now on? Anticipate and then react. Because that's Reisi Munakata.

And Fushimi too.

The PDA called again. This time, he made sure to check the person before answering. Akiyama's calm voice sounded.

"Fushimi-san, I have another report. There was a robbery at the Takeido Ekimae bank. I think it was due to a Strain."

Fushimi snorted and responded.

"Here Fushimi, I understand. I'll be on my way immediately. Please prepare a transport vehicle."

Then, he too began to walk quickly.

Fushimi is also nothing more than Fushimi Saruhiko. Being a supernatural being is just one of the factors of him. Even if he loses his supernatural powers or the world changes, Fushimi will be Fushimi.

Therefore, what he has to do remains the same.

He will just do his job.

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Kusanagi finished polishing the glass.

He placed a glass in front of him and two glasses on the other side of the counter, in front of the stool. After placing them carefully, Kusanagi turned on the lamp.

It was left by someone who frequented that store a long time ago. He was a troublesome guy who engaged in various hobbies, but he left the things he collected for those purposes in the store. The reason Kusanagi knows how to use a lamp is because that person forced him to learn.

The glasses gave off a mysterious glow due to the flickering flames on the counter.

Looking at that with half-closed eyes, Kusanagi opened the bottle and poured the amber liquid into the glass.

A voice echoed in the silent bar.

"Wow, it smells good."

Totsuka was sitting on a stool, looking innocently at the glass with his usual kind expression on his face.

Next to him, Suoh lifted his glass and brought it to his mouth.

"...Not bad."

Totsuka held the glass with both hands, but didn't drink it, just enjoyed the aroma. He asked, looking at Kusanagi with a big smile.

"But is it okay, Kusanagi-san? This is an important bottle, right?"

"...Well, once in a while, why not?"

Yes. Sometimes something like that would be nice.

Suoh snorted. He put a cigarette in his mouth and tried to light it, but the lighter didn't light. Kusanagi shrugged, lit the Zippo, and handed it to him. Suoh looked at Kusanagi and then held the tip of his cigarette to the light of the Zippo.

The tip of the cigarette burned red hot and the exhaled white smoke floated in the light of the lamp.

Totsuka rested his chin on the counter and looked at him amused.

Kusanagi also slowly raised his glass, squinting behind his sunglasses. At this moment, the door of the bar opened with the loud sound of the doorbell.

"Damn...! They just stole my prey!"

"Yata-san! There will be another chance! Next time, let's make the guys in blue scream!"

Yata, Kamamoto and the rest of "Homura" entered the bar while chatting loudly among themselves.

Kusanagi blinked as if he had just woken up and looked at them. As they talked among themselves, they began to take positions at the desired locations.

There was no one sitting on the stool across the counter from Kusanagi.

Still holding the glass, Kusanagi stared at the empty stool.

"Izumo."

Kusanagi looked towards where that voice came from.

Anna was there. She was sitting on a stool, silently looking at the glass that was still there.

Her crimson eyes turned towards Kusanagi.

Kusanagi placed his cigarette in the ashtray and smiled silently.

"...Welcome."

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From the rooftop of the building, Mishakuji Yukari looked into a large hole.

The hole, which was also called Yomito Crossing or Yomito Gate, was surrounded by a yellow cordon and sparsely patrolled by police. They seemed to be quite distracted, some were holding back their yawns, others were simply staring blankly, and no one noticed the presence of the suspicious person standing on the rooftop, Mishakuji.

That marked the end of everything.

That place has little meaning to them anymore. "Jungle" was disbanded and most of the clan members gave up their power or hid in the world as people with clanless powers. The Green Clan no longer exists anywhere in the world. What's there is just a hole, a tombstone for those who once tried to bring down the world.

That's why Mishakuji holds a bouquet of flowers in his hands.

"...Iwa-san. Narare-chan. Did you have fun?"

Mishakuji muttered that and threw away the bouquet.

As the petals were scattered, the bouquet fell to the bottom of the tombstone as if it were sucked.

"Nagare... Iwa-san..."

Kotosaka on his shoulder shouted in a muffled voice. Birds cannot shed tears. Instead, he lowered his voice, perhaps as a tribute to his closest friends.

As if he was wiping away his tears, Mishakuji stroked his feathers with his fingertips.

Then he slowly turned on his heel. He called out to him as he passed the boy who was standing stunned.

"Come on?"

Sukuna didn't answer anything. He bit his lip, frowned and looked as if he was desperately suppressing something.

Mishakuji pretended not to see it.

Suddenly, he remembered something from the past. Mishakuji also lost something important in his childhood. His family, his first teacher. Everything was taken away by irresistible violence.

At least, that's not the case with the deaths of Nagare and Iwafune. They lived, fought and died for their desires. Although there may be sadness and mourning, there should be no regrets.

(I had fun. Iwa-sa, Nagare-chan.)

In place of the dead who did not give an answer, Mishakuji walked forward, giving his own answer.

Sukuna also wiped his eyes roughly with his sleeve and began to follow Mishakuji. He looked back only from time to time, looking at the hole with a trace of regret in his eyes, but then he turned forward and began to walk with difficulty.

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"Wait, wait, Wagahai-chan, your skirt is riding up! It's riding up!"

"Nya?"

Kukuri quickly grabbed Neko's shoulders as she jumped as if she were dancing. She quickly pulled up her skirt, which had gotten caught in her bag and rolled up. As Neko blinked, Kukuri spoke in a tone similar to that of a mother teaching a small child.

"You know, Wagahai-chan. Your uniform skirt tends to ride up easily, so you shouldn't move too vigorously, okay?"

"Mmm... I'm very tight..."

Neko pouted in dissatisfaction, but obediently allowed Kukuri to do whatever she wanted. She was the one who said that she wanted to join the school, and if that was the case, she had to listen to her teacher, Kukuri, because Kuro had told her so.

"Yes, this is good!"

After properly adjusting her clothes, Kukuri looked at Neko seriously.

"Wow, I never expected Wagahai-chan to move here. And at a time like this!"

"Hehehe~. Nice to see you! Kukuri!"

"Likewise~. Ah, that's right. The teacher who transferred with you. I heard that he is a relative of Wagahai-chan?"

Neko laughed mischievously.

"Yes. That's what we decided to do!"

"Did they decide?"

Kukuri tilted her head in confusion at the strange way she said it. It was largely due to Neko's power that she was able to do that. However, she had no intention of telling Kukuri that, at least not until her life had completely calmed down.

"Well, anyway, he is a very nice teacher. It seems like everyone in my class already calls him by the nickname "German Sensei"."

After saying that, Kukuri suddenly looked up at the sky as if she remembered something.

"But... I feel like I've met him somewhere before."

Neko laughed again at that reaction, but she didn't say anything.

A delicious smell tickled Neko's nose as she ran towards the bedroom.

"I'm home! I'm hungry!"

A calm response came from the back of the kitchen at Neko's voice full of desire.

"It's done. Sit down."

"Hurrah!"

Raising her arms and expressing her joy, Neko jumped into the dining room.

In the chabudai there is white rice, miso soup, pickled vegetables and grilled fish. Those are some of her favorite dishes that she sees all the time.

Neko pinched the sleeves of her uniform and showed off a little at the person sitting there.

"How I look? What do you think of my uniform?"

She chuckled, Kuro walked out of the kitchen and opened his mouth in shock.

"You heard that in the morning too."

"I want to hear it over and over again! What do you think?"

He looked at Neko calmly and nodded slowly.

"Looks good."

Neko laughed as if tickled. No matter how many times she heard it, she was still happy. Even more than his praise for her uniform, the fact that he was there made her happier than anything else.

Isana Yashiro.

Or Adolf K. Weismann.

That wasn't the Shiro that Neko knew. He is a young man of exotic appearance, with silver hair and a white face. It is natural that there are no traces of the Shiro from before, and this is the "real" Shiro.

She doesn't really understand the detailed reasoning. However, either one was fine for Neko.

Even if his appearance has changed. Shiro is, after all, Neko's Shiro.

Kuro took off his apron and sat across from Shiro. Neko also sat between the two of them, waiting for a signal.

"Well..."

Kuro nodded and the three joined their hands and spoke in unison.

"Itadakimasu."

Neko laughed out loud at the steaming white rice, miso soup, and grilled fish.

It is not the pleasure of eating. Of course, that's one thing, but the fact that there were two people on each side of the chabudai she was placed on filled her with immense joy.

If she reaches out, she can touch them. If she smiles at them, they will smile back. There are two people she loves within that short distance.

That alone made her happy. Everything she needed was prepared on that small table. Happiness with a touch of warmth. It was what Neko had been looking for.

Surrounded by her family, Neko, Ameno Miyabi is happy.