

限定 王權 戰記

著／鈴木鈴

LIMITED KINGSHIP - WAR STORIES -

TRANSLATION: NARU-KUN
RAWS: RIDIA

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CHAPTER 1: BUTTERFLY AND MANTIS

"Uh... do I have to clean this up myself?"

With the mop and bucket on the floor, Tadashi Maruha complained.

Originally, it should have been a good room in this detention center. Whether in the reception room or the director's room, the custom-made furniture was so good that even Maruha could tell, and he might have imagined that it would be nice to live surrounded by such furniture.

If the burned blood didn't stick, he was sure he would.

At that moment, the interior of the room seemed miserable. Charred blood and internal organs were strewn across the table, couch, and cabinet, and every part of the human body, such as the hands, feet, and head, was rolling around randomly. It could be like this if you put multiple people in a red-hot mixer.

"I wonder if I should pick this up with tweezers... but if I don't do it early, Soma-san will get mad."

As he muttered and murmured, Maruha donned a mask, put on gloves, and placed a bucket on a charred table. At the moment, he started from a large place and raised the head that was nearby.

His face was familiar. One of his open eyes was crushed by a burn. "Wow.", he leaned back a bit, put his head on the table for the moment and Maruha clasped his hands.

"Well, what was your name? You sure were an acquaintance of Aniki, right? Well, anyway... Nanmandub, Nanmandub..."

Maybe it was Nembutsu, he didn't remember well. After muttering, Maruha threw the head of "one eye" into the bucket.

He started cleaning.

He put the scattered body parts in a bucket, put the debris from the shattered table in a garbage bag, and put the scattered debris in a bucket after a little hesitation. He could just throw away the garbage bag, but he couldn't bear to throw out the body.

"Sorry, I'll take care of you later."

When he finished cleaning the rough door, the living room door opened. What he see from there was a familiar face.

"Maru-san, are you finished? Let's eat meat, meat!"

With an innocent smile on his young face, Kyoji said that. Maruha looked up at the ceiling with furrowed brows.

"Kyoji, think about the moment and answer me. Do you think I can eat meat after cleaning the corpse?"

"Why? Isn't it good to eat meat at any time?"

"You might like it! I was cleaning burned human flesh just now! Maybe this is your kind of job after all!"

"Hehe, sorry."

The look that he laughed with his tongue out was that of a mischievous villain. Looking at him, he sighed instead of getting angry.

"Well, whatever, help me."

When the mop stuck out, Kyoji was surprised.

"Eh, but isn't it bad to keep Hiiragi-san waiting?"

"Ah? Why did Aniki's name come up?"

"No, because Hiiragi-san told me to go eat meat."

"Stupid, say that first!"

Maruha quickly looked back at the room. He was almost finished, but he had yet to finish. If he left it as he was, he would buy Soma's wrath, but an invitation from Hiiragi couldn't be refused.

"Kyoji, drop this! I'll bury it! Say nice things to Aniki!"

Pushing a garbage bag at Kyoji, he picked up the bucket. The bucket containing the human bodies of various people was quite heavy, and Maruha ran off, feeling the weight of the heavy corpse in both arms.

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Executive class "Purgatory" member Hiiragi Soma liked meat

He liked to eat, but he preferred to bake. "Grilling" here was not what was often done in "Purgatory", but ordinary roast beef. Go to a proper steakhouse, order a large quantity of meat that you couldn't eat, and start grilling from one end. He liked the act of grilling and eating meat to the extent that he was careful and beat them when others tried to do so. As a man who had lived a life of violence and murder, it could be said that it was a strange habit.

That's why Hiiragi took Maruha and Kyoji to visit a local yakiniku restaurant. Most of the restaurants had already withdrawn from the area around the hideout. The yakiniku restaurant was one that remained.

Therefore, with the exception, it was like a hangout for "Purgatory". Mysteriously, order was maintained because there was a common understanding that "when this store disappears, there will be no place to drink alcohol". If someone tried to take away their oasis of life, mainly their opponents, "Purgatory" would kick them out quickly, most of the time.

"Hey. Top ribs, top loin, and 3 mugs of ale, old man."

An old man with the flavor of half a century had brought a lot of meat and sake. Hiiragi quietly began to arrange the top ribs and top loin placed on the table in the shichirin. Maruha found that it was always the same routine, but he was in a bit of a good mood.

"Sorry! I'll take it!"

Kyoji raised his mug of beer and began to drink with a squeak. Maruha slightly raised his mug in response to the "toast", and Hiiragi was still quietly roasting the meat. It was a show that would not be possible with a normal yakuza organization, but "Purgatory" is not a normal yakuza organization.

Kyoji, who had half the mug empty, wiped his mouth and then leaned forward and asked.

"By the way, Maru-san! What kind of kanji is King?"

Maruha took just a sip of beer and looked at Kyoji curiously, "Huh?"

"Maru-san, you were cleaning up, after the King fought, weren't you? Didn't you see him fight?"

Maruha was still unfamiliar with the fact that Kagutsu's name was not "Oyaji" or "Kumicho" but "King". Far from being a normal yakuza organization, "Purgatory" was not a yakuza organization in the first place. It was said to be a group of paranormal people with different abilities, led by what was called a "King".

Maruha responded with another mouthful of beer.

"No... I fought, I guess I went crazy. Don't look. I could die."

"Hey! It's a waste! It was close though!"

Kyoji felt sorry like a child who missed the hero show. Maruha wondered why such a boy had lived so long with his head on, and he thought on the other hand that he could have lived so long because he was such a boy. In fact, Kyoji must have been less than 20 years old.

Hiiragi threw down the pliers. Seeing the dripping sauce fall into the flames, he nodded, "Okay."

"Eat it."

"Ok, thanks!"

Kyoji swept about half of the meat with tweezers and brought half to his mouth. With a big smile on his face, he raised a voice between "Delicious!" and "Uhh!" Maruha also sighed as he minced the meat.

"Even so, I really don't understand Kagutsu-san."

"Eh? Why?"

"When I walked into that room, he looked in a good mood. I took some other guys along and I thought it was unusual, but he came out in less than a minute, and that's it. And when he came out he wasn't mad, he was still in a good mood. It was as if he had just taken a walk and came back."

"Mmm..."

"I wonder if I can be like this by killing those below. I don't know at all."

"Maru..."

When Hiiragi yelled, Maruha reacted sharply. It was a moment when he regretted saying that and criticizing, and Hiiragi immediately showed the Shichirin with his chin.

"Take it."

"Oh, yeah."

He took the tenderloin that was dripping with the sauce and popped it into his mouth. It was hot and delicious.

Kyoji, who drank the beer, raised the mug grandly, yelling "Oh, I get it!"

"They must have been spies of the blues! And the King suddenly noticed!"

"No."

Hiiragi denied it like a sled, and Maruha and Kyoji looked at his face at the same time. While he was roasting additional meat, Hiiragi said without looking at them,

"That person is that kind of man. It's the same as an accident."

"Accident?"

"You can't help it if you run into it. If you're lucky, you'll live, and if you're bad, you'll die. That's it."

It was hard to tell that Maruha and Kyoji, who didn't have any, fully understood the meaning of the word. But even so, the reactions of the two were contrasting.

"Uh...", Maruha was scared,

Kyoji admired him, "Wow..."

The two looked at each other. Maruha was stunned.

"Kyoji, you... will you die soon?"

"What's wrong, Maru-san?! What are you saying?"

"....."

Maruha narrowed his eyes. He feels on his skin that the air was tightening rapidly. It would be the same for Kyoji. He glanced at Maruha too, rolled up the arm of his black suit that didn't fit the body, and slammed it against the table.

"I'm not afraid! If the guys in blue come, I'll kill them."

Kyoji's eyes shone with brilliant fighting spirit. In response, the burn scars on his forearm began to glow red. The brilliance of extraordinary ability. Maruha opened his eyes to see if he was sane. If he made a fuss in this place, he may suffer a life-threatening injury from another member in black.

At that moment, Kyoji's body flew to the side.

Maruha was shocked and looked at Hiiragi next to Kyoji.

He had his arms straight at his sides. With the other hand, he was silently roasting yakiniku. Without even looking at Kyoji, he hit him with one arm.

"Guh..."

Kyoji's eyes, holding his cheeks and lifting up, blazed with anger. He wasn't mature enough to hold back here. Maruha was ready again for the worst development that suddenly fell.

However, he ended up melancholy.

Hiiragi looked at Kyoji. There was no killer instinct in his eyes, he was just in a bad mood.

"I'm the one who roasts the meat."

"....."

Kyoji's expression changed from anger to embarrassment.

Both Maruha and Kyoji were familiar with the fact that Hiiragi's words were not timely. Hiiragi was that kind of person.

He didn't know what to do, but there was no front or back. Hiiragi was angry because he tried to bake meat for himself, not because he was fed up with tantrums, or because he tried to wreak havoc in the place of the law.

It was absurd, but that's why it was "Purgatory". And Kyoji was also a person who could understand absurd language. He held her cheeks and bowed his head obediently.

"Sorry."

Hiiragi didn't reply, he was just roasting the meat.

Kyoji rebuilt his chair and sat there. He said to Maruha with the eyes of an angry child and bowed to him.

"Maru-san, I'm sorry. I said something wrong."

"No, not really."

Yakuzas are creatures like mantises. If they get sick, they should squeeze the other person immediately. It is like a reflection, not an action that is the result of thinking.

However, Maruha was no longer a yakuza. He was a member of the "Purgatory" clan.

Therefore, he sighed and sighed.

"I'm not scared. It's just... I don't think it's appropriate."

That said, he drank the beer to the last drop.

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The group that Maruha Tadashi belonged to was a group of leftovers so to speak.

Some might say they were a collection of yakuza and other gangsters. It was, but as with any group, there were differences in shit. Some leftovers can be laughed at, while others can cause nausea just by putting them on the rim of the eyes.

The Maruha group was the last group. Even within the industry, Shinogi with a frown was calm. Thanks to that, the wings were good, but the respect was next to nothing. The color of disgust was stronger than the astonishment in his eyes, and that color stimulated his outer ways.

They did anything to make money. It seemed like Maruha didn't even have the slightest bit of ethics.

The Shinogi are primarily drugs and human trafficking.

The kidnapped woman was drugged and sold to customs. They disarmed the kidnapped youths and sold their organs. In addition, they would take a photo of the situation and sell it to a rich man who had a hobby of hunting. In some cases, they used a combined

technique to kidnap a pretty woman and sell her as she was to a rich man with a strange hobby (because the reaction was worse if she kept it on drugs). The woman would suffer almost every pain imaginable and die miserably.

Sachiko Kashiwazaki was one of those women.

The man who kidnapped her was Maruha's older brother at the time. One hot summer day, Maruha was summoned to a warehouse owned by the group. At that moment, he had a bad feeling. That warehouse was only used when making Shinogi in that direction.

There was a man and a woman in a warehouse room, where the concrete was exposed.

The man had scissors that were dripping with blood.

The woman clutched her bloody ankle and groaned without voice.

It was common group practice to cut off the Achilles heel to prevent the victim from escaping. Alternatively, the customer could have made such a request. In any case, man cut through the human body as easily as he cut weeds.

As he washed his hands in the built-in sink, the man turned to Maruha.

"It is time to ship."

"Prepare" meant to adapt the "goods" according to the customer's request, and "ship" meant to deliver the "goods" to the customer.

"Clean her body, you can't leave her bloody. I don't know what the rich think."

With a laugh, the man wiped his hands on a towel and touched Maruha's shoulders to leave the room.

Maruha turned his eyes inside and saw the box on the table. "Preparation", he probably he should use the content. He opened the lid and looked inside.

It contained a pure white wedding dress.

Maruha took a deep breath and exhaled.

Was the concept a bloody girlfriend? He couldn't understand anything.

He didn't even want to understand. He didn't want to understand what happened to the woman who would bring that to the client, but Maruha understood. It was because his older brother had shown him a video like that with half the fun.

Maruha looked at the woman reflectively, thinking that he shouldn't be looking at her.

They looked into each other's eyes.

Sachiko, of course, at that time, Maruha didn't know her name. The "item" was supposed to be called by number, but she was staring at Maruha, bleeding only with the pain of not begging for life and her silent resignation.

Perhaps at that moment, he reached the limit.

Until then, he had been doing the same. Each time, something sank into Maruha's chest, like drops of water in his cup. Then, Sachiko's gaze at that moment became the last drop, and the water finally overflowed from the cup.

By the time he realized it, Maruha was visiting Hiiragi. Hiiragi and Maruha were originally seniors and juniors from the same corps of fools. Even after the corps of fools disbanded and they belonged to different groups, the relationship continued to go out for drinks from time to time. He was a man who embodied the violence of that time, but Maruha did not hate him. He just wanted to hit him.

It was exciting to see that kind of honesty that was hitting the other person at the time.

He was not surprised when he heard that Hiiragi's group was attacked by "Purgatory" and that he belonged to "Purgatory". Within the industry, "Purgatory" meant a group of monsters, and it seemed natural for Hiiragi to be in that group.

Using holly as a messenger, Maruha encountered Kagutsu and gained a different ability in exchange for a part of his body.

Maruha took him to the warehouse and burned the man who was his older brother. After freeing the captive women, he went to the group's office and killed all the members, including the group's leader. He stole the group's entire vault and gave it to Soma, who later cleared up and became a member of the "Purgatory" clan.

He did not regret betraying the group and killing his friends. He just went to hell and sent them to hell. He was sure that he would go to hell, but at least he was no longer interacting with that garbage. That just made him feel refreshed, and the night he killed them all, he was fast asleep for the first time in a long time.

However, Maruha's chest started to feel uncomfortable again.

The meaning of the existence of "Purgatory" was simple. Destroy and kill, that was all. Like Kagutsu, most of the clansmen did.

Fight, raze, kill and die against the mafia, the Yakuza and, above all, the deadly enemy, "Scepter 4".

At the same time, they were causing enormous damage to the surroundings.

Only in that he was stuck. It didn't matter if he fought, rampaged, killed, or died. But it felt different to involve other people. So it was the same as that group. It was difficult to answer whether human trafficking or mass murder was better. Nothing happened, Maruha simply moved from one background to another.

Maybe Maruha was halfway there. He was so crazy that he couldn't live properly, but he was too plain in a swarm of monsters. Neither Hiiragi nor Kyoji could live anywhere else except in "Purgatory". This is where those guys were.

Where should he go if he didn't even have a place there?

Sachiko Kashiwazaki called out to him when he was about to overflow with such a sense of incongruity.

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In a crowded cafeteria, he quickly found out where Sachiko was. She had her crutches on the side of her seat. Maruha somehow remembered the salvation that it was not a wheelchair.

"Ah."

Sachiko also soon noticed Maruha. He wore a black suit, which was labeled a "funeral home staff" in the industry, he emitted a seemingly insidious aura. He had an unbearable feeling.

"Oh."

Maruha's expression that raised his hand slightly was not clear. He wasn't sure why this girl called him. Wasn't it the symbol of a nightmare for this girl?

But in contrast, Sachiko smiled happily. She tried to stand up touching the table with her hand, she almost lost her balance and fell. Maruha rushed to reach out and held her body.

"I'm sorry. I'm still rehabbing, but I haven't been able to do it yet."

"No, do not worry."

After seating Sachiko, Maruha sat opposite her.

He was somehow uncomfortable because Sachiko was looking directly at him. Glowing eyes were the kind of thing that wasn't usually directed at him. He was not used to that. Maruha had to move his hips several times to endure the uncomfortable sensation.

"So what did you call me for?"

Sachiko slightly colored her cheeks when he asked her.

"Oh, no, that... I wanted to thank you again."

Maruha wondered what she was saying.

"Maruha-san... you helped me, but I couldn't thank you at the time. Thank you very much."

"I didn't help you in particular. It was a dead end."

It was a fact. He just wanted to get out of there, he just wanted to kill them all, and it was just incidental that he helped Sachiko.

But Sachiko didn't believe those words. She laughed and her eyes looked softly at Maruha.

"You are modest, Maruha-san."

Then Sachiko started talking about the ramblings. From her recent situation, her favorite food, hobbies, what kind of place did she live now, when she was rehabbing and walking around the neighborhood, she found a nice park and a bakery, so she always had lunch there.

Maruha was beginning to understand what the situation was like, as he established a suitable relationship.

Sachiko wanted to make up for it in some way.

She maybe she thought that Maruha was the hero who rescued her from the situation. It was a ridiculous misunderstanding. Maruha sent many women in the same situation as Sachiko to hell. Sachiko was saved because Maruha's boundaries coincided when it was her turn. No more than that.

Of course, he couldn't say that.

"What do you do on your day off, Maruha-san?"

Sachiko wondered if she had talked a lot about herself. She was impatient and nervous. She wondered if Maruha would be bored. Maruha replied with a slight laugh, as if he was a high school student.

"Well, I'm going to eat yakiniku."

He couldn't tell that he was killing and looting. Sachiko happily joined her hands when he responded appropriately.

"It's the best in the neighborhood, it looks delicious."

"You eat meat?"

"That's right. Yes! I like it!"

Maruha calmly analyzed that it was a lie. He maybe he didn't eat much meat. He only said that for her.

"Well then, would you like to go eat with me next time?"

With that said, Maruha closed his mouth tightly.

Sachiko was looking at Maruha with her bright eyes. Eyes with equal expectations and anxieties. The eyes of human beings that are unhappy but still look ahead and try to live hard.

Was he qualified to see that?

He could go eat with Sachiko. He maybe would repeat it two or three times and eventually they would start dating. There are some men who have a woman in "Purgatory" who can live with them, and some men approach the woman instead of hiding. He would be one of those people. Living under one roof, eating together, sleeping, getting up, helping with rehabilitation, eating delicious bread in a nice neighborhood park.

She could be killed by Kagutsu.

Or she may have been kidnapped by the mob who hold a grudge against him

Captured by "Scepter 4".

He could think of many ways to ruin it, but he couldn't think otherwise.

Alternatively, Maruha could expand his imagination and run away together. Somewhere far away, two people. He could escape from Kagutsu, the mafia, and "Scepter 4" and say goodbye to that sinister black suit.

Then he would follow a happy holly. Kyoji might also come. Soma did not allow anyone to escape. Even earlier, the "right hand" ended up being burned in the city. He did not think they would hesitate to involve a woman in the matter.

"Uh."

Maruha laughed. He was thinking about the future when he really didn't have a future.

Sachiko said with a mysterious voice.

"Maruha-san...?"

"Hey. Is there someone else besides you?"

Sachiko opened her eyes a bit in amazement and then shook her head. After all, Maruha thought, people who have family or relatives are not the target of that group.

Still, Maruha leaned forward and asked with a serious expression.

"Is there no one anywhere? Relatives?"

"Uh, I have an uncle and his partner in Kanagawa. They're nice people, but I don't usually get in touch with them."

Maruha was relieved. It was enough to ask for so much.

He looks for his own bag. He grabbed a couple of bills that he found and tossed them to Sachiko. With a pile of bills piled on her lap, Sachiko moved her body as if she had been pressed against a burned stone.

"This, huh?"

"Go to them with that money. They won't hurt you."

Maruha carried a bag on his back and stood up. Sachiko looked at Maruha with a cat face that understood the truth of the universe.

Maruha scratched his head and said...

"The other day, there was a conflict around Yodomiya. It was news. The city was burned down and many people died."

Sachiko blinked. The understanding hadn't caught up yet, but it was going well. If she only considered the facts, understanding will come later.

"It was my partner who did that. If you don't want to get burned, go somewhere far away."

With that alone, Maruha left the coffee shop.

He sighed deeply as he walked through the city for no reason.

"I am not suitable."

For groups, for "Purgatory" and for the world. He was not suitable. He did not know how to live. He was envious of Hiiragi and Kyoji who could find a place there.

Was when...

"You are Tadashi Maruha."

Before looking back, he had an idea who called him.

"We are "Scepter 4". Come with us."

Several blue clothes surrounded Maruha before he realized it.

He looks around. Maruha had come to the square in front of the station without realizing it. He can't find any way to take control. Perhaps he should limit himself to minimize the damage, but Maruha was easily enthused.

"If you resist, I will not forgive you."

There was no deception in the eyes of the blues. They have already cut many with their sabers. Just as "Purgatory" was not a yakuza group, "Scepter 4" were not police officers. It was a battle group to hunt down and kill those in black suits.

Maruha gave a fierce laugh.

"Hahaha!"

The burns on both arms glowed with pain from the heat. Fight violently, kill and die. Maruha also had that instinct. He was also a member of "Purgatory".

Suddenly, Maruha understood.

"Purgatory" cannot be a place for anyone. Only a handful of monsters, like Kagutsu and Soma, can "be" there. Hiiragi, Kyoji and he were the same. There was nothing there for them.

That was just his place of death.

"If you can, try it, blue clothes!"

While shouting happily, Maruha threw swirling flames from both arms and attacked the blues in front of him.

Three people died in the limited royal war that day.

On the "Scepter 4" side, Kuroshio and Kido Rokuhei's team.

Side of "Purgatory", Tadashi Maruha.

"Scepter 4" caught Maruha's movement and surrounded him with 6 people, but Maruha made a burst of different abilities and struggled as he burned his own body. Swinging the flames that sprouted from both arms like a sickle, he cut and killed two people, Kuroshio and Kido, and in the next moment, he was cut by four other people, was cut like a sickle and died.

CHAPTER 2: HEKIREKI & SENDEN

Suddenly he realized that the enemy was gone.

The surroundings were full of the dead. Most of the folded corpses belonged to members of the "Purgatory" clan who wore black clothes. Fifteen minutes ago, a hasty force led by Gouki Zenjo raided that warehouse after being contacted by the intelligence department. And then the warehouse turned into a terrible battlefield.

With "Hekireki" bloody on his shoulder, Zenjo started looking for the next enemy to attack. But that no longer existed.

The battle was over and the remnants were hunting. There were still some in black who resisted, but it was only a matter of time before they were crushed or smashed. While he was thinking that, Bado's iron spear pierced one of the black ones, and Azuma's twin

sword stabbed another. The "Purgatory" clan member, who had decent fighting ability, didn't seem to be staying anywhere.

"How boring."

He hit the field in an unsightly way and lowered "Hekireki" to the ground.

The next moment, the pile of corpses exploded.

"Zenjo!"

Fresh blood came out from the sword wound all over the body, and flames came from both feet, the one in black clothes was good at fighting. A deadly surprise attack that hid the corpse of a colleague. Long before he understood it, Zenjo tried to shake "Hekireki" with his own super reaction.

He could not.

According to a later investigation, it was an inadvertent collaboration between those in black. One in black that lay behind Zenjo was dying, but was still breathing. With the last of his strength, he grabbed the "outside" blade, regardless of whether his fingers fell.

That caused a delay of a few seconds. Zenjo was just looking at the flaming fingers approaching in front of him, holding "Hekireki's" fixed handle.

But he just grabbed Zenjo's nose.

"You need more than that..."

The one in black clothes who attacked Zenjo stopped in midair. Blood poured from the edge of his mouth which opened and closed with bloody eyes wide open. A thin saber protruded from his chest, and the saber that pierced his chest diagonally from below suddenly stopped the one in black clothing.

"Ah!"

A cheerful voice that did not seem to belong to the place, resounded behind the one in black clothes.

"I'm sorry I made a mistake! Zenjo-san, can you take care of it please?"

It was as easy as asking him to take the remote there. After blinking, Zenjo passed by "Hekireki" and frequently shook the ones in black clothes.

The flames that clung to both feet disappeared.

The body of the man in black, who had lost his neck, was thrown to the ground. A young man standing there waved his saber and wiped off the blood. The friendly look reminded him of a laughing dog.

"No, I made a mistake. If you tap it, it can't be the case, huh? Hahaha..."

"Kuze. You saved me."

Young Kuse laughed cheerfully and waved.

"I just did something extra. Zenjo-san, you could have handled it with a margin."

"No, I couldn't react now. I would have been 'without a nose' at best, because it was aiming at my head."

"Well, is that so? That's good. Soon it's new soba season!"

Zenjo smirked as he tapped on Kuze's shoulder, saying that he was out of focus.

"This season's buckwheat noodles are pretty good too. I'll use chopsticks when I get back to the barracks. Thanks for your help."

"Oh then, make it soba."

"What? Are you going to ask me to make arrangements again?"

Kuse was smiling. Zenjo saw the smile as if he was amazed. Not suitable for a bright appearance, this young man had a very persistent character.

"Well, I wish I could go home."

"Oh, thanks!"

As Kuze struck a gutsy pose, Zenjo shrugged and walked towards a group of hurrying troops who had begun to take care of the remaining work.

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The war was escalating.

Kagutsu Detention Center "Red King" crackdown operation. The attack from "Scepter 4" intended to kill Kagutsu Genji was unsuccessful in retrospect. Although the force of "Purgatory" was greatly reduced, the original purpose of the operation was not finally achieved, and Kagutsu left his territory and fled, and the remaining clan members divided into thousands and went into hiding. The hive was destroyed, but the queen bee and the soldier bees were flying now.

The activities of the scattered members of the "Purgatory" clan were almost the same as before. Whenever something happened, there was a danger that they would explode. "Scepter 4" chased after them and they were incapacitated as soon as they were discovered, but "Purgatory" wasn't just silently hunted to death. The damage caused by a fierce counterattack who did not care about his own life was turning into a social problem that could not be covered even by "Tokijikuin".

There were two pressing issues.

One was the search and murder of Kagutsu as soon as possible. As long as that "King" will continue to exist on earth, this war would never end.

And the other was to increase the strength of "Scepter 4".

The battle with "Purgatory", who burned the people, burned the city and even burned themselves, was slowly shaving the staff of "Scepter 4". To make up for the loss, they touted that they had the cause of the war and recruited a large number of talented personnel from the relevant ministries.

Shuichiro Kuze was one of those supplemental staff members.

Originally a police officer, he achieved outstanding results on both his aptitude and skill tests, and joined the "Scepter 4" running unit at exceptional speed. He was a rare human resource who had already been dispatched several times and was not afraid to fight the deadly "Purgatory", but instead displayed a simulation as if he was enjoying it.

For some reason, Kuze teamed up with Zenjo.

Even now, Kuze and Zenjo were undergoing simulated one-on-one training in the training ground of the "Scepter 4" barracks. Except for the fact that the product was a bamboo sword, it was a form of training that came as close to the actual battle as possible. Even attacks on key points were tolerated wherever they were covered by armor.

Kuze raised the bamboo sword to eye level and turned its blade towards Zenjo.

Zenjo carried a large bamboo sword on his shoulder and was about to attack him.

Kuze's specialty was "pushing". His stab, fired by explosive acceleration with a different ability, was roughly equal to the speed of a bullet. It would be impossible to react if it were the perception of an ordinary person.

But, of course, Zenjo was not an ordinary person.

"Let's go!"

The next moment that Kuze said that, the figure disappeared.

An extraordinary light that glowed fluttering blue like the tail of a meteor. Before recognizing it, Zenjo's body was moving. The speed God's sword judgment darted into the void on the right.

Zenjo's bamboo sword touched Kuze's sword that jutted out without fail.

"Ah!"

As he wielded the sword of pursuit, Zenjo was impressed. Viewed from above, the location of the different abilities would have looked like a rank "nine". A blow from

outside the field of vision due to explosive acceleration, but it did not exceed Zenjo's reaction speed.

"Che!"

Kuze sped up again, leaving a childish click of the tongue. As he repeated sharp turns ignoring the laws of physics, he jumped incessantly. He was like a spring-loaded toy that swept across the training ground.

Zenjo stopped chasing him with his eyes and closed his lids.

Behind.

Before he felt it, his body was still moving. He turns and cut the space behind him. The cut that was shot deflected Kuze's thrust horizontally upward and hit him like he was a face shield.

"Damn!"

With a stupid voice, Kuze struck and fell to the ground of the training ground. If he had been serious, he would have lost his nose.

"This is the ninth."

Carrying the bamboo sword on his shoulder again, Zenjo said that without pride. Kuze, who had stretched out into a large shape, lifted his upper body as he rubbed the back of his neck.

"I thought I could pull it off now... Zenjo-san, do you have eyes behind you?"

"Well, it's clear. You can understand it even if you can't see it."

"Mm... Zenjo-san, another one! Please."

When Kuze lifted his index finger, Zenjo was truly astonished and showed the training ground clock with his chin.

"It's closing time. It will be tomorrow."

"Really? Absolutely tomorrow!"

"I wish they hadn't sent me."

Saying that, while he was a bit crowded, Zenjo headed for the exit. Kuze also put the bamboo sword in a bag and bounced after him.

After taking a shower together, they had dinner later.

The barracks cafeteria was quiet, probably because it was late. Zenjo ordered a hazaru soba and Kuze a kitsune udon, and they ate together.

Kuze talked to Zenjo all the time while he ate.

"Zenjo-san, are you attached to the army?"

"Hmm?"

"I belonged there. There are a lot of people like that in "Scepter 4", right?"

Surely it was so. The personnel of "Scepter 4" came mainly from other security organizations. Unless they didn't lack combat training on a daily basis, they couldn't withstand the battle with "Purgatory".

However, the situation was different for Zenjo.

After slurping his soba, he said...

"I am from a mountain."

"Mountain?"

"When I was waving a stick in the mountains, I met Habari, so I followed him."

Kuze blinked twice as he pinched the fried food with chopsticks.

"Well, what was that? What kind of situation?"

"Thanks, like I said."

Answering only that, Zenjo took a sip of soba again.

Kuze stared at Zenjo for a while with a surprised face, and then...

"Fu..."

He shook his shoulders and started laughing.

"Hahahahahahaha! What's wrong, did you meet the commander in the mountains and follow him? Hahaha, Zenjo-san, are you a youkai?"

Zenjo was disappointed in Kuze, who bent over his body and laughed like a child. It was surprising that he was laughed at, although it was not his intention to make him laugh.

"No, sorry, I'm not going to make a fool of myself. But that was very interesting."

"Is it interesting?"

"It's incredibly interesting! I've never met such a person!"

"Mmm...?"

He wondered if that was the case. Originally, Zenjo was a guy who didn't understand many things. If they told him it was interesting, it would be true.

"No, you're good at "Scepter 4" after all. It's not boring."

As he cheerfully said that, Kuze drank the udon from him. As Zenjo ate the soba noodles, he looked at Kuze as if he was looking at something strange.

"Bored?"

"Yes. The workplace in front of me was already boring. Anyone can do it, such as document preparation, on-site verification and traffic control. More like this, a fierce car chase with the criminal! Fighting battle! Shooting! I was imagining it."

He lifted the bowl and drank the soup.

"So it's so boring that I shouldn't do it. When I was thinking about it, they asked me and I came to try it. I can do what I want every day! It's a lot of fun, right? That's why I think you adapt very well to "Scepter 4"!

Zenjo scratched his cheeks while Kuze drank, wiped his mouth and clasped his hands with a "Thanks for the food!"

"Uh..."

"Isn't that the case with Zenjo-san? Don't you do it because it's medicinal?"

"Eh?"

He wondered if that was the case. Was he enjoying the battle with "Purgatory"?

There was no doubt that he was elevated during the battle. On the battlefield where a momentary judgment divides life and death, that feeling that inspires all cells cannot be experienced anywhere else.

But he didn't think he was struggling to taste it.

When he swung his sword under Habari's command in "Scepter 4", he felt that he was breathing properly. It seemed natural to do so and it "fit". He didn't know if he could describe it as funny.

"Well, that's correct."

It became difficult to think of the way and Zenjo answered that.

"That's right! Well, I'm glad you feel the same way as me!"

Kuze laughed in a friendly way and then a mysterious light fell on his eyes.

"But lately, it's more fun practicing with Zenjo-san than interacting with "Purgatory"."

"Really?"

"Yes, because Zenjo-san is much stronger than them, so it's fun to do it. Hey, Zenjo-san. Someday, with me..."

Kuze cut off the words when he suddenly remembered. After blinking several times, the mysterious light disappeared. Then suddenly he stood up and held the bowl of kitsune udon in his hands.

"Sorry, it's nothing! So, good night!"

With a smile, Kuze went to the place where the dishes were being returned.

As he drank his soba, Zenjo rebelled against Kuze's words.

(Well, I'm glad you feel the same way as me!)

Maybe it wasn't.

Although they belonged to the same "Scepter 4" and wielded a saber, he felt that something was decisively different between him and Kuze.

He didn't know what it was. He didn't want to think until he knew. Thinking again that he was okay, Zenjo dropped the green onion seasoning into crushed chunks.

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Three days later, the hidden member of the "Purgatory" clan in Minari-cho, Fengze-ku, was discovered.

According to the information department report, there was only one member. However, the problem is that he was hiding in the houses of common people. They threatened the inhabitants and parasitized their lives themselves. A bully lurked in his house and behaved inattentive. The father of the family, who could not bear such a situation, rushed to a public institution and discovered his existence.

In response to this, "Scepter 4" quickly formed a unit that rushed over. They ran to the site to "exterminate" the abominable parasite.

However, this time, it was not possible to get through the gate with the transport vehicle and cut it randomly. After all, the other party was alone and the detained hostages were a mother and two young children, according to the father's information. If they took action inadvertently, it would have the worst consequences.

The operation required speed and stealth. "Scepter 4", the deputy director, Gen Shiotsu, selected the appropriate personnel and devised a strategy.

Shuichiro Kuse was included in the staff, but it was boring for him.

Kuze was toying with that idea while biting his yawn in the car.

It had already been three hours since they arrived at the place. Because "Scepter 4" stood out in a transport vehicle, they used an ordinary sedan type and stopped from hiding to blind spot. Kuze sighed softly, looking at him stagnant out the window.

He wished he could rush in and kill him.

It would be easy. He would jump out the door, go through the second floor and invade, and drive the saber into the heart of the guy in black. That was all that was needed.

Kuze understood why he was selected as a runner. The small body was suitable for infiltration, and the "Senden" saber he had was also a slim custom-made one, so it should work effectively in a small room.

So he wanted to do it as soon as possible.

Finally, the long-awaited command came from insiders.

"The target has taken the hostage. I enclose the location."

"Yes!"

He sprang to his feet, grabbed the saber, opened the passenger seat door, and Kuze broke into a run.

In seconds, the target house came into view. When he was hiding behind the wall of a neighbor's house and observing the situation, the transmitter spoke a voice again.

"The target is in the bathroom on the second floor. The children cannot confirm the whereabouts of their mother in the next room. Each member must pay the utmost attention and do everything in their power to secure the hostages."

"Kuze, ready!"

With a light tone, Kuze pulled "Senden" out of the scabbard.

He held his breath and waited for the moment. The plan of the house is engraved on his head. All the images of how he would move, what kind of path he would take and how he would kill the one in black clothes were created in Kuze's brain.

Kuze himself did not know that there were no hostages there.

"Fast!"

By the time Shiotsu's voice echoed, Kuze was jumping.

He jumped off the wall, landed on the ceiling, and ran. At the edge of the field of vision, he could see a blue trail that went through him in the same way. There were a total of four runners, all their own competitors, who aspired to the life of a single man in black. Kuze licked his lips and accelerated to the point where the shingles broke.

He jumped with the same impulse, he broke the second floor window with his body and ran inside.

"Eh?!"

He heard a high-pitched voice. Kuze invaded the children's room on the second floor. According to the information, two children who were less than elementary school students were shaking in a corner of the room.

Kuze ignored it.

The problem was that of black clothes. If he killed him, everything would be solved. So that should take precedence. Kuze thought that way and stepped out into the second floor hallway.

Their eyes met.

There was a figure in black clothes in the bathroom that was left open. However, when Kuze found him, he was strangling and using the children's mother as a shield.

"Stay away, blue clothes! This woman will die!"

He could barely see the one in black who was angry. Very firmly, he was hiding behind the woman. The scared woman shook her head, while she shook her head, he looked and disappeared his face burned in black.

Before thinking of anything, Kuze was kicking the ground.

If he killed him, that would be it. That was the only priority, and everything else was wiped from Kuze's head.

Many things happened at the same time.

"Kuze, stop!" One of the rushing staff members yelled.

"Damn it!" The man in black's burned face turned red, and the flame-filled woman screamed in tears.

Time seemed to flow slowly. He could feel precisely the extraordinary light of "Senden", the heat of the flames that sprouted from the face of the man in black and the smell of the flesh that enveloped her.

In the slowdown time, Kuze analyzed various factors and...

(Oh, this person can't be helped anymore.), he thought.

Too easily, he cut off the hostage's life.

This being the case, the hostage's body was no longer a problem. It was just a corpse, a wall of flesh less than 8 inches.

It did not hinder "Senden".

With a half-smile, Kuze stabbed hard forward.

A bright blue tip pierced the woman's chest, and the heart of the man in black was skewered and glued to the bathroom wall.

"....."

The woman opened and closed her mouth. Kuze tilted his head and looked at her face, thinking that she looks like a dying goldfish.

When Kuze drew the saber, the woman and the one in black fell one on top of the other. Their bloods mixed.

The bodies clung to each other and wet Kuze's shoes.

He takes a breath and inform the others.

"We have deactivated the objective. The mission is complete."

At the same time, an angry sound rang out from behind.

"Kuze! Damn! What did you do?!"

He thought, and looked at the owner of the voice as if he was confused. It was Shinohara, who belonged to the same group as him. He was yelling something when he flushed with anger, but Kuze couldn't understand the meaning of the word. He turned his neck and face away to keep them from flying off.

The frozen facial expressions of the two boys, looking through the door, were reflected in Kuze's field of vision.

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"Do you know what you did?"

"Scepter 4", Shiotsu made a heavy voice in the barracks interview room.

Shuichiro Kuze, standing in front of him, replied as if nothing had happened.

"I killed the member of the "Purgatory" clan. I think it was an unavoidable decision in that situation."

"Right now, "Purgatory" is not the problem. The problem is Kuze, you stabbed the hostage and killed her."

"I did not murder her. At that time, the woman had already been killed by the one in black clothes. Should I be so reprimanded for damaging her corpse?"

Shiotsu had various reports in front of him.

"Shinohara's report is different. At that time, Shinohara said that the woman was still alive. However, he testified that you ignored the warning and approached the black-robed one and went through him."

"In my eyes, she looked dead."

Kuze spoke clearly.

"I think it would have been difficult to help her, even if she had a break. Is it the right decision to leave the dangerous clansman to help a dying woman? If the action was delayed, hers, two of her children and I could have been euthanized."

"It is not you who should judge whether the woman would be saved or not."

"The judgment of the site should be left to the members of the site."

Shiotsu groaned softly.

What Kuze said was correct in some respects. In the battle with "Purgatory", a momentary misjudgment could be fatal. And that moment came innumerable times. It was not enough to have many lives if they were all compared with the regulations of the body and the current law. Above all, Kuze said that a certain amount of excessive acts should be allowed to protect one's life.

But...

Shiotsu watched Kuze's expression.

There was no expression floating there. Self-blame, regret, remorse. He couldn't read any of the emotions the one with the almost innocent human hands would have.

Shiotsu muttered to himself that that was the real problem.

"Kuze..."

At that moment, Shiotsu silently inhaled, and then...

"Where do you think the meaning of 'Scepter 4' is?"

"Eh...?"

"Answer it. What's 'Scepter 4' for?"

For the first time, the color of hesitation reached Kuze's expression.

As he listened to Shiotsu, Kuze replied.

"Kill the enemy. Annihilate 'Purgatory' and bring peace to society."

Shiotsu sighed deeply and said.

"No. You are definitely misunderstanding."

"....."

"Our mission is to protect the general public. The sword to protect those who cannot resist the weapon of incompetence, that is "Scepter 4"."

"It's the same as I said, right?"

In the words that Kuze muttered, unprecedented emotions appeared.

He was frustrated.

"Killing those in black clothes is to protect the general public. If they are left unattended, tens or even hundreds of people will die if they are not treated well. To avoid that, isn't it natural to leave two people alone?"

"Still, we should not be the ones to kill. We should be the ones to protect the people. If there is a defenseless civilian, that is why we have the power to protect ourselves."

"It's stupid."

Kuze laughed through his nose. His dark and bright gaze seemed harsher, as he generally had a friendly gaze.

"Why do we have to do that? It is so stupid for a good person to be sacrificed for an inferior person."

Shiotsu closed his eyes.

What swirled around his chest was not anger at Kuze, but responsibility for himself.

He may have been too impatient to make up for the personnel lost in the battle with "Purgatory". He had hired a person who lacked the most important qualities, distracted only by the ability to fight. He should have known well what would happen if that person had a different ability and special power.

People who cannot control themselves will eventually use their different abilities as they wish.

How is it different from "Purgatory"?

Shiotsu slowly opened his eyes and said in a low voice,

"Shuichiro Kuse. Say goodbye to "Scepter 4" from now on."

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Kuze, who came out of the interview room, was looking vaguely at the ceiling of the hallway.

(I blew it.), he thought.

With that in mind, he sighs. This time, he looked down at the ground and started walking.

When he was called by Shiotsu, Kuze had decided what he should do. That was a field decision and he didn't think he had done anything wrong. He intended to stick to that statement.

It is the members of the field who exchange lives. However, it was not uncommon for him to be blamed for a later trial. It was a common feeling not only for Kuze but also for the ER personnel.

Shiotsu was smart and looked closely at the members. That is why he thought that he would not give such a severe punishment based on his thoughts.

"He was telling me something strange."

Kuze lied and looked at his hand. When he focused his consciousness there, the blue glow of the extraordinary shimmered.

It was proof that he was an excellent person and a chosen one.

Kuze couldn't respond well to Shiotsu's words asking the meaning of "Scepter 4". That was because Kuze didn't know. Therefore, he got a rag out of there. It didn't matter if the general public died or lived, he knew that his true intentions would probably not be forgiven within the organization, so he hid it.

The important thing for Kuze was to use that power in all directions to fight. Fight "Purgatory", bypass the momentary deadline and end the life of the enemy. Never in a dull life until now, was it a bright day.

That was stolen from him.

Because he took a boring life from a boring human.

Kuze sighed again and suddenly raised his face.

A familiar giant was walking down the hall. Kuze laughed and raised a hand.

"Hey, Zenjo-san."

"Oh, Kuze?"

Zenjo's eyebrows widened when he noticed that Kuze was there for the first time.

"What are you doing in a place like this? Is it training?"

"No."

Kuze laughed bitterly and...

"Hey, I've been preaching to the vice principal. I'm here for that."

"Oh, Shiotsu? It's loud."

Sympathy reached Zenjo's eyes. Seeing that, Kuze's smile changed to a natural one.

That person knew himself.

He had always felt that way. Zenjo, like himself, rejoiced in the fight. He was a person who should have the nature of killing people rather than helping people. So, Kuze was sure that if he talked about the situation, this person would be on his side.

"But you're almost right."

Zenjo simply denied the idea.

"Eh?"

"Shiotsu is loud, but he's always right. If he claims something from you, you're wrong. I wonder what he was. Apologize properly."

"....."

Kuze looked at his toes.

"Yes, what is that?"

"If that is all."

"I see."

Kuze scratched his head again with a bitter smile.

"In a way that's correct. I thought it was suitable for 'Scepter 4', but surprisingly, isn't it?"

"Eh?"

Zenjo mysteriously shook his head, thought for a moment and then nodded.

"That's right. You said you were the same as me, but I think you are different from me."

"....."

"I can't put it right. You might not be good at 'Scepter 4'. You should stop in time."

Zenjo said that in a wonderful and irresponsible way.

Kuze was about to start laughing. Interestingly, he didn't get mad at all. This was because it had been broadcast that Zenjo was saying that from the bottom of his heart without any malicious intent.

After all, Kuze didn't dislike Zenjo. He was clean, natural, and stronger than anyone. That's why he liked dealing with this person, because he could fight without shackles.

He regretted thinking that he couldn't do that from now on.

Then, Kuze suddenly glowed.

"Ah!"

"Hmm? What's wrong?"

"Sorry Zenjo-san, I just remembered my errand now! I'm done!"

In a hurry, Kuze ran down the hall. Zenjo said, "Oh...?", and gave up, but Kuze suddenly stopped and looked back.

"Please help me again later!"

Zenjo laughed and nodded.

"Oh, I have to be sent."

"Still, please!"

Kuze ran away, saying just that with a smile.

It was that night that Shuichiro Kuze disappeared with "Senden".

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When he got out of the transport car, a warm wind caressed Zenjo's cheeks.

The policeman raised his face and smelled a faint smell on the wind. He was delving into the battlefield with "Purgatory". He smelled like sticky, burnt blood.

According to the map, the back alley where the discovery of the men in black was reported was divided into T-shapes. The unit split into three hands, blocking all exits. The most important thing to prevent was that those in black clothes escaped. They had to make sure to capture or neutralize them, even if they took some risks.

At that moment, in front of Zenjo, the entrance to the back alley was black and open.

"Over there."

At random, Zenjo entered an alley.

The back alley was narrow and dark. Polyethylene buckets and outdoor units blocked the street, and the walls of the building that approached from the left and right blocked the sunlight. If one in black clothes came out of the shadows and emitted a flame of extraordinary skill, there would be no way around it. It could be said that this was also a dead place.

Still, Zenjo was not afraid and advanced slowly.

The process suddenly stopped.

Shinohara, who was following Zenjo, said groaning.

"What is the situation? What is this?"

One in black clothes was dead, as if his back was against the wall of the building.

Wide-eyed and in a pool of blood. The burned right hand was soaked in the blood clot, burning and producing black smoke. This was probably the cause of the smell.

In the first place, it was a mystery from the initial discovery report.

It was said that several of the black clothes were fighting. At the time, there were no "Scepter 4" units deployed nearby, and since the Hiiragi incident, the police had been told to stay away from the men in black. Most likely it was a fight between those in black, but in the current situation where they were hiding in a scattered way, he did not think they would do such an outstanding act.

So who was fighting the ones in black?

Zenjo, who was inspecting the corpse in black, said the answer.

"It's Kuze."

"What...?!"

"It is pierced all over the body. This is due to 'Senden'."

Saying that, Zenjo stood up.

Since that night, Kuze's whereabouts have been known to be uncertain. Kuze's legal status was the same as an "Illegal Strain" since he was fired from "Scepter 4". They had to capture him and put a skill suppressor on him, but there weren't enough personnel to track him down in "Scepter 4".

Kuze killed the ones in black and, perhaps, he was still hiding in that place.

"But why is Kuze here?"

Shinohara said that, and suddenly closed his mouth.

Someone slowly emerged from the darkness behind the alley.

It was also one of black clothes.

"Oh, fufu...!"

His face was distorted with anger and hatred, and blood was pouring from his entire body to the point that his black suit was still drenched in red and black. Legs wobbling, the one in black slowly approached.

"Gah!"

The tip of the saber protruded from his chest.

The saber was instantly pulled out and the one in black collapsed to his knees.

Zenjo spoke the name from behind him, standing there.

"Hekireki."

"Oh, Zenjo-san!"

Dressed in a dark green raincoat, Kuze smiled at his face, which had been bathed in blood, and called out to Zenjo cheerfully.

"No, I'm lucky! I can't get it all of a sudden!"

"What are you doing?"

"What?"

Eyes blinking, Kuze looked around him, and mysteriously at himself.

"What's wrong? It's not a job. I got fired from 'Scepter 4'."

He shook "Senden" to spill the blood.

"But if you look for the black clothes, 'Scepter 4' will come, right? Maybe Zenjo-san is there! I thought it was good."

While he smiled, Kuze,

"I never thought we could meet at once! I'm lucky! So..."

He crouched down and pointed the tip of "Senden".

"Let's go."

Before Zenjo thought of anything, Kuze was kicking the ground.

The glow of the blue genie was diffusely reflected in the narrow back alley. He bounced off the ground, scaled walls, emergency stairs, he went up, down, left and right, and hit everything, drawing an unpredictable trajectory like a pinball.

Shinohara, who was behind Zenjo, couldn't even follow Kuze with his eyes. But Zenjo reacted.

It was also an action before thinking. The thick blade of "Hekireki" flipped up as the wind scattered.

The dark green raincoat split in half.

Kuze was no longer there. He twisted in midair, tossed his raincoat, and landed on the ground.

Zenjo kept "Hekireki" jumping and stopped in an unprotected posture. Looking at his empty torso, a fierce smile appeared on Kuze's mouth.

(I caught you!), he thought.

With extraordinary power in his legs, Kuze tried to strike a stroke of luck.

He felt the shock in his chest.

"Eh?"

He lost the strength of his leg. His soles did not separate as if they were stuck to the ground. Interestingly, he looked under his feet and saw a saber thrust into his chest.

"Ah?"

When he coughed, a blood clot spilled from his lips.

Kuze slowly looked at Zenjo.

Zenjo was flipping "Hekireki", with just his right hand.

Before he knew it, he held another saber in his left hand. That pierced through Kuze's chest.

"Oh, wow...!"

Kuze distorted the edge of his mouth when he heard Shinohara make a panicky voice.

"Hey, Shinohara. It's a pay cut to have a saber stolen from you."

When Zenjo drew the saber, Kuze sank into place.

The blood was overflowing. The color of his face was white and transparent. It was clear to everyone that it was no longer useful.

Still, Kuze was somewhat satisfied. He looked at Zenjo and laughed weakly.

"After all... you are amazing, Zenjo-san. I couldn't get over you."

"Kuze."

There was no anger or sadness in Zenjo's expression, just confusion.

"What did you want to do?"

"What?"

Kuze shook his shoulders and laughed. Eventually the laughter turned into a cough and the exhaled blood created a series of stains in the alley.

"I wanted to. A real and potentially deadly battle with Zenjo-san."

Breathing out, Kuze fell onto his side.

"It was fun."

That was the last word from him.

Zenjo, holding a bloody saber, shot a confused look at Kuze's corpse.

CHAPTER 3: BLUE CLOTHES & BLACK CLOTHES

The rain that started to fall in the morning was pouring down in the afternoon.

Kazumada Takechi liked the rain. To put it more precisely, he thought that "it was preferable if it rained at the time of shipment". The rain hid many things. The more smoke screens there were, the better you would be earning in terms of visibility, steps, number of people, and amount of initial exit information. It would be great if the enemy was destroyed without knowing which is the right or the left.

According to the notification from the information department, the number of confirmed black clothes was six. They were said to be hiding near the abandoned influx facility in Shiotsuchi Ward. "Scepter 4" formed a breakthrough unit consisting of 18 people and dispatched them directly to the site without delay. The hideout was in a river area away from the residential area, and the fact that there was no need to consider the damage in the surrounding area was the deciding factor in making a quick decision.

In the first confrontation, the two dressed in black were incapacitated.

From that moment on, it was the usual battlefield. A catastrophic counterattack of angry words, taunts, and black clothes turned into living bombs. A firestorm blew, and the storm-swallowed limbs screamed and turned. Overcoming this, Takechi and others proceeded. When he tries to cut the one in black clothes and go further to the hall,

"Die! Blue clothes!"

From the side room, black clothes appeared.

A flaming fist protruded into Takechi's face. Takechi prevented it with a shield of extraordinary skill, and waved a saber at the back of the opponent's neck. He avoided the one in black clothes, kicked the ground and hit the enemy's entire body like a bullet with martial arts.

"Guh..."

The epigastrium broke and Takechi lost his balance. Those in black pushed Takechi down as if they were entwined, and laughed as if they were riding a horse.

"Hey, that's it!"

The one in black raised his burned right fist, with the flame of extraordinary ability.

He couldn't turn it off.

"Ah?"

He blinked and looked mysteriously at his fist. On his flank, Takechi hit the left hook hopefully. Takechi bounced off the one in black that lifted his body with a crushed groan and stood up as he coughed.

"What is this?"

Rolling into the corner of the hallway and quickly regaining his posture, the one in black got annoyed when he saw his left wrist.

There he put on a metal wristband. Takechi installed it at his own discretion when he became a rider.

"It's a different suppressor, bracelets type. As long as you're using it, you can't use your abilities."

"Don't be silly, take it from me! Right now!"

"If you were me, would you remove it?"

Takechi approached the one in black, saying that clearly. In the battle with "Purgatory", the death of the hostile clan member is allowed, but orders have been issued to stop him and bring him back "if possible". Black's threat, which had been sealed, was so low that he could take it away and he tried to stop it.

At that moment, red and orange lights filled the field of vision.

"Mmm!"

Takechi reflexively reflected his hands in front of his eyes and developed a field of different abilities. He protected himself and the defenseless black-robed man. Probably a suicide bomb attack with another in black. In response to the deadly pressure of power, Takechi held the field with concentration on him,

"Take off because it's fine, you bastard dressed in blue!"

The one in black screamed and rushed inside.

"Now, stupid!"

He lost concentration. At the last minute, a crack occurred in the talented field that had stopped the blast and it immediately collapsed. Takechi and the one in black attached to

him were dragged like leaves in a muddy stream, smashing the window panes and thrown "outside".

There was a huge "hole" in the "outside".

"Mmm!"

Takechi grew impatient as he spun in midair.

In the pre-operative briefing, he knew what that "hole" looked like. It is a well with a diameter of 30 meters and a depth of 70 meters to pour the water from the flooded river into an underground drainage channel.

If you are a talented person, you will be safe even if they throw you out here. He should have been able to deal with it by softening the impact of the fall or by clinging to the inner wall due to the power of it.

However, the one in black that was thrown with him was sealed.

If he fell like this, he would die.

Within seconds of the fall, Takechi recognized, thought, and made up his mind. Takechi was angry, shining with an extraordinary brilliance under his feet.

"Damn it! Why am I saving one from black?"

He then he jumped further as if kicking in the air, holding the one in black and falling into the depths of the "hole".

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He woke up with the sensation of being hit by his body.

He opened his eyes slightly. In the field of vision like a movie, his dark red hair was swaying. The temples on one side of him were cut off and the other side of him was injured. Takechi reflected on a fuzzy thought that the one in the black suit had a drunken hairstyle. So he came back to himself.

There was a man in black in front of him. The member of the clan "Purgatory", the enemy of the sky.

"What are you doing?!"

He screamed out of reflex, pulling away from the man in black, Takechi tugged on his right hand to catch him. He looked there involuntarily.

Takechi's right hand and the man in black's left hand were connected by a handcuff-like power suppressor.

A low, whining voice escaped from his throat.

"What is this?"

"You don't know what to look for! You're connected! Quick, give me the key, you fucking bastard!"

The function of the suppressor of different abilities does not choose the opponent. Whether it is "Purgatory", Strain or "Scepter 4", those who use it will be blocked from different abilities, and their physical abilities will be the same as those of normal humans.

(Why is it on my wrist?), he thought.

"You've done it?"

"I don't know! I was like this when I realized it!"

The man in black who had lost his fangs was screaming and it seemed that he was not lying.

If so, was it a coincidence? Takechi and the one in black fell into the well in a tangled manner. It seems that the impact of the fall could be softened by Takechi's abilities, but the momentum at that moment caused the empty handcuffs to get stuck in Takechi's hands.

As a result, the one in blue clothes and the one in black clothes were sealed and lost their abilities, falling behind at the bottom of the shaft.

"That's probably what happened."

Explaining that, the one in black shot Takechi's lock to the max.

"Don't worry, that's it!"

As he scowled and endured the pain, Takechi glared at the one in black. He helped him with all his might, but what was that attitude? He thought he should have abandoned him, but that would violate the order to bring the man in black alive "as much as possible".

With a sigh, Takechi confirmed the situation.

There was no doubt that they were at the bottom of a cylindrical shaft. Looking up, light and rain poured from the rounded sky. The water that collected at the ankle was wetting Takechi's entire body and the one in black.

He felt no pain when he tried to move his body. He was lucky to have fallen from that height and not injured himself, although he had used his ability, but he had encountered another problem.

The radio was broken. With this, it was not possible to request help from "Scepter 4".

When he was thinking with a difficult look, the one in black yelled, "Hey!"

"Okay! Take off the handcuffs and you'll be fine! Even you are in trouble if you can't use your skills!"

Looking back at his unruly puppy eyes, Takechi asked.

"Why didn't you kill me?"

"Eh?"

"You probably woke up earlier. You should have killed me while I was passed out and then look for the key, why didn't you?"

After thinking about the one in black for a while, he made an "Ah..." face.

When he was shocked that he couldn't think about it because he didn't have a conscientious response, the one in black stood up and grabbed Takechi's chest.

"Oh! Idiot, you've made a fool of me now!"

"Actually it is."

"That's it! I'll kill you from now on!"

The one in black jumped up and tried to put his hands on Takechi's neck. Takechi shook it off with a disgusted face. The one in black was very small and seemed weak. In the case of fighting with sealed abilities, there was no element that Takechi lost, who was superior in physique and had received combat training.

He could kill that guy at any time.

But...

After thinking for a while, Takechi controlled the one in black who was still in an uproar with one hand.

"Wait. Calm down."

"Don't worry! Die! Or take off the handcuffs right now!"

"I don't have the key."

The movement of the man in black stopped.

"The "Scepter 4" runners do not carry the key because if they are stolen, the hostile clan member they sealed will be revived. I cannot remove the handcuffs unless I return to the transport vehicle or headquarters."

"Hm... oh... that's..."

"Will you still kill me and drag the corpse away? Can you do it now? I weigh 94 kg."

The one in black grabbed his mouth and stared at Takechi's thick boar neck and his tight shoulders. He seemed like he could hear the sound of thinking going round and round.

Takechi did not miss the opportunity and opened a hand in front of the one in black clothes.

"I have a suggestion. Let's make a truce."

"Eh?"

"I don't want to drag your corpse. I want you to walk anyway. So how about a break until we get out of this hole?"

The one in black looked at Takechi with suspicious eyes and asked:

"Exit, then, and then?"

"I'll drag you to headquarters. If you don't like it, you can resist. If you're lucky, your friends can find you. Then you will die."

"....."

"Or do you stay here and starve?"

".....!"

The one in black thought, thought, thought, and finally scratched his red hair and screamed like a buffoon.

"Oh, yeah! Okay! That's fine!"

"Ok."

Takechi looked around him, and then, when it suddenly occurred to him,

"What is your name?"

The one in black glared at Takechi.

"Ah? Why would I give my name to a blue outfit?"

"I am Takechi Kazumada."

"Hey! Listen to me!"

He was angry and hit Takechi, but his thick chest was not afraid. As Takechi stared at him without saying anything, he sighed and murmured, as if the one in black clothes had taken root.

"Mina."

"That is all."

Takechi nodded, convinced.

"I was not confident because your body is thin, but that is correct. You are a woman."

Mina dressed in black kicked Takechi again.

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The stairs leading to the ground had brilliantly collapsed after about 10 steps.

"What is this? Do a good job..."

Mina said bitterly, Takechi shrugged.

"This is an abandoned well in the first place. It is wrong to expect decent maintenance."

"Sorry. You don't react to soliloquy one by one."

She looked up and threw it away, but Takechi started walking without any particular pretense. Because they were connected, Mina couldn't help it.

A tunnel was cut through the shaft at a distance from the stairs to the ground. She was one step away from one of them. It seemed true that it was not maintained and there was real darkness with no emergency lights.

Wondering what to do, Takechi pulled the flashlight from his blue clothes. A powerful beam of light illuminated the interior of the tunnel. It was about 10 meters in diameter and the destination was covered in darkness, so he had no idea what was going on.

Mina asked Takechi anxiously.

"Hey. Is it really here?"

"I don't know."

"Eh?! You don't know the way!"

Takechi looked at Mina coldly.

"I only know the data. I don't know which way the exit is."

"That is not usable. You are a tax thief!"

"There is no reason for criminals to say so."

Mina and Takechi walked through the tunnel while cursing each other.

The tunnel was wide, but dark and damp. Of course, it was not a path for humans and vehicles to walk. The reflected footsteps reawakened anxiety and Mina hit Takechi on the elbow.

"Hey. What is this path?"

"It is an underground drainage canal."

"What's that?"

Takechi looked at Mina with stunned eyes.

"You didn't even know what they were occupying? Geez..."

She was irritated. She used to hit him with a fist of fire, but now Mina couldn't do that. She screamed to reduce the anxiety of squeezing and opening her right hand.

"Please just answer! What's in here?"

She wondered if he could reply in disappointment, but Takechi explained clearly as he looked ahead.

"The underground drainage channel is like a tunnel to take the water from the river when a flood is about to occur. We have fallen into a well to drain the flood into the drainage channel. There are several, all connected through channels of underground drains, so if you get to a working pit, you should be able to get to the ground from there. "

"Mmm..."

Mina's nose was confused by his unexpectedly polite explanation. Yes, they did not know the details of the facilities they occupied and Mina did not even know that there was a system to prevent floods.

"What is that axis? How long do you need to walk?"

"The total length of the flood channel is 10 km and the number of wells is 5, so if calculated, the average distance of each is 2 km."

Takechi looked back at the path he had taken with a delicate expression.

"Here's a discarded axle. I still don't know if it's still connected to another axle. Maybe it's stuck in the way."

"Hey! What's that?!"

"It is not my fault to fall here or not know the way."

Mina tried to curse Takechi again, but she reconsidered and tied her lips.

Takechi was a blue robe and her enemy, but from what he had spoken, he seemed to have a fair personality. Certainly, as he said, this situation was not due to Takechi. The reason they fell here was because of Mina's attack, and...

Mina looked down at her feet and spat out the question that she had caught in the back of her throat.

"Why did you help me?"

Takechi looked at Mina. Mina continued her words, feeling his gaze around her.

"We, the "Purgatory" clan, I think that for the blue clothes, we are just bugs. If you had dropped me as I was, you would save yourself a lot of trouble, but why didn't you?"

Takechi thought for a bit and then replied.

"I never thought of "Purgatory" as an insect. I think they are criminals."

Then he looked ahead.

"If they want to hurt us with their abilities, we have to fight, but if they don't, they don't have to die. Criminals are still human. If you're incapacitated, I have to protect you because that's my job."

"....."

Mina didn't know how difficult it was.

So she didn't understand half of what Takechi said. What she could barely understand was that he was in a job helping people and that he thought Mina was a human being.

She was getting frustrated.

Takechi's response was not what Mina expected. She thought he had fallen next to her in the basement to take her neck and take credit. If he had told her that he helped her for his own benefit, she would not have been so frustrated.

No, thinking about it again...

After all, Takechi helped Mina, to take credit for himself. The reason why she walks on the ground like this was probably because it is difficult to carry Mina's corpse. Takechi himself said so, so it was for his own benefit after all.

She wouldn't forget it. Takechi was a blue clothes. She knew that many of her friends from "Purgatory" had been killed by the blue clothes. No wonder he strangled her as soon as she hit the ground. So she was not afraid.

When she was thinking about that while she was looking at the ground...

"Wah..."

She tapped the tip of her nose against Takechi's back who stopped.

"Hey... why are you stopping?"

Mina rubbed her nose and protested, and Takechi made a little soliloquy.

"What's wrong with this?"

When he wondered what it was, he noticed.

Moist air and the sound of flowing water.

The road split in two in front of Takechi. The right side was a bit higher and the left side was a bit lower. A stream of water flowed from right to left along the fork. That meant...

"This means that if you go somewhere, you can go out, right?"

"Probably yes. The fact that the water is flowing means that it is connected to a live shaft."

"Then you don't have to stop. Let's go quickly."

Takechi grabbed Mina's wrist as she tried to walk.

"No, you should go back."

"Eh?"

"The river water flows inwards. I don't know the state of the soil, but there is a danger that the amount of water will increase if it rains a lot. Let's go back and go through another tunnel."

"Don't worry, why do I have to turn around if I've walked so far? Let's go this way!"

"No, let's go back. Until the situation clears up."

Mina looked seriously at Takechi, who still had a hard expression, and then laughed.

"What's wrong, are you scared, you idiot? How much water do you think it is?"

Takechi replied grumpily.

"Even if the water is low now, it may rise in the future. It may be too late to go back after that. Don't you know?"

Mina didn't listen and stick her tongue out at him.

"Eh? I don't think it's a good idea to be ridiculous, but we'll say goodbye as soon as possible! It's no joke to wait here!"

"That's the same for me! But considering the danger..."

"That scares you! What's wrong with your courage? If it's too bad, I'm going to leave you alone here!"

Mina started walking, telling him that. But of course her right hand was stretched out and she couldn't go any further. Looking at Takechi with a look of contempt, she started walking with an indignant expression.

Mina shook her shoulders and laughed.

"Hey. You should do it from the beginning, face the problem."

"Black clothes. Remember when we went out..."

"That's my line. I'll kill you, get ready!"

Then they began to follow the path to the left, avoiding the running water.

Five minutes passed and then ten minutes.

Meanwhile, the water level rose steadily. It used to be a stream, but now it was as big and fast as a mountain stream. The water could no longer be avoided approaching the corner of the tunnel, and the splashes began to wet the black shoes. That fact made the silence between the two even heavier.

The two went further.

The water level was rising even higher.

The water level was already up to their ankles. The two of them sped up without saying anything, but the currents of water made them fall over and over again, and they moved ridiculously. Mina screamed unbearably as she supported her body by pushing her hand against the wall on the right side.

"Hey, when will we get there?"

Takechi yelled back without wasting time.

"You should know that! You told me to go this way!"

"Is everything we did wrong?! Idiot, you came with me, right?"

She slipped and fell, sinking from her head to the bottom of the water. Spitting water, scooping up wet red hair, Mina tried to spit out words of anger.

"Hey! Behind you!"

Looking back at Takechi's warning, she found that her face was completely tense.

The water that was twice as high as before was rushing down like a tsunami.

"Run!"

Mina scrambled to her feet and started running with Takechi. Of course they couldn't escape. The water level had already risen to shoulder height and it was not a state where they could run properly. Still, the two of them desperately moved their slowly moving legs.

Feeling the impact of being hit from behind, Mina fell forward again.

She spun as the field of vision went round and round. Mina shook her limbs and tried to keep her body fluid. It was a waste of effort. The water rushed towards her mouth, which she opened in search of air.

She was drowning.

Even if she stretched her legs out, she couldn't even scratch the bottom of the water. Fear of death filled her lungs in an instant, and Mina literally appeared on the surface of the water in a deadly manner.

The water hit there even harder.

Mina's head flew off and crashed into the tunnel wall. A spark flickered in the back of her eyes, and as it disappeared, Mina's consciousness plunged into darkness.

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He was lucky that her finger got caught in "it".

Takechi's situation was not much different from Mina's. But, Takechi was taller than Mina. He was able to keep his composure because his feet were on the bottom even though he was being washed.

Mina, who had been hovering until just now, suddenly stopped moving, and Takechi knew from his handcuffs that she was passed out or dead. In any case, it was inevitable that he would follow the same path. He circled his bloodied eyes around him, desperately trying to reach into the wall, wondering if there was any way to help her.

At that moment, his fingertips touched a different texture than concrete.

When he reflexively grasped it, he applied the weight of two people and the pressure of the jet of water, and the ligament in his left arm was stretched to the point of breaking. While frowning in pain, Takechi held Mina's body in his right arm and began to lift them up with the power of his left arm alone.

"It" was apparently like an iron ladder.

Against the water, Takechi brought his body to the ladder, dangled his right foot, dangled his left, and carried Mina on his shoulder. Mina weighed less than half his weight. So there was no particular problem. The unit he once belonged to was trained with a backpack of similar weight on his back.

At his feet, a large amount of water flowed with a sound like that of the ground. If she was swallowed again, this time she would not live. While he was haunted by fear, impatience, and the constantly rising water level, Takechi still secured himself and Mina's body and climbed the ladder.

By pushing the hatch attached to the top of the tunnel and opening it, Takechi and Mina were finally able to reach stable ground.

He stabs his knee into the concrete and take a deep breath. Then Takechi laid Mina's body on her back and listened to her mouth.

She wasn't breathing.

Takechi's decision was quick. He had done it many times in life-saving training. He opened her black garment, gave her a heart massage, opened her airways, and did mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. After several attempts to revive her, Mina's body shook and a surprising amount of water leaked from her lips.

"Keh, Kah..."

After seeing Mina cough, Takechi breathed a bit of relief.

He then he looked around him.

What kind of place was that? Is it a maintenance passage or an emergency evacuation passage installed at the top of the underground drainage channel? There was no doubt that it was still a habitable facility because it had a light green night light. So it was no wonder there was an emergency phone somewhere.

When he got to that point, Mina groaned. Looking at Takechi with a vague look...

"What? What happened...?"

"We were saved. There appears to be an escape route over the tunnel."

"....."

"I won't be able to walk for a while. I'll take a break here."

With that said, Takechi sat down by the wall.

Finally, Mina got up. She sat next to Takechi with a slow movement, her back against the wall in the same way. She brushed away the red hair sticking to her cheek with her finger and asked in a heavy voice.

"Have you helped me again?"

"Well, that's correct."

Mina looked at Takechi with an indescribable gaze and then collapsed.

"Thanks."

Takechi was a bit surprised.

He didn't think the day would come when a black robe would thank him for something, he tried to say that, but a different word came out of his open mouth.

"Ah..."

Then, for a moment, Takechi and Mina stared silently at the ceiling.

They were both soaked, it was cold and they were tired. In the dim light of the night lights, they couldn't even see the color of the other's clothes. The only thing that was transmitted was that there was someone next to them, and only someone's body temperature there. Surrounded by darkness, the two of them were only human.

"And you..."

It was Takechi who broke the silence first.

"Why did you go into 'Purgatory'?"

If it had been the Mine from a little while ago, it would have been repulsive. It was not something related to him, she would rather die quickly than hear his insulting voice in her ears.

But Mina didn't, and she only echoed a careless voice in the dark.

"It's a wrap."

Takechi glanced at Mina. Mina was staring at the ceiling.

"The man I lived with was at the bottom of the Yakuza. The group started fighting with 'Purgatory', and I happened to get involved."

Mina's voice was simple. Like listing the facts.

"The man and the others were all dead, I was wondering if I would die too, but that person came over."

Mina's voice trembled. He knew who that person was without asking. The cause that created the current situation. The worst "King" who does not know self-control, has no cause and exercises violence at will.

Genji Kagutsu.

"Even though the corpses were scattered around, I laughed. I was very scared, but I couldn't tear my eyes away. So, as if grabbing a child's head, my head was in a mess."

Mina shook the air with her left hand and her fingers folded.

"Then... something hot spilled out of that hand. It was so hot, it was painful, and it seemed like my body was going to explode. In fact, it exploded. My right hand burned and I screamed. He was laughing and looking at me."

Takechi looked at Mina's right hand. The scars that were badly burned reached down to her bare shoulder.

"Once that was done, the people around me stood up and passed by. At that point, I became a member of 'Purgatory', and I have been with them ever since."

After speaking, Mina hugged her body tightly. Was it because her wet body was getting cold, or because of the memory of Kagutsu Genji? With a little sympathy, Takechi asked.

"What kind of man is Kagutsu Genji?"

Mina looked at Takechi. The distorted look on one cheek of hers also seems to laugh. With that look, she slowly shook her head and...

"Here we go, I don't know."

It did not appear to be a trap or a joke. Maybe it really was a "I don't know."

The information department of "Scepter 4" wanted information on Kagutsu Genji. Hometown, age, values, purpose, career before becoming a "King". Knowing the enemy is the first step to capturing him. Therefore, it was an important goal for "Scepter 4" to know what kind of person Kagutsu Genji was.

However, the answer he got was, strangely, the same as Mina, "I don't know."

One day, Kagutsu Genji suddenly appeared. With the power of "King", he destroyed neighboring antisocial organizations, absorbed the rest of the reconciliation, and "Purgatory" gained momentum.

No one knew where Kagutsu Genji was coming from and no one knew where he was going. He had no past or future, but he lived the present in a sensible and catastrophic way. That was the kind of existence that Kagutsu Genji created.

The words that Mina muttered clearly expressed that.

"That person is a bakemono." (Synonymous with yokai.)

Takechi nodded slightly, but opened his eyes at Mina's words.

"Or maybe Kamisama?"

"What?"

A God. Takechi didn't know anything else to express about Kagutsu Genji.

Mina didn't mind his comments, but in a light tone she said:

"I was so scared, I was very strong, I don't know what he was thinking, but that person saved me."

Takechi couldn't understand the concept of being saved by Kagutsu Genji. Confused, he said what he thought.

"But Kagutsu Genji probably killed your lover."

Mina's eyes glared at Takechi with thick anger.

"The guy who sold me and made money, he's not my lover."

"....."

"Well that's it. I'm different. I had nothing else to do. I couldn't help it because I wanted to live, but..."

Taking her burned fist, Mina laughed as if she was tugging at her.

"Now I have 'this'. If I have 'this', no one can make fun of me. I won't let you use it. I'm a member of 'Purgatory'. That person did that for me."

Takechi involuntarily pinched his mouth.

"Kagutsu Genji didn't give you power to save yourself. It's just a whim, that's all."

Mina laughed, "Haha.", and she looked at Takechi in a silly way.

"I don't understand. That's why it's fine."

"What?"

"Whether he has money or not, is smart or bad, whether it helps or not it helps. Others would think that way. But that person doesn't do that, he hasn't seen it in the first place. What kinds of things are right and what no? I have learned it equally."

"Equality?"

"Yes, that."

With a tense index finger, she pointed at Takechi.

"For that person, we, you, everyone and him are all the same. He is no different from the ants and the waters that surround him. That is fine. In front of that person, they are all the same."

Mina took her burned right hand many times and opened it again, as if to confirm.

"We're not special. I've seen a lot of guys who died like they were exploding with the same power. We just happened to survive. I know that better than anyone. Without "this", my life would be crap and shit."

"I don't think that's the case."

Mina had a soft, resigned smile.

"Haha. You're a good guy. But..."

She covered her face with her raised knees.

"You don't know anything about me, you should stop."

There was no word to return.

"Let's go, I already rested a lot."

Mina stood up and Takechi did the same.

"Ah..."

Then they started walking in that dark place again.

Mina's words contained part of the truth about "Purgatory".

Why was the number of people in "Purgatory" not exhausted, stripping all societies of their fangs and, therefore, being persecuted by all societies? Although the organization should have almost collapsed since Operation Kaume, the amount of black clothing had not decreased, instead it seemed that the damage spread and the amount had increased.

From the testimony of Mina and the captured clan member it was clear that Kagutsu Genji himself had a mysterious charisma. However, Takechi believed that that was not the only reason why "Purgatory" continued to exist.

Members of the "Purgatory" clan consider their lives worthless.

Society, property, life. They don't respect what most humans should focus on. They recognize that their lives are nothing more than a decaying young lady. This is why it is possible to wield the power granted by Kagutsu Genji to the fullest, and even if they destroy themselves, they can lay waste.

Only the moment that they burn life and shine, is valuable to them.

Currently, there is a stable moment. Under the reign of the "Golden King", the people sing prosperity. Still, there are those who find their life useless. As long as human beings are human, such things will never cease.

What if this was an unstable society in a more chaotic era? If Kagutsu Genji appeared there and empowered those who are casually dissatisfied. Imagining tens of thousands of members of "Purgatory", Takechi felt goose bumps on the back of his neck.

"And you?"

Mina's voice made Takechi recoil, who had been caught up in his thoughts.

"What?"

"Why did you go into 'Scepter 4'? Did your parents tell you to do that?"

Mina said that moaning. She may have remembered it when she got up and started walking. They are blue and black, and they have to kill each other when they reach the surface.

Takechi responded to the provocation with a calm voice.

"I am an orphan. I have no parents."

"....."

"I immediately joined the military after leaving the facility because I didn't have the money or the head to get into a good school. I am grateful to my parents for being strong."

Mina awkwardly averted her gaze and then said:

"Sorry."

He wanted to tell her that she didn't need to apologize, but what came out of his mouth was a different word.

"Do not worry."

Then there was silence again.

The tunnel was so long that they still couldn't see the exit. Even so, the night lights continued without being exhausted.

The light that was placed at regular intervals was hypnotic. As he walked and vaguely gazed at the light, Takechi was suddenly caught up in mere imagination. He and Mina were already dead when they fell into the well, and that channel was the Sanzu River, and now they were silently heading towards the afterlife.

If they were dead, at least they wouldn't have to kill each other.

Realizing that he was thinking that way, Takechi frowned.

"Is the same for me."

Suddenly, Mina opened her mouth.

"I don't have parents. One passed away, then the other went to the hospital and I was taken by a relative."

"....."

"They suck. I couldn't take it, ran away and got picked up by the guy I mentioned earlier."

Then Mina looked at Takechi and...

"I wonder if I should have put up with it. Or maybe I should have been born with a big body like you. So, by now, I could have been wearing blue clothes."

Several laments arose.

He shouldn't have helped Mina. He shouldn't have offered a truce. He shouldn't have asked her why she went into "Purgatory".

The blue clothes and the black clothes kill each other. They can kill each other because they don't know each other. The opponent's life can be killed because is just an icon of an obstacle to remove and an enemy to defeat.

Even knowing what kind of person she was and how she lived, it was unlikely that Takechi could take her life.

"Ah..."

Mina screamed. Then she realized that he was looking at the ground. When he raised his face, Takechi saw it.

The white light that illuminated the end of the tunnel.

It was the outside.

The two of them continued walking in silence. Stepping on the path that led to the exit. They both knew what was to come, but they would never stop.

Mina stopped.

"Mina?"

"No, sorry. Somehow."

She said that scratching her red hair.

"Yes, that's right. Let's go out."

"....."

"It sucks. I just wanted to get out as soon as possible. Now I hope it's a little later."

With a slight smile, Mina looked at Takechi.

"I ended up getting along well with you. I wish I could do it a bit more."

It was the same for both of them.

But they had to move on. As Takechi walked silently, Mina began to move her legs without object. The light outside gradually grew stronger and the two figures disappeared from the darkness. The blue clothes that go through and the black clothes that are darker than blood.

Takechi said, squinting at the growing light.

"I have to say one thing."

"Hmm?"

"I said the runners didn't have the key to unlock the ability suppressor, but that's a lie."

Mina's legs stopped again.

"It is hiding in a confusing place; in case it is stolen by the enemy. I am healthy. It's here."

Takechi put his hand on the collar of his uniform. From a cleverly hidden pocket, he pulled out the release key that was thick and long as his index finger, and showed it to Mina.

Mina shook her voice.

"You lied to me?"

"That's right. It was better for you to walk to the surface than to kill yourself there. I thought you'd be easier to control in that state. I'm a few steps higher in terms of physical disparity and ability."

Takechi looked at Mina. Mina was looking at Takechi. Her hair, shoulders, and eyes trembled with anger and hatred. No, it was more intense because they shared time together and she got to know him.

Takechi said, looking at her.

"But I cannot do it."

"Eh?"

"I heard your story."

Capture her and take her to headquarters just as she is. Then what will happen?

Mina will be sealed forever. She will be taken to a detention center dedicated to talented people and she will spend a lot of time there. For Mina, who found value only in power and said that her life could not be anywhere else, it would be more painful than death.

She was a criminal. Whatever the circumstances, sin must be punished. As a member of "Scepter 4", Takechi had never questioned that. Do chores. That should be so.

That should have been it.

"I can't kill you. I can't take power. I can't let you go. I'll regret it all the time if you sin again."

"So what will you do?"

Takechi laughed at Mina, who revealed her mistrust.

"Unlock you."

"....."

"Then you and I will return to the same state as before we fell into the well."

Mina swallowed hard. Takechi turned to the front and started walking.

"Then you can kill me without hesitation. Forget everything until now. We have never had the time to walk through the tunnel."

"You're stupid?!"

Mina screamed as if she couldn't bear it.

"It's not like that! It's not so easy to forget about the boy I care about! What you've done so far, if you take off the handcuffs, you won't be able to do it!"

Takechi didn't object and nodded silently.

"I don't think so. Maybe so."

The light outside already enveloped the entire body of the two. They could hear the sound of the rain. The cool air outside caressed their skin. Taking a deep breath, Takechi looked at the cuffs on his right hand.

"However, nothing can be done as it is now. If the situation is resolved, a change is needed. If I remove the key, it will change."

"You, up to that point...!"

Mina gritted her teeth and shook her voice.

"Do you want to kill me that much, Takechi?!"

Takechi slowly shook his head.

"No, Mina. I just want to correct my mistakes."

What they had talked about, helping each other, reveal their emotions. That was a mistake.

They shouldn't have done that. It couldn't be Takechi and Mina. They had to be blue and black. Otherwise, if they didn't think of the other person as a human being, they couldn't kill them.

Takechi inserted the key into the suppressor for different abilities. Mina screamed in fear.

"Stop! That's not true!"

Takechi slowly turned the key. Mina wreaked havoc and tried to annoy him, but Takechi, who was physically superior, forcibly advanced with his finger. Tears spilled from Mina's eyes, and she stomped on the ground many times, like a child with tantrums.

"This is because I will kill you! When the handcuffs are removed and my strength returns, I will kill you! I will burn you! I really will! Okay?"

"Yes."

Takechi smiled calmly and replied.

"That's right."

The ability suppressor came off and fell to the ground with a thud.

CHAPTER 4: SHINIGAMI AND THE HOUNDS

At the time it was reported that Habari Jin was shot, Goki Zenjo kicked the door of a moving transport vehicle and jumped straight onto the street.

"Zenjo?! What?!"

Someone's voice instantly disappeared and became inaudible. No, Zenjo didn't hear anything in the first place. In the midst of an inertial movement exceeding 100 km / h, he killed the impact of the landing, he would have died instantly if he were a normal person, but with his skills and physique, he started to run backwards down the street, just as it was. Zenjo jumped the fence and disappeared into the dead of night, leaving a trail that glowed blue despite the confusing, snaking vehicle on its way.

Then about 15 minutes later.

"Scepter 4". Inside the tunsho, there was the figure of Zenjo breathing on his shoulder and Habari looking at him coldly.

"You came, Zenjo."

Zenjo silently approached Habari, who said nothing, and grabbed him by the shoulders.

"What? You're close. Hey, stop. Don't smell me."

"No blood. Where did you get shot?"

"It wasn't me who got shot. Get away from there."

As expected, Zenjo blinked several times and finally understood the situation.

A corpse dressed in blue lay under his feet.

His chest was stained with blood. Shot to the heart. Probably an instant death. He died with a shocked face and there was no sign of pain.

Habari was frail next to the corpse and wiped the blood from his chest with his fingertips.

"To be precise, they shot me, but the bullet missed me. I'm still the "Blue King". I can help it."

If you look closely, there are a lot of members around. Probably for status and protection verification. The giant who suddenly appeared and began to smell the "King", looked at him with a very delicate expression.

"The sniper seems like he waited a lot. I shot him as an incident, and the sniper ended up there. I wasn't lucky that he died perfectly."

Habari stood up, lamenting.

Zenjo, who was still observing the situation around him, said something decent for the first time that day.

"Sniper? Where?"

They are in the equipment warehouse inside the tunsho.

It is about 6 tatamis in size, things are stacked neatly and there are no windows. Shooting a person in this room from "outside" is impossible if you think with common sense.

But of course your war is not within the bounds of common sense.

"Commander. Traces were found."

One of the members who was conducting an inspection on the spot looked at Habari. Habari walked towards it and looked at the part indicated by the member with a slight stretch. Zenjo stood behind Habari and watched him.

Ventilation duct for taking in air from outside. There were bullet holes in the filter.

Habari narrowed his eyes and affirmed.

"Here it is. The sniper shot us through this conduit."

"But, Commander. Sure, this conduit is connected to the outside, but it coils intricately on the inside. No matter how talented you are, it's impossible to shoot from here."

"It's Magome."

It was not intuitive to say that. Even to Zenjo's knowledge, there were very few talented people who could perform such tricks, or there was only one.

Habari probably had the same name in mind. He gave orders as he traced the burned conduit with his finger.

"Notifies Shiotsu. He is a Strain criminal, looking for Magome Hayato all over the country. Alive or dead, I want to capture him urgently."

"Yes!"

He salutes in an upright and immovable position, and several members ran out of the room. After saying goodbye, Zenjo muttered as he furrowed his eyebrows.

"Why is Magome pointing at you?"

"He's a professional criminal. Did Soma ask him or did he join "Purgatory"? In any case, he's our enemy from the start."

"I understand."

Zenjo nodded and stopped thinking. No matter what the circumstances are, he only has one thing to do.

As he feels the weight of "Hekireki" on his waist, Zenjo asks him to remind him.

"Dead or alive?"

"If Magome were to target us, the damage would be enormous. We have to stop him before he raises the death toll. First."

Habari chuckled slightly.

"You are not that skilled. Zenjo."

"Ah."

Zenjo replied without laughing and left the room. As Habari said, he was not the type of person who can wield a sword thinking about the life and death of the enemy. If there is something to be done, he will just do it.

If there is something that points to Habari, he will cut that throat. That is what Zenjo should do now.

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When he opened the door, a strong wind blew into his face.

Taku narrowed his eyes and held his sunglasses in hand to keep them from flying. The rooftop of the building had no obstructions, so the wind became stronger. That was the third time he was there, but he hadn't gotten used to it. With tight lips, Taku searched for the person he was looking for.

He was sitting in the southwest corner.

"Hello. Taku-kun. Thank you for your hard work."

With his back to him, Magome said that.

Taku approached him silently. The military coat that wrapped Magome's body flapped in the strong wind. Still, Magome didn't make a slight move. With one knee upright, he fixed the new floor of a long sniper rifle and kept its face down.

Taku casually placed his backpack next to him.

"Soma-san told me. This is a supply."

"Yes, thank you. I can still stay here for a while."

Magome smiled with his red lips. White skin like a woman and a slim body are rarely seen in the violent group "Purgatory". By simple comparison of power, Magome is probably one of the weakest of the clan.

Still, there is no one in "Purgatory" who despises Magome.

It is well known that he is a murderer who has dealt with over 100 humans so far.

"Isn't Kyoji-kun here?"

Magome's face swayed to him, and Taku felt his spine stiffen. Even though he was known to belong to the same clan, "he" had a muzzle-like intimidation.

Magome's eyes were covered with a white bandage.

The first red eye, crudely drawn with a magic pen, was staring at Taku.

"If he only brings supplies, I can do it alone."

"Aha. That's correct."

Magome laughed slightly, lowered his face again and adopted the same tone.

"You don't have to be so scared. It's okay. I won't shoot you."

That said, Taku swallowed the dream.

Hayato Magome. Known as "Shinigami", a blind Strain specializing in sniper assassinations.

Taku doesn't know when he became famous in the underworld. What he knows is that his true ability is not to see things with his eyes but with the ability to feel. Due to his unique ability, he has managed to be a high precision sniper many times. And more recently, Magome became a member of the "Purgatory" clan, and now his target is "Scepter 4".

"What's happening down there now?"

Taku accurately grasped the intent of the question. It had already been a week since Magome settled on the rooftop of that building. Meanwhile, he has lost contact with the lower world. That was to escape the detection network of "Scepter 4".

"Nothing was broadcast to the world, but it seems that "Scepter 4" is quite adherent. It is natural because the "King" was the target."

"Huh, that's right. I wonder if the 'King' suddenly went overboard."

Magome talked about his failure in a funny way. Taku couldn't understand that behavior.

"Are you laughing? Thanks to you, the other side is dying and they are chasing me. If they find me, they will definitely kill me."

"Yes. That's correct. Either way, I'm in trouble."

"Is that the goal too?"

"I am a sniper. I am targeting many things."

Magome jokingly leaked that inadvertently. Hearing that, Magome laughed face down.

"Sorry, sorry. Don't be so mad. Well, I mean, if you target is the "King", all the servants will be mad, right?"

"Yes, that's how it is."

"An angry prey lacks calm. Movement is simple. If you follow me, the route is limited. It is very easy to point and shoot. That's why I did it."

"....."

"In a nutshell, it's like feeding yourself. But this method works quite well. No matter how strong the organization is, if you shake it up, something will spill out."

Magome was motivated.

On the rooftop of the building, the muzzle protruding from the railing flashed.

That was it. He couldn't hear any roars like in movies and dramas. Taku didn't know if the weapon was handmade or if it was his genius.

But what was clear was...

"That's right, harvest."

It's just that a life had just disappeared from this earth.

The "Shinigami" who came back to life had a gentle smile.

"Well, but there were other objectives as well."

"Objectives?"

"I wanted to see the "King" there. Jin Habari. I have never seen him."

Magome's "seeing" was probably different from Taku's. The views of birds of prey flying in the sky and lizards crawling on the ground are different.

"It was very nice. It was good to see it. It was beautiful. You should see as many beautiful things as you can while you are alive."

Taku's breath hitched when he saw Magome's face murmur hypnotizingly.

The first red eye on the bandage turned red and began to get wet.

"That's why I'm glad I entered "Purgatory". Habari Jin's beautiful blue. If I could get through that, I'm sure... it would be very good."

Blood spurted from the burned skin around his eyes. Magome's eyes were shattered when he received the Kagutsu installation. His blindness was from birth and his eyes did not originally function. As he spat flames from both eyes, he Magome silently smiled and said:

"Ah, I blame you. I finally got rid of him without any help."

Taku thought that guy was crazy.

Perhaps he finally noticed that the blood was gushing out, Magome touched his bandage for a moment.

"Oh, sorry. It was a bit expensive. I showed you a strange place."

"Yes."

He didn't care. He was filled with feelings that he wanted to go home quickly.

After reading it, Magome laughed again and lowered his head again.

"See you next week. Glad there are lots of sweets next time."

"Yes."

Nodding, just before returning the answer, he again saw the light flashing from the muzzle.

Taku frowned. Descending to the nether world means entering the rank of that god of death. He was in a place where Magome's bullets could reach, and just knowing that, neither mess nor liquor will taste the same.

"I wonder if you can kill him right away, that blue clothes."

Taku descended the stairs that led to the nether world, muttering that.

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"Shinohara! Hey! Answer me, Shinohara!"

As he huddled behind the car, Masaki Tsuchida, a member of "Scepter 4", could only call out to his colleague who was bleeding and groaning.

There was no omen. "Scepter 4" is currently at war with "Purgatory", but has to deal with other crimes of different abilities. Upon receiving a call from the general police, Shinohara in the passenger seat was suddenly shot as the two headed there.

Tsuchida's reaction was quick. He stopped the car suddenly, got out like he was falling from the driver's seat and stuck his body to the body. However, Tsuchida did not trust the meaning of that shield. He already knew who fired that shot.

"Help me! Shinohara got shot! Magome, damn it!"

Tsuchida felt despair slowly erode his heart as he became a radio.

It's been five days since Habari was attacked by "Purgatory" sniper Hayato Magome, and six people have died during that time. And most of them were shot in places where they couldn't be attacked. Closed room without windows, narrow alley, toilet, bathtub, bed, Magome's bullets did not discriminate a place.

No obstruction made sense to that sniper. Still, he had no choice but to snuggle into the car to increase his chances of survival. Even while he was doing that, his partner in the passenger seat was bleeding and dying.

"Shinohara, hold on, Shinohara...!"

Using the driver's door that remained open as a shield, Tsuchida managed to stick his head into the car and raise his voice. Shinohara, leaning back in the passenger seat, was no longer speaking. Blood soaked his blue clothes. It was clear that his life would be lost in no time.

"Damn, if things continue like this...!"

Fear of death and affection for his comrades drew Tsuchida's spine. Little by little, Tsuchida began to crawl towards the driver's seat. If his bullets will chase him forever, it's better to start the car and run.

His right hand, reaching for the car key, exploded.

"What?!"

His blood and pieces of his flesh fell on his face. Tsuchida buried his face under the steering wheel, enduring severe pain. The last minute teething was due to fear and anger.

Magome is having fun.

The pain and desperation of fighting to help his companions and getting shot when he gets close. He laughs at Tsuchida and Shinohara, who die while suffering, somewhere.

Thinking of a sniper who didn't even know his face, laughing red, Tsuchida even wept with humiliation and hatred.

"Tsuchida! This is...!"

Suddenly, a voice called out to him from behind.

He takes a breath and look at him. Before he knew it, "Scepter 4's" transport vehicle pulled up there. It was probably the first squad, even though it had been less than three minutes since Tsuchida contacted them.

However, it wasn't because of his speed that he caught Tsuchida's attention.

It was Gen Shiotsu, the deputy director of "Scepter 4", who got out of the transport vehicle and ran towards that place.

At that moment, Tsuchida understood Magome's thoughts.

Why didn't he kill them right away? Why did he shoot Shinohara, but he didn't take his life and let the blood flow?

(We are food. It's just a pinch to attract bigger prey!), he thought.

"No! Shiotsu-san, don't come!"

Tsuchida screamed, forgetting about his death and pain. Still, Shiotsu's legs never stopped. He was constantly approaching there. How long would he have until they pierced his face? 5 seconds, 3 seconds, 1 second. Tsuchida couldn't even close his eyes and was just looking at Shiotsu.

So, he was sure that Tsuchida was the only one who saw him.

The glow of blue and red exploded like a spark.

It wasn't long before he realized that "Hekireki" that passed over Shiotsu's head had repelled the true dragon's bullets.

A burly man with a huge saber landed on the asphalt with the flexibility of a carnivorous feline. He was already running when he thought it was a good thing. Tsuchida, who was stunned, didn't even look at him, and as he exposed his fangs as if he was laughing, he jumped up and disappeared from sight.

"Tsuchida! How is the wound? Can you move?"

Shiotsu's voice suddenly came back to him. Several members came to try to help Tsuchida. Severe pain hit him, and Tsuchida frowned at his sweaty face and said painfully...

"Okay, I'm fine. He just shot me in the hand. Instead, Shinohara..."

"Shinohara is behind."

Tsuchida instinctively saw Shinohara.

He was stuck, leaning against the passenger seat.

"Damn, that bastard...!"

With tears in their eyes, they took Tsuchida out of the car and loaded him into a transport car. Shiotsu said in a low voice, giving first aid to his right hand.

"Don't worry. He will surely be killed by Zenjo."

Shiotsu's expression was calm as usual. However, Tsuchida did not miss the light hidden behind his eyes. Neither anger nor hatred. The brilliance of the "Scepter 4" philosophy itself.

Hold the sword and control the sword.

"Scepter 4" will never forgive the "Shinigami" who kills people with a deadly bullet.

"Yes, surely."

As he clenched his teeth, Tsuchida just muttered that.

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Zenjo ran through the city at night, carving the blue glow out of the dark.

Jumping from the street and using the block wall as a springboard, Zenjo leapt like a monkey from the roof of the residential area that stretched beyond to the rooftop. Feeling that something burned on his forehead, neck and chest. Perhaps it was the line of sight of the assassin sniper Magome.

For Zenjo now, the path is not a path. Because it is straight and flat. If he were there, Magome's bullets will mercilessly attack him. Even if he could handle it, he decided there was no need to take a mindless risk. Somehow, he was just doing that.

For Goki Zenjo, thinking was not always necessary. His body reacts before thinking. He knew that surrendering to that feeling would lead to survival.

And, again, the "heat" he felt at the key point instantly increased.

"Ah!"

"Hekireki" moved at super high speed and repelled the incoming bullets.

This was the fifth attack since he protected Shiotsu. Zenjo had prevented and shot down all of that. And each time the "scent" became more precise in determining Magome's position from the direction and angle the bullet was flying.

Somewhere in the skyscraper 1 km from where he was now, Zenjo grasped Magome's position with a sense rather than a language. If he did the same a few more times, he could pinpoint his whereabouts.

That would be when Magome's neck would fly.

With that in mind, Zenjo raised his face and...

"Eh?!"

He instantly squirmed and tried to dodge it.

He couldn't dodge it. Zenjo fell from the ceiling, recognizing that heat, pain, and blood were spilling down his side.

"What?"

As he plunged into the garbage can from the head, Zenjo looked at his side curiously. He dipped his finger into the blood-dripping wound without hesitation and pulled it out.

It was a bullet.

He split in half vertically.

"Oh, I see."

With a smile, Zenjo dropped the bullet and stood up. The next bullet he fired immediately hit the lid of the trash can and he started running again.

What was trapped in Zenjo's body was a fragment of a bullet that had been thrown.

Of course, he was not accidentally stabbed. That was Magome's unique ability.

Although Magome is a Strain, he is also a member of the "Purgatory" clan. If the shots he has succeeded with are due to his responsiveness as Strain, then there must be another ability as a member of the "Purgatory" clan. And maybe that was it.

The bullets fired by Magome move freely according to his will.

At the same time, the bullet has the ability to respond like a Strain and the ability of a member of the "Purgatory" clan. He can detect the target by his sensitive ability and freely change his trajectory by emitting a red genie. In this case, whether in a closed room or in a duct with complicated curves, he can shoot as long as there is a space for the bullets. It was a magic bullet from the Shinigami.

And, if you put into words the feeling that Zenjo captured, it would be like the one on the right. Of course, Zenjo didn't think much. Magome's bullets move according to Magome's will, and even after being knocked down, he cannot be alert. All he needed to know was that.

Again, Magome's magic bullet attacked Zenjo.

"Hekireki" blinked and cut the bullet in both directions.

Starting from the good line, the separate bullets to the left and right flew again in an arc. Zenjo felt it instead of seeing it. And the body was moving before he could feel it.

The next moment, when it seemed that Zenjo's giant body had sunk, he was leaping at the top. As he spun around, he shook "Hekireki" like he was rolling it up and knocked down the bullet chunks that were attacking from behind.

The bullet that sank into the asphalt shuddered with synchrotron radiation for a time, but finally stopped moving.

Zenjo didn't look at it and ran at explosive speed. He was able to grasp Magome's position. All he had to do was run straight to that point and cut his throat.

Zenjo accelerated even more. With a smile on his fangs, he looked like a bullet-like hound.

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Hayato Magome sees things in color.

It was too natural for true innately blind ability. People have colors. Red to blue to green to white to yellow to purple, various colors that will likely vary depending on your propensity. In the dark, those colors appear and disappear, are born and die. For Magome, this is how the world should be.

When did he want to reach him?

Blind and therefore considered vulnerable, Magome wanted to use it when he realized his power. He wanted to touch the colors with his bare hands in a world that he could only dimly see. He could do it with different abilities.

Since he knew it, for him, the world became more than a sight, a touch and a change. He touched the colors of others and watched them change. It became the meaning of Magome's life and the reason for his existence.

However, there was only one sad thing.

When Magome touched it, the color changed dramatically. If he believed it glowed, withered, or swelled, it would one day disappear. The change was very beautiful, but it was sad that Magome disappeared. He wishes he could keep swinging forever, he hadn't thought about it again, but now he had a different idea.

The color is beautiful because it disappears.

After embracing that idea, Magome began to believe that his mission was to erase the colors. He would leave drastically changing color fluctuations in his heart. Magome had had that idea for some time, saying that he was the monument for that purpose.

And now...

He had seen the most beautiful blue in his life.

"Fufu..."

On the rooftop of the building, holding a sniper rifle and turning his face downward, he smiled a heartbreaking smile on his lips. Red blood spurted from his white bandage and ran down his cheeks like tears, but he was unaware of it. There was something more to etch in his heart than such a trivial matter.

Surely, it must be a meteor.

The stars have no color. Therefore, Magome had never seen a meteor. He had just found out. Fragments of stars running in the sky. A ray of light that fulfills someone's prayer while burning.

It was coming straight for him.

"Well... well...! Very beautiful!"

Magome shot, leaking a voice of joy. He fired a bullet from the muzzle and headed straight for the meteor. Magome was a sniper who lurked on the roof of the building, but at the same time he was the bullet itself. The bullet, which was linked to the main body by its responsiveness as Strain, extended the fingertips of death to the meteor to burn it.

And it was cut without worries.

"Wonderful!"

What he admired was that blue fluctuation. Every color Magome had touched changed dramatically in that moment. He glowing, struggling, writhing, swelling, withering and disappearing. It must have been the victims' emotions, anguish, fear, rage, despair and death.

And yet that meteor hadn't changed at all.

Anger, fear, despair. Nothing. That's why it was wonderful. Things he couldn't touch. Things that cannot be changed by touching. Like a blue star that shines forever, it seemed to remain there unchanged.

That is why...

"I want to erase you!"

Screaming, Magome fired three times in a row.

The three sniper bullets were the same Magome. The three bullets were connected in a chain of beads making full use of both the sentient ability and the ability other than red. The death binary landed on the blue meteor with a time lapse of less than zero coma seconds, and just before that, each of the three bullets split into three.

Making full use of the red ability, Magome destroyed himself. Still, the nine bullets were still connected to Magome's will.

"Catch you!"

The nine bullets surrounded the meteor. That blue couldn't defeat all the bullets attacking from all directions. Since he couldn't move, he would be stuck. There were still many bullets with different abilities.

At that moment, the meteor sped up even more.

"What?!"

For the first time, he was really upset.

The meteor did not try to crush the bullet. He dared to ignore some of the bullets that struck him head-on and sank further. Naturally, some bullets dug into his body, but the meteor never stopped. On the contrary, he accelerated more and came directly to the building where Magome was.

Magome's expectation that he would enter the building as he was was completely disappointing.

The meteor did not enter the building and began to run directly down the wall.

Magome felt the nape of his neck twitch.

Death crawled from his feet. He was afraid of himself, that he was called the "Shinigami". Realizing that, Magome laughed.

"Fufufufufufufufufufu!"

As he held the sniper rifle, Magome bounced to his feet. The knuckles of the fixed body ached from the long sniper stance, but he wasn't prepared for that. He leaned over the railing, he holding a long sniper rifle "down", aiming at a meteor already approaching dozens of meters. There were no shields on the walls of the building. Even if he avoided it, he could catch up with the propelling force of different abilities. If he ate it right like before, he would go down without doing anything. Then it would be good prey for the sniper.

"Here we go, what will you do?!"

Magome's first red eye surely giggled and captured the meteor's appearance.

The next moment, it disappeared.

".....?!"

The blue color that should have existed until now, the loss of light like a meteor, had completely disappeared from view.

At that moment, Magome panicked. Like when those with open eyes were enveloped in jet black darkness. Magome finally remembered that the blue meteor, which had been rushing straight towards him, was the only one that could connect him to the world.

In total darkness, but it was certainly audible.

Some steps going up the building.

"Breathe, a harsh beast breath!"

Magome was a professional. The moment he found out that his weapon had become insignificant, he simply dropped his sniper rifle. He fled from the railing and found the submachine gun in the bracket.

At that moment, the footsteps stopped.

Magome lifted his face from him. If the red he had seen, it would have been visible.

A hunting dog dressed in blue leaped with a huge saber against the white moon.

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Magome was still alive.

Zenjo, who landed on the rooftop of the building, turned to the blood-soaked "Shinigami" as he shook himself. Even the eyes, ears, and nose were on alert.

However, on the rooftop of the great building, there was only one enemy, Magome. He couldn't find any other members of the "Purgatory" clan. There was nowhere to hide. Recognizing that, Zenjo finally approached his true target cautiously.

Magome's body was almost severed.

The example was floating from his belly to the bottom, which had been ripped apart by "Hekireki" and into the sea of bright red blood. Still, with a slight exhale from his lips, a low voice was leaking out.

"Fu, fu... wow, here you are..."

Zenjo proceeded silently. He knew more than anyone that in "Purgatory", he can be a threat if it comes from the breath of an insect.

He shook his head and saw the first red on Zenjo.

"Disappear... the 'intention'... it is in your hand where the emotions disappear... for you, no..."

Zenjo frowned.

"What are you talking about?"

"Well... yes, it's true... I can't reach it, that's why my bullets are due to my 'will', so..."

Zenjo stopped next to Magome's head. Magome laughed as he coughed.

"I'm sure... a person like you... wearing that blue... can kill the 'King'..."

The tip of "Hekireki" pierced the first red.

Magome's body jerked several times and then he froze.

Zenzo took a deep breath and looked up at the sky. He was looking at the big, white, round moon as the wind blew on the rooftop of the building.

Then, Zenjo heard the approaching footsteps.

The hunting dog glanced at him quickly, and then Zenjo echoed a screaming voice.

"Habari. What are you doing here?"

"I don't think there is anything to do. I have come to kill him, but you seem to have gone ahead."

He said that calmly as usual, and then Habari added,

"There's a relief team downstairs. I hope they treat you."

"I am not hurt."

"So what is that on your side?"

"It's a scratch, just that."

When he returned, Habari laughed out loud.

Then Habari stood next to Zenjo and looked at Magome's corpse.

"It was a nuisance. Without you, more sacrifices would have been made. Well done, Zenjo."

"This guy was saying something strange at the end."

"What?"

"The "will" disappears, or the "King" may die. Well, I don't know. What did he mean?"

For Zenjo, it was just a common question. There were a lot of things that he "didn't understand", and Habari always answered them clearly.

But this time, Habari fell silent with a slightly impressive expression and started looking at Magome again.

"Habari?"

When Zenjo asked repeatedly, Habari smiled a little and turned to his true skill.

"What is it? You can see it correctly."

Habari said that.

".....?"

Of course, Zenjo didn't understand the meaning of the word, at that moment he wasn't there yet.

Habari turned to Zenjo. The usual smile returned to his mouth.

"Let's go back to the tunsho. Would you like to eat something?"

When Habari hit Zenjo's shoulder, Zenjo forgot about everything. With a big nod, Habari returned the gesture and began to walk slowly.

CHAPTER 5: DRUNK WITH THE KING

As soon as he woke up, a severe headache hit Hitoshi Soma.

"Uhg..."

With a groan, Soma blinked his muddy eyes several times. The side view of it showed tatami mats, chests of drawers, tables, and liquor bottles strewn about.

The liquor bottle was the trigger. At the same time that he remembered the taste of sake in his mouth, something hot and sour flowed from his stomach to his throat. He couldn't help but jump up and quickly looked around him and found the toilet. He stuck his head in there and Soma threw up all he wanted.

"Ah..."

As he endured the contraction reaction that made his body flip over several times, it became easier. He wiped the vomit that was contaminating his mouth with the palm of his hand and then Soma sat leaning on the toilet.

The interior of the room was miserable.

This is one of the multi-tenant rooms at the Kaume Detention Center. Since "Purgatory" has occupied this area, the Clansmans live where they want. The multi-tenant room, which was created for multiple people to wake up, was a popular spot and was also considered a superior room in "Purgatory".

He couldn't remember who was in that room, but at least now, several people, or what were human, were lying in a bottle of liquor.

There were two corpses, both female. One was half-naked and peeking from the belly to the bottom, and the other was almost charcoal. Without the breast lump, it would not have been possible to distinguish between men and women.

When he looked away from there, he saw a sleeping man leaning against the door of the multi-tenant room.

The "Red King", Kagutsu Genji.

The memory of last night suddenly revived.

Kagutsu that day was in a good mood. He took two women with him when he returned from outside, but of course, that was not the reason he was in a good mood. It always happens that Kagutsu likes women. There are a certain number of women who like dangerous men, but if it is too dangerous, some survival instinct will cause a mistake. They are happily hugged by Kagutsu and turn into corpses of joy.

In any case, Kagutsu started serving sake just as he was, and Soma was involved in it for some reason. There are not many parties to drink between two people. Various members of the clan came and went, and he always carried sake and left it, probably because it was an offering. Kagutsu drank like it was a sacrificial liquor, and Soma was also involved.

His memory was cut off from the point where he opened the fifth bourbon.

"I'm afraid I did something stupid..."

As he cursed himself, Soma held his aching head.

Suddenly, he found a giant body that moved to the edge of his field of vision.

"Oh, damn, Hiragi."

The "Purgatory" executive, Hiragi Toma, turned his back on this. The muscular upper body was exposed, and the burned Japanese tattoo was staring at Soma. Glancing around the corner of the room, he looked at what he was doing, and he was drinking alone.

Soma was amazed. He felt bad just looking at the bottle.

"Is it liquor? Don't drink."

Hiragi replied without looking back.

"It is the last liquor."

"Eh?"

"We are done. We are about to die."

With that said, Hiragi stirred the drink.

Soma laughed at that with his nose.

"What do you say, are you still drunk?"

There, he suddenly became aware of the current situation.

That multipurpose room was originally a room for confining prisoners. The windows had upright iron bars and there was only one person.

And Kagutsu was leaning against the door and sleeping.

Looking at him, Soma sat down next to Hiragi.

"Ah, how much did you drink yesterday?"

"Do you know? You were the first."

"Did you get drunk?"

"It was careless when I came."

A heavy silence fell in the multi-tenant room.

Even with Soma, all of Kagutsu's actions could not be read. He often killed people in a good mood and sometimes ended up in a bad mood without wreaking havoc. He was like a disaster. It may be possible to predict in rare cases, but it is by no means perfect.

However, in his experience thus far, there was one thing that was true.

Kagutsu's hangover has a habit of killing everyone who is noticed.

Only Soma and Hiragi were in this room at the time.

Soma and Hiragi were in a situation where they got caught on a ship with a beast, and the beast was taking a nap at the entrance of the ship.

Soma's decision was quick. Looking back at Hiragi,

"It's okay. Run away."

Hiragi asked.

"Where and how?"

"You are getting stronger. Can you gently lift him up and push him away?"

"Hmm, do it yourself."

"Well, are you afraid of dying, even though you always say something that looks great?"

"If you will die anyway, drink your favorite drink and die."

Cocococo... Hiragi poured sake into the drink, making a pleasant noise.

Soma threw a spoon. Hiragi seemed to have completely given up. Originally, "Purgatory" people had little attachment to life. If you die here, you probably think until then.

However, Soma still hadn't given up. It may be inevitable when it finally arrives, but there is still something that can be done.

"You can get out even if you open the door. Who are we?"

While he was lying down, Soma raised his left hand. The little finger, the cross section where the tip of the second joint was missing, began to illuminate a red light. It is an ultra-high pressure flame called a "whip", which is Soma's unique ability. Literally a flame that sometimes swings like a whip or laser and could easily cut through an iron bar.

Kagutsu said something.

Soma and Hiragi looked back at the same time.

"....."

Kagutsu kept saying something. He maybe he was talking in his sleep. They weren't sure what he was talking about

"Stop it."

Hiragi said, gliding smoothly. He was evacuating towards the wall, holding a bottle and a drink.

"You think I haven't used my power until now? I don't know what you think, but when I tried to use a different ability, I stopped. Now it is dangerous."

Soma said that, with his back to the wall like Hiragi.

"Well, then sorry."

"I already told you. Drink your favorite drink. There's still something in the bottle around that."

"....."

Soma folded his lips into a sword and looked at the sleeping Kagutsu.

A beast at the door. He cannot use different abilities. He doesn't know when it will happen. Soma, in a slow but almost certainly dead room, laughed. By the way, the detention center also had an execution room. So, that would be the death penalty room.

Well, aside from "sin and punishment", Soma still wasn't going to die. He went through the front of his black suit and tried to get the cell phone. He wanted to contact the outside and ask the members of the "Purgatory" clan for help.

The cell phone he pulled out was melting muddy.

"....."

Soma remembered the headache and held his temples. He didn't remember why that happened at all, but it was probably drunken entertainment. "Purgatory" didn't care about that.

Soma called out to Hiragi, with a hint of hope.

"Hiragi. Do you have a cell phone?"

"Eh?"

Hiragi turned his turbulent gaze towards Soma's cell phone, which turned into a piece of iron and plastic. He then she thought about it for a while and made a voice as if remembering something: "Oh."

"Somehow, I threw it away and it broke. So I didn't bring it."

"Goodbye hope..."

Despair was still despair, although he did not expect it. The ability was locked and there was no way to contact the outside world. At that moment, he was about to sit down and wait for death.

"Ah..."

Suddenly, the memory of him revived.

The night before, before drinking alcohol. One of the women brought in by Kagutsu, her red lips giggling slightly, her fingers thin with fine cigarettes and her fingers slipping.

He turns his gaze. Soma was about to approach the corpse of a woman that rolled onto a tatami mat. Hiragi was looking at the appearance of the open clothing.

Finally, Soma found a woman's cell phone, sturdily decorated.

"Ok!"

When he accidentally said that, Hiragi also looked at the cell phone from the side. He didn't think he wanted to die unnecessarily. Being killed by Kagutsu is almost synonymous with dying in a disaster.

When he opened the cell phone, the words "Enter password" jumped into his eyes, and Soma frowned.

"Password?"

"It's a PIN. That woman's phone is locked."

Soma groaned.

"Even though she came with Kagutsu, why is her cell phone locked? Lock your life!"

Hiragi shrugged and started drinking again.

"I can't help saying it now. Sorry, I can't use it."

"Hiragi, you are an ex-yakuza. Do you know how to find out the PIN in such a case?"

Hiragi was still holding the goblet.

"It's that easy. You should catch someone who knows and beat them until they throw up the answer."

"She's dead now! I was hoping you would say something a little more useful."

Kagutsu turned around.

The two of them looked at each other as they headed for the wall again.

"Hey. You're free to die, but don't involve me. I still have some alcohol left."

"This line is mine! It's too early to give up! Let's cooperate a bit!"

When Soma screamed, Hiragi thought with a troubled face. Looking at Kagutsu, then the corpse of a woman, and then, like a soliloquy...

"No, I heard it when I was collecting a debt. I can't ask a deceased person for a PIN, but the numbers that people use are usually fixed. I can't think of a four-digit number. Hey. There are a lot of people who use numbers that are easy to remember. "

Soma was a bit impressed.

"You have intellect regardless of appearance."

"Shut up. It's an older brother's sale. It doesn't matter if I was a scammer. Easy to remember numbers are simple numbers anyway. 1234, 1111, etc."

Soma immediately entered both passwords. However, both did not work.

"It didn't work. What else?"

"Your birthday, your family's birthday, your room number, the last four digits of your phone number, or something like that. Whether it's a date you like or a random number. I don't have that kind of information here. You know?"

"I don't know, that's all."

When Kagutsu brought them in, they thought they would die anyway. So to be honest, they didn't even remember the name. Especially some kind of detailed personal information.

When he wondered if all was lost this time, he suddenly had a flash.

Once again, Soma was about to approach the corpse of a woman. He turned the corpse over, but there was nothing to look for. He looks for the corpse of another charred woman under the scattered liquor bottles and under his desk, but he can't find it either. Another place he hadn't seen.

There was only one.

Between both feet of the sleeping Kagutsu. In the crotch, there he was.

"Why...?"

He unintentionally rushed in. But it didn't matter what the reason was. The important thing is that now it is absolutely necessary for Soma.

A thick wallet with rose gold decoration, belonging to that woman.

To achieve this, Soma approached Kagutsu.

"Hey."

Hiragi screamed as if he was impatient. At that very moment, Kagutsu could wake up. If that happened, he would definitely die. Cold sweat swirled around that premonition, but a slight smile floated on Soma's mouth.

Being around Kagutsu is already a life threatening situation. Kagutsu kills people naturally and he doesn't kill naturally. He is not even sure if he is a murderer or a perpetrator. He would be like a person erasing the life of a mindless creature or without him realizing it.

So it doesn't change wherever it is.

If ruin was coming soon, whether near or far, he wanted to at least look at it with a good cover.

The moment he touched the wallet, Kagutsu opened his eyes.

"....."

At the death sentence, cells throughout his body screamed. The muscles contracted, the skin all over his body was covered in goose bumps, and unknown chemicals were released into the brain. Soma endured a moment that seemed infinite without even swaying.

Kagutsu closed his eyes.

As he held his breath, Soma took out his wallet because it was at his crotch, and it was time to get back on top of the tatami so as not to make noise again. He exhaled grandly and struck a gutsy pose.

"Oh, safe!"

"Do you want to die or live?"

Soma replied as he opened the wallet to Hiragi, who asked him as if he was in awe.

"I'm still determined to want to live. Even if nothing starts, you don't want to end in such a place, right?"

Then Soma took out a card from her wallet.

It was a driver's license with a photo of a dead woman's face attached to it.

"Now we know at least her birthday."

"Did you cross such a dangerous bridge just because of that? I don't know if it's correct."

"Better than dying doing nothing. Now, let's see."

He enters the birthday written on her driver's license. As Hiragi said, there was no guarantee that her birthday was a PIN. If that happened, that would be the end of the road.

Soma entered the last number, hoping that was the case.

The mobile phone lock screen was changed to the home screen.

Soma exhaled deeply. The other, who was looking at him from the side before he knew it, gave a voice that seemed to admire him.

"It's hard to do it, right?"

"I'm going to try anything. Alright, next."

Soma called the Kaume Detention Center from her cell phone. Like Hiragi, the "Purgatory" clan's cell phone loss rate is quite high. Therefore, a landline phone was set up in the detention center and a system was created in which the lower end was the phone number. The area is the same as that of the yakuza organization.

The ringtone stopped in almost 1 second.

"Hello, this is "Purgatory"!"

Soma involuntarily pulled his ear away from the cell phone as the eardrum trembled.

"How loud. Ah, I'm Soma. Who are you?"

"Ah! Soma-san! Hello! My name is Murata and I'm on the phone!"

"Is there anyone else?"

"Now I'm the only one! Sorry!"

With a bit of anxiety, Soma told him the number of the room where he was.

"For some reason, I can't open it from the inside. Sorry, can you open it from the outside?"

"I understand! I'll go right now!"

Murata hung up and said that screaming.

Soma looked at Hiragi as if blaming him as he poked at the sore hole in his ear.

"What are all yakuza?"

"I didn't have "Shitsurei". Education comes later."

"Yes, yes..."

Giving up everything, Soma sat down on a tatami.

Anyway, that should resolve the situation. All he had to do was open the door silently from the outside and smoothly cross between Kagutsu. By doing so, both Soma and Hiragi could safely survive. He had been through many shrines so far, but he didn't want to die for something so stupid.

The door to the multi-tenant room was slammed with tremendous force.

"Hello! "Purgatory", newcomer, Murata, I will come in!"

Soma and Hiragi froze. Of course, Murata, who did not know such a thing, knocked on the door even louder and moved the door lever up and down, and more and more the lever hit Kagutsu's brain.

Kagutsu groaned.

Soma screamed.

"Do not be stupid!"

"Huh! I'm sorry, Soma-san! Just a little, sorry to bother you, but could you let me in there?"

"If I could do that, I wouldn't have called you, don't you think?"

In his own words, Soma recalled the fact of remorse. That's right. The guys in "Purgatory" are basically stupid. He thought he was a stupid person trying to hold a life preserver.

The door was still being slammed. Kagutsu's brain was also fluttering. Kagutsu's closed eyelids came into force and a shadow of bad humor appeared on his sleeping face. Soma froze and stared at him.

"You are loud, stop!"

Holly's anger drowned everything.

The behavior behind the door stopped and there was a silence like death. At that moment, Soma understood that a true yakuza could stop sometimes.

Kagutsu wasn't awake. Not yet. However, the eyelids were rubbed together with a yank, and apparently Kagutsu is becoming a popular choice. There wasn't much time left before he woke up, maybe it would be 5 minutes or 10 minutes.

At that moment, the door quietly apologized.

"Sorry, big brother... Oh, I think it's best to open it right away, so..."

"Ah... well. Murata-kun, did you do that? Sorry, I called you all of a sudden."

Soma said that in a rather soft voice. Hiragi looked at him with a creepy face as he smirked. Ignoring that, Soma was talking to Murata.

"The door is already open. I want you to go out and go to the back of this room."

"What? Outside...?"

"That's how it is."

"Ok! Please wait a minute!"

Perhaps because he knew that he could take the mistake back, Murata escaped from the front of the door, speaking aloud.

Hiragi asked while he was frowning.

"What are you going to do this time?"

"Yeah, when you see it. Oh, before that, could you help me a bit?"

After a few minutes. Murata's voice was heard from outside the multipurpose room.

"Soma-san, I've arrived! What should I do from now on?"

Murata's cheerful voice, which seemed to have regained energy in a few minutes, was heard from outside the window, but he couldn't see him. This multi-tenant room is located on the basement floor, but the windows are attached to the top of the wall to prevent a leak. All he can see outside is the blue sky cut out by the bar.

Soma stood under the window right in front of him was Kagutsu, at the end of it.

"Thank you for your hard work. Will you come here?"

"Well... are you around here?"

"Oh, yeah. Well then, stay there. It'll be over soon."

Soma said softly as he smiled.

He released the whip.

An extraordinary red light was emitted from the cross section of the little finger of his left hand. The smoking paranormal flame, however, was shorter than usual and had a correspondingly higher pressure. It would be more correct to describe it as a saber burning with a red lotus rather than a whip.

At an unnoticed speed, Soma turned his left arm around a lot. An extraordinary red leaf pierced the wall of the multi-tenant room with precision.

When the rounded wall fell into the multi-tenant room, Soma was no longer there.

"Eh?"

Murata, who was out of the room, blinked. The situation was not swallowed at all. Soma was not in the multi-tenant room, but his boss, Kagutsu, who was sleeping leaning against the door.

Kagutsu Genji opened his eyes.

"Eh?"

Kagutsu saw Murata.

"Eh?"

Kagutsu had started.

"Eh?"

Soma and Hiragi held their breath and watched as Kagutsu crossed the room, while hiding under the tatami mat that Hiragi had ripped off. They wondered how effective this kind of deception would be on Kagutsu, that he had a paranormal feeling.

Kagutsu exited the room through a hole in the wall that was cut in a circle.

After confirming that, the two of them left the tatami. With a tone that Hiragi couldn't believe, as he dusted her clothes, he said...

"It can't be, a trick like that worked..."

"I was surprised too. Somehow, we made it."

Kagutsu's hangover kills every human he sees, on the contrary, if you groom a human in front of Kagutsu's hangover, he will go to kill him. They should have a "bait" outside and be out of sight. He thought so, but Soma didn't expect it to work that well.

"Ah?! Kagutsu-san? What's wrong?! Um, Soma-san said... Ah, I'm Murata! That's it! Kagutsu-san, did I do something wrong? Why are you raising your fist? No, that's... Gaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!"

From outside the wall, Murata's lamentable death cry could be heard. He couldn't help but sympathize with him as a "bait", but he didn't care. Now that he was in "Purgatory", he couldn't live long anyway, but he wouldn't give up there.

Soma, who left the multipurpose room with Hiragi, grew significantly.

"Ah, I am so tired."

"Oh, let's drink."

"Huh? You've been drinking the whole time. Well, yeah."

Shrugging, Soma started walking alongside Hiragi. At the screams and roars that began to echo outside, they never looked back.

CHAPTER 6: AISEKI 1999

"Hey, what are you doing?!"

Screaming, Shiotsu Gen ran down the river slope.

It all started when he saw boys his own age gathered at the foot of the bridge. If it was just a fight between baddies, he would have left it unattended. Shiotsu wasn't free enough to stick his nose in a fool's fight. Still, he ran out because, of course, they were hitting a person in a group.

It was the nature of a boy named Gen Shiotsu that he couldn't ignore such things.

"Ah? What, you idiot!"

He turned and tossed his Boston bag at the menacing regent. The guy fell back as he took a cannonball-like impulse bag into his face, sliding off the side, and Shiotsu clung to his brown hair.

"Let's go!"

With a flash of energy, he slammed his forehead against the other person's nose.

The brown haired one spurted blood from his nose, and Shiotsu exhaled.

"What's up, idiot?"

They hit him from behind.

He didn't lose consciousness, but he staggered. He must have been hit by some kind of weapon, be it a square wood or an iron bat. Shiotsu stuck his hand out of his side, and

almost instinctively rolled sideways. The sound of something hitting the wet ground could be heard just inches from the ear.

"Lock it up, lock it up!"

"Do that all the time!"

He did not regret it, but he thought he had made a mistake. The amount of enemies he saw just before hitting was 5 or 6 or even if the first ruler didn't get up, there were still more than 3 enemies left. And unless he had supernatural power, he couldn't defeat three people properly.

As he endured the rain, the fists and the kicks that fell, Shiotsu looked at them.

"What?!"

One of the enemies hit him while he screamed.

When asked what he was, the boy who was in the bag for them first got up and was ready. What he held in his hand was the same Kendo Shinai that Shiotsu always held.

A bullish buzz cut off a skinhead. The small body was slightly bent forward.

When he saw that figure, something came to mind.

But the bad guys didn't care about that. Stopping from hurting Shiotsu, they turned to the boy.

The regent, who was first hit by Shiotsu, also stood up and turned his hostile gaze towards the boy.

"Ah?"

Shiotsu hit his torso from behind.

Fainted in agony, the regent rolled across the riverside meadow. Looking at him, Shiotsu turned to other enemies.

In his hand was a wood stolen from the enemy. The "grip" was reinforced with bandages. It was an abominable weapon to touch, but he couldn't tell.

The boy looked at Shiotsu. The color of understanding lived in his eyes. There must have been something that came to mind.

But that story would be later.

At that time, the first decision was to beat them.

"Ooooooh!"

At the scream that escaped from the throats of Shiotsu and the boy at the same time, the enemy visibly stood up.

"You are Shiotsu."

Five minutes after the bad students escaped from the river bank with their bodies crawling, Shiotsu and the boy were on their way home.

They both had swollen faces and traces of blood that stained their faces red. They couldn't blame the people who passed each other, for being visibly scared.

"You are Takamuro, right?"

"Did you know?"

"Can you forget it? Thanks to you, I..."

Remembering that moment, Shiotsu sighed.

Shiotsu first saw Takamuro Kunikatsu in the kendo room he attended.

That day, Takamuro stood out in the middle of an exchange game with other dojos, where both adults and children were present. A small body that looked like an elementary school student was made to bounce in all directions, and even if it were an adult, it would be a challenge. The line of the sword was not flattering, but Takamuro was so strong that he could easily defeat him if he was a two-level opponent.

"Brother Gen, he looks like a monkey."

It was Akio, a childhood friend who was two years younger than Shiotsu, who attended the same kendo hall as Shiotsu.

"It's fine. Do you want to try it?"

Seeing Akio who stood up with a smile, Shiotsu got caught up in an unpleasant premonition. At times like these, things that don't usually happen happened.

And that premonition was correct.

The first match ended with a victory for Takamuro. However, Akio, unable to stay behind due to her heavy defeat, requested a rematch and launched a surprise attack to win. Takamuro requested a rematch, he won and Akio requested a rematch.

Finally, when an unprecedented incident occurred in which bamboo swords were thrown and began to hit each other, the game of the other style of the day was opened.

After that, apart from Akio, for some reason Shiotsu was scolded by his master. It seems that Shiotsu's role was to tighten Akio's reins.

Saying that, Takamuro was absurd.

"Ah. There was such a thing. How are you?"

"I'm fine. More than necessary."

He imagines Akio was in that river and Shiotsu felt chills. The bad guys couldn't have escaped. Everyone would have been beaten until they could not stand up.

Suddenly, Takamuro looked directly at Shiotsu and...

"Why did you help me?"

"Why? It's natural. You don't abandon someone who gets beaten up by too many people."

Takamuro's eyes widened and then he laughed again.

"Hahahahaha! It's natural to help! You're serious, Shiotsu-kun!"

Shiotsu was angry. He didn't say anything to make him laugh. However, Takamuro laughed, that was not the first time he did that. It seemed like the other party should laugh at what Shiotsu meant seriously.

That was annoying, and Shiotsu asked as if he was half-hearted.

"Why were you entwined in such a place? Was it Katsuage?"

"Ah. It's revenge."

Shrugging, Takamuro laughed again.

"Some time ago, I hit one of them. They had a grudge against me, gathered his friends and took revenge. Haha."

The smile had a malicious color different from before.

Shiotsu narrowed his eyes. After all, it was an extension of the fights between the bad guys. He thought it would have been better not to get involved, but he didn't start at the point he just made.

As if Takamuro was in a hurry, he might have read Shiotsu's expression.

"No, I'm small! Even then, did you have a connection from the other side? I wonder if it's a bit or something, I guess they decided to wait for me!"

"I don't know why they think it's okay to use violence carelessly."

"Uh."

Takamuro fell silent with a bored expression.

Looking at the profile, Shiotsu remembered another reason why he remembered Takamuro.

"Takamuro. Can I ask you something?"

"What?"

"Is it true that you left the dojo?"

Takamuro's expression trembled.

He immediately averted his eyes and fell silent. After opening his lips and trying to say something, Takamuro closed his mouth.

Shiotsu had many questions.

"I heard that rumor during the trading game during this time. I am sorry for your teacher. You are very talented."

"You are loud."

There was a strained expression in his voice.

"I don't care. I'm tired of it, Kendo."

"....."

Shiotsu looked at Takamuro's back. There he hung a bamboo bag for swords.

He wanted to tell him a better lie, but he stopped. Like Takamuro said, it didn't matter.

Shiotsu was not friends with Takamuro. He might not even have been an acquaintance. He just remembered the name for something. Maybe he will forget what happened that day in a few months, and they would even forget about each other in a few years.

Both Shiotsu and Takamuro knew that they were originally unrelated people.

The two of them stopped as they approached the intersection. They looked at each other.

"I'm going this way. And you?"

Shiotsu showed the left to Takamuro, who showed the right.

"This is it. See you."

That boy would no longer be found. With that in mind, Shiotsu took a step forward.

".....?"

He pulled out the Boston bag and stopped.

It was Takamuro. As he looked at Shiotsu on top, scratching his shaved head.

"You helped me. I haven't thanked you yet."

"I do not like that."

"Even if you don't need it, I'm not satisfied. Come on."

Then Takamuro pulled Shiotsu and started walking.

He wondered what it was, but Shiotsu followed him probably because he wanted to delay his time to go home as much as possible. Looking at his swollen face, he thought his serious parents would make a fuss. He wanted to delay that time as long as possible. Gen Shiotsu was still a 13-year-old boy.

While he was attracted to Takamuro, Shiotsu walked down the road at the end of the night.

"Itadakimasu!"

With their hands clasped happily, Takamuro began to swing his chopsticks fiercely.

"Itadakimasu!"

Shiotsu thanked the food even though the situation was still unknown. It was the education he had received so far, that he would make him do that if they served him food.

The popular coffee shop where Takamuro entered with Shiotsu was full of students. Most of them were returning from athletic club activities, and the shaved-headed baseball members and the gyoza-eared judo members scooped up the white rice with all their might. When a person offered him a refill, Shiotsu, who pushed the empty bowl in a chain reaction, felt half ill and saw such a scene.

"Hey, eat fast."

Prompted by Takamuro, Shiotsu looked at the plate in front of him. Fried dish Mega MIX. It is said that fried chili, fried shrimp, minced meat cutlet, heaped cabbage, white rice, and miso soup can be freely filled. Shiotsu's belly sounded with a large number of fragrant fried foods. No matter what he thought in his head, his body was honest and he was looking for the calories that had been used up in training and fighting.

It was frustrating to sprinkle the sauce on that, and Shiotsu held onto the chili fry. Along with the crisp, crisp sound, the runny and fat from the fish spread all over the place.

"Uh!"

Shiotsu involuntarily pressed his mouth. Perhaps he cut his mouth when they hit him and the hot broth stained the wound. Takamuro laughed when he saw it.

"I said so too. If you eat rice, it will be better."

Shiotsu obediently followed the advice. He threw the amount of white rice, about the size of a baby's fist, into his mouth at one time. The strong flavor of the fried food intertwined with the white rice and pain doubled. As things stood, Shiotsu and Takamuro turned into creatures that simply ate rice in silence, just like other students.

After eating the last grain of white rice and the last drop of miso soup, Shiotsu took a breath.

"It was delicious."

To be honest, Takamuro cheered with pride.

"And it's cheap so you don't spend a lot of money."

In response, he poured barley tea into his and Shiotsu's glass. He drank and Shiozu asked.

"Is this your parents' house?"

"No. I'm working here. When this is over, I'll have to go to the dishwasher."

Takamuro looked towards the kitchen. The employee was busy working there. Some were running into the upper room, but he was drinking tea without worrying about it.

"At home there is no money. I will work and make things easier with my pocket."

Shiotsu took Takamuro's muttered words very seriously.

Shiotsu did not know the home environment of Takamuro. However, the fact that he, a high school student, has to work can be very difficult. Shiotsu stopped thinking when it occurred to him the reason why he left the kendo room, or maybe he was there.

"I see."

He said just that and drank the barley tea.

Takamuro told Shiotsu to keep his wallet.

"It's a thank you. I'll pay the food."

"....."

Takamuro, who was by no means rich, still said that he invited the food. Shiotsu couldn't turn it down, he just bowed firmly and...

"It was delicious."

Saying that, Takamuro smiled. Since he was small, he was like an innocent child.

"Come again. I will serve you."

Shiotsu nodded and stood up.

Takamuro stood up in the same way. When he was about to go to the kitchen and Shiotsu to the exit, he suddenly stopped and looked at Takamuro.

"Hey. Are you always there?"

"Eh?"

Shiotsu asked Takamuro, who listened as he put on his apron.

"That river bank is your practice place?"

Takamuro, who should have left the kendo room, was still holding a bamboo sword. The reason may be that the sword was not yet abandoned.

Takamuro fell silent at Shiotsu's point. His eyes were hostile. He maybe he didn't want to touch on that subject. Especially with people who were neither friends nor acquaintances.

Still, Shiotsu touched it.

"If I want to practice with you, should I go there too?"

Could it be because the food in that coffee shop was delicious?

Perhaps because Takamuro's innocent smile was dazzling.

At least it wasn't sympathy or pity. That seemed to have been correctly communicated to Takamuro. After breathing a bit, Takamuro quickly blushed and walked away.

After that, with a little voice that could be mistaken for the screams from the coffee shop.

"Do what you want."

Shiozu laughed at that attitude this time.

"See you."

With that said, Takamuro turned his back on him and fluttered.

"Ah."

He said that when he realized what he had just said.

+++++

Ten years have passed since then.

He met Takamuro many times after that. They weren't meeting each other at the rate of several times a week, but when they met at the river, they practiced. He ate rice when he found it in the popular coffee shop. When he came to the store with Akio yelling, it was a bit tricky. That was because Akio, who was not convinced by the outcome of the previous game, drew the bamboo sword and requested a match with Takamuro.

From that moment on, Akio began to mix with the practice on the river.

Takamuro and Akio had a fight as a matter of course. The testimony lessons of the two seemed like just an extension of that. The two always insisted that they were the winners,

but Shiotsu did not compete. He was tired of being refereed and protested by the loser every time he declared victory.

The relationship was completely severed when Shiotsu and Takamuro graduated from high school.

Shiotsu decided to go to college, but Takamuro decided to go to work in the city. Takamuro, who had a sick mother and was supposed to take care of the household budget, only laughed at the end.

"This is the end of the club swing."

With a hardened fist, he lightly struck Shiotsu's chest.

"Go on. There is a university and a kendo club."

"....."

Shiotsu didn't reply anything and just silently nodded.

After all, they stopped contacting. Akio complained a lot. When she became a high school girl, she didn't grow up at all, and when she got mad, she was like a tantrum child.

"Who should I hit if Gen and Katsu are gone?"

Perhaps in the beginning, what Akio complained of was a lonely expression.

Anyway, as soon as she graduated from high school and entered college, she brought her fiancé. Surprisingly a decent man. Akio Minato, who entered Hayatoshi Minato's registry, became a mother a year later.

Shiotsu continued his life steadily, glancing at Akio, who was living very fast. He entered inspection school and safely graduated there.

At that moment, Gen Shiotsu met with Kunikatsu Takamuro.

+++++

It was a damp spring night after work.

It was mainly because of Akio that she was unprecedentedly drunk. After a graduation celebration with a fellow from the police academy and a private celebration of the tribe, she was looking forward to a drinking party with the Minato family. To be precise, Akio, the main driving force, was drawn in saying, "It's a job search celebration! Let's drink!"

At first, it was peaceful and started out as a mix with the Minato family. Every time he saw the happy smile of Akio, who was babysitting and drinking alcohol, Shiotsu seemed to share her happiness.

It wasn't until she sent Hayato out saying "Come slow." that he began to suspect. As if the happy act of the Minato family was nothing more than a prologue, Akio first went to a stand-up bar and drank heavily. She then she toured the taverns, the sandwiches, the karaoke, the bars and went out to drink more.

Akio, who was drunk and reeling, ran into a man.

"That's right, be careful!"

The two of them cut the tanker truck at exactly the same time. The other man was a perfect bully, in a striking patterned shirt that relaxed across the chest, a shaved blonde head, and ear piercings.

At those times, Akio's initial run was really fast. She quickly grabbed onto the opponent's chest and looked from a close distance in the form of lifting her small body. The demon appearance did not seem to belong to the mother of two children.

Shiotsu had a headache and thought about how to make the place easier.

"Akio?"

Suddenly, the man muttered that.

Akio, who was looking at the man with Prajna's face, blinked. From that expression, the slope gradually disappeared.

"Are you Katsu-chan?"

Shiotsu saw the moment when the bomb, which was about to explode, thawed in a second.

"Oh, really, you're Akio! It's a lie, in a place like this!"

"Yes, Katsu-chan? What are you doing in this place?"

Holding hands holding their breasts, Akio and Takamuro began to spin on the spot as if they were dancing. No matter how long they were on the streets of a bar, he didn't want them to do those kinds of eccentricities. Shiotsu led them to the corner of the street.

"Shiotsu too! How are you?"

"Oh... you too."

"I'm not tall though!"

"Huh?! It doesn't make sense to you, you idiot!"

"Ah?! What are you playing with people's heads?"

Takamuro kneaded Akio's hair, and Akio put a hook in Takamuro's side. Shiotsu smiled at the flirtation of the two people, who were the same as 10 years ago.

"What the hell?! You're really hitting him with that!"

"Ah! I'm not serious at all, I guess that was first!"

"Wait, wait, wait!"

He hastily interrupted between the two who were about to start working on it. Maybe it hadn't changed or it just wasn't growing.

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"Well, to commemorate the meeting, Kampai!"

"Kanpai!"

Shiotsu slightly raised the glass as Takamuro and Akio, sitting left and right, happily raised the glass.

Development was quick after Akio said that they should drink together. The three of them sat at the counter after rushing into a tavern where Takamuro resided. Takamuro and Akio were on either side of Shiotsu, if you put Takamuro and Akio next to each other they will start fighting.

"Today was a celebration of Gen's employment. So we were drinking and walking together."

Akio spoke to Takamuro through Shiotsu. Takamuro laughed happily and looked at Shiotsu for a moment.

"Hey, yeah, congratulations on that! Where did you end up working?"

"Well... cop, that's correct."

Takamuro's expression trembled for a moment.

However, the confusion soon disappeared. To revive the friendly smile, Takamuro lightly tapped the tall glass against Shiotsu's glass that was left in his place.

"That's it! Looks like you are. You've always been a serious guy."

"From now on, I have to be careful when I hit people in front of Gen. They will arrest me."

Shiotsu turned his displeased eyes towards Akio,

"Don't feel free to hit in the first place. Even today, if the other party hadn't been Takamuro, you would just hit him."

"There is no such thing. You are saying something that makes me angry."

Akio drank sake after saying it. Takamuro turned the glass.

"What about you Akio? Are you still a college student?"

"I went to college, but now I graduated and I am a mother."

"What did you say?"

"Now I am a mother. Besides, they are twins. I am incredibly busy every day."

Takamuro looked at Shiotsu and Akio alternately with an incredible gaze,

"Seriously...! If you're married, say so first!"

Shiotsu, who was drinking beer, was about to let out a scream. Akio actually screamed, turned around and started laughing. Shiotsu coughed for a moment, then looked at Takamuro with a determined expression.

"It's not me! Akio's husband is another guy!"

"Hahahaha! Okay, Brother Gen is a nice guy! I don't like him, so don't make that face!"

Akio laughed with his whole body and slapped Shiotsu's back for a while seeing what was funny. On the other hand, speaking of Takamuro, he felt relieved and stroked his chest.

"Well, no, I'm glad."

"What was good?"

"If you get attached to something, I think Shiotsu's stomach will be full of holes in less than half a year. No matter what you think, is it better not to have a relationship other than "distant relatives"?!"

"It's none of your business, stupid!"

Akio quickly reached out and threw cold at Takamuro. Of course, Shiotsu was also splashed, but he didn't complain. There is no idiot to oil the fire. Shiotsu drank silently, leaving the two people who started arguing again.

After interacting for a while, he notices that they made up, laughed, and poured sake on each other. He wasn't sure of the niceties of starting and ending the fight, but now they were both pretty good at it.

"So? What about Katsu-chan?"

"Hmm? What about me?"

"What are you doing now? That parenthesis doesn't mean you're going to school, does it?"

Takamuro's expression trembled again.

He lost his eyes on the counter. After looking through edamame, yakitori, motsuni, etc.

"Well, I'm that... I'm the one who doesn't have an earthmoving building..."

"What is it, are you a yakuza after all?"

Takamuro shrugged to the point of being easily guessed by Akio.

Shiotsu silently threw the edamame into his mouth. Truth be told, Shiotsu knew. At first glance, anyone could understand it because it is a chimp style very easy to understand.

Takamuro dropped a weak voice as he pushed the motsuni away.

"Sorry."

"What? Why are you apologizing?"

Akio had a clean face and asked. Takamuro looked uncomfortable.

"Because Shiotsu became a police officer. If it were known that he was drinking with a yakuza, it would not be a reminder. I knew from the beginning."

Then Takamuro laughed helplessly.

"It was nostalgic, so I put it behind me. I'm leaving. At least to apologize, let me pay here."

Then he reached for the paper.

Right before his finger reached, Shiotsu quickly reached over and picked up the paper.

Takamuro looked at Shiotsu with surprised eyes. Shiotsu smiled back at Takamuro and smiled.

"It's my job search celebration. I still don't have enough to drink."

Takamuro opened his eyes, Akio laughed out loud and hit Shiotsu's back again.

"That's Brother Gen! That's right, Katsu-chan, I haven't had a drink yet! Let's go!"

Akio raised her hand and called for a clerk to order a surprisingly large amount of food and sake. As he glanced sideways, Shiotsu silently tipped the glass, and Takamuro again calmed his floating waist and inevitably laughed.

"Wow. Are you going to go crazy for me?"

"That's right. There is no better sake than free sake! Look, order something you like!"

With a big smile, Akio offered the menu. Takamuro's expression when he received it looked happy.

After that, there was a lot of noise.

Akio just drank, drank, drank, ate and drank. Is it because it was literally gratuitous love or for the joy of finding ancient wisdom? The same happened with Takamuro, who continued to drink at the same rate as her. Only Shiotsu was able to maintain his sanity around midnight.

Thus, Shiotsu was the only one who heard the story.

"My bag is dead."

Akio was snoring on the counter like a roar. The clerk looked at her like she was in trouble, but the reason he didn't complain was probably because Takamuro "left".

Takamuro also put a cheek on the counter, and while he was about to collapse, he talked about himself like shit.

"I have a bad head, but I thought that if I worked hard, I wouldn't let my bag entertain me."

Then Takamuro laughed with a rumor.

"It was sweet. High school graduates are not treated like human beings by decent company. Still, I went to a guy who looked like shit and worked with the idea of dying every day, and then I was finally able to get into a good hospital, and at the tip of the arrow, my purse was missing."

"....."

"I look stupid. I don't know what I was working for. Then, I went to work the day after the funeral, and my shitty boss guy said something like shit like always. At that point, I got ready."

He takes a sip of whiskey directly.

"I won't tell you what I did. If I say that, you'll have to catch me. Well, there were so many things that I joined the current "company"."

With sick eyes, Takamuro looked at Shiotsu.

"It's a good thing. There are many types of shit, but the wings are messy. There seems to be a bonus for those who are good at it, Shiotsu. Listen. Hey, are you listening?"

"Ah..."

"I started with the sword again. This time, it's a practical type... hehe."

Takamuro laughed with a melted face.

Shiotsu felt an instinctive disqualification in his smile. He knew what he meant Takamuro. He said that he chose what he once united them as a means of violence, not a sword as a martial art.

However, Shiotsu had no right to say anything.

His ways were already different. Shiotsu chose order and Takamuro chose violence. Whatever he said now, he wasn't going to change his way of life.

So, he thought it was useless to say it.

In regards to regretting that thought, he didn't think at the time.

Takamuro muttered, almost falling into unconsciousness.

"Someday, let's play again. Like we did in that river, Akio, you and me. I'll decide who is the strongest."

"That's how it is."

When answering, Shiotsu knew. Definitely, that opportunity should come. Only that night were the two roads divided into policemen and gangsters. Perhaps Takamuro, who was saying that, should have known.

They would never see each other again.

Shiotsu brought rum to his mouth, feeling a slight pain in it.

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Ten years have passed since then.

He never met Takamuro. Shiotsu constantly continued his career as a police officer, and Akio worked diligently as a mother. Neither of them cared about what Takamuro was doing, and they didn't even talk about it. It seems ruthless, but they couldn't afford to worry about the aftermath of his old friend, whom they first met 10 years ago.

Meanwhile, Shiotsu and Akio's lives reached a turning point.

They met Jin Habari, the "Blue King".

"King", different ability, member of the clan. Shiotsu discovered many wonders that he had never seen before.

He joined the "Scepter 4" clan created by Habari, because he knew that he had talent and aptitude for different abilities. It was quite natural for Shiotsu to hone and exercise his abilities to maintain the order that he believed in.

However, there were two uncalculated events.

One is that the Minato family found aptitudes for different abilities. In particular, Akio displayed outstanding qualities, and they both became members of "Scepter 4".

And the other thing was the emergence of "Purgatory".

A clan of "violence" led by the "Red King", Kagutsu Genji. It has been a long time before "Purgatory", which spreads murder and destruction at will, and "Scepter 4", which tries to maintain "Order" with different abilities, entered a state of war without any restrictions. It was not necessary.

Limited royalty war.

Many things changed in that whirlpool.

Many things were lost.

It was painful to remember. Thus, Shiotsu tried not to look back at the past as much as possible, but only to look forward. Towards the future.

However, if the "Red King" is left as he is, even his future will be lost. It was already common sense not only for "Scepter 4", but for all humans involved in the different abilities.

The war between the kings to kill Kagutsu was about to enter the final stage.

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"Scepter 4" and "Purgatory" were in a state of immediate action.

The beginning is that Kagutsu Genji, who appeared suddenly, wore many black clothes and began to invade the gray clan "Cathedral". The "Gray King" Seigo Otori tried to negotiate with Kagutsu and take responsibility, but of course he failed. It was like trying to stop the erupting magma with words.

Shiotsu did not know if any arrangement was made between Otori and Habari, the two "Kings". However, it was decided that "Scepter 4" would do it. Destroy "Purgatory" to protect innocent people. That policy had never changed. Chasing "Purgatory", "Scepter 4" began to advance towards "Cathedral" territory.

That night, Shiotsu was given a short time off.

Most of the members, not just Shiotsu, were allowed to move freely within the range that did not interfere with the change. That is, the "final battle" will occur in the near future. Reaffirm family, lovers, friends, and what they should protect, and when the "time" came, they expected to die without remorse.

Shiotsu smiled and thought it was his own organization. He didn't know if he was benevolent or cruel.

Shiotsu went to a strange city.

He didn't have any important people. Speaking of strength, he would be dealing with those twins. However, the suicide note addressed to them was already written. Even if

Shiotsu died, the right people and the right institutions should guide them. Shiotsu could only hope for that.

It was July, but it was hot and humid, or maybe it was because that man was not far away. No wonder they told Shiotsu that the "Red King", like "Purgatory" himself who appeared in this world, raised the temperature in the area where they were.

To escape the heat, Shiotsu entered a bar that he noticed.

The doorbell rang and the waiter looked at Shiotsu. It was because Shiotsu had an elongated bamboo sword bag that he narrowed his eyes slightly. He was not wearing his uniform, but members of "Scepter 4" were told to take their extraordinary control saber with them when they left.

Sitting on the counter stool, Shiotsu ordered a drink.

"Martini."

"Understood."

With a slight bow, the bartender picked up the liquor.

Shiotsu didn't miss the slight tremor of his fingertips.

He looked inside the store again, frowning. There was no other client other than Shiotsu. However, there was a glass of whiskey two seats from his eyes. Maybe he hadn't cleaned it yet, or that person was standing in the bathroom.

As soon as he thought about it, the sound of water echoed and the back door swung open.

And from there came a man in black clothes.

"....."

Reflectively, Shiotsu loosened the straps on the bamboo sword bag. Even if he took out the saber from inside, as long as it was in the bag, there would be a gap. How would he overcome that? The enemy had to be beheaded before he could activate his abilities.

The guy in black clothes also seemed to instantly understand who the human in front of him was. As he distorted his half-burned face with haste and hostility, he placed his finger on the Koiguchi of the Japanese sword in his hand.

It was a blond, shaved head.

For a second, if he had been slow to realize it, the inside of the store would have been a sea of fire. It wouldn't be known if Shiotsu was also alive.

However, Shiotsu noticed.

Before thinking of anything, the name came out.

"Takamuro?"

The one in black clothes opened one eye. The other eye was covered in burns and blocked by a patch.

Takamuro muttered in a weak voice as he was drawing his sword out of his black clothing.

"Shiotsu?"

Then a time that seemed eternal passed.

"This..."

It was the bartender's trembling voice that broke the two's stalemate.

"Client. If it's a disaster, please come out."

Then, as if to take a breath, Takamuro relaxed his body.

He returned to his seat with the Japanese sword. Shiotsu still couldn't drop the saber. It took him a long time to understand it, and to relax from the hand that held the saber.

Before the bartender who was comparing the two people in a confused way, Takamuro said in a rough voice...

"Rather, do it right for that guy."

The bartender blinked hastily and then took the shaker glass.

When the martini was placed in front of Shiotsu, Takamuro looked at it with a complicated expression. When Shiotsu picked him up, Takamuro also raised his glass without saying anything.

"Long time not see you."

It took him a long time to say that.

After moistening his lips with a red liquid, Takamuro replied.

"Oh, isn't this the first time in 10 years?"

"Since then."

The words he tried to speak didn't come out of his throat.

There was no such thing. As you could see, Takamuro had turned into a human from the underworld. Then, he ran into Kagutsu. One of them had become a member of the "Purgatory" clan that he should kill.

Takamuro must have thought the same. A police officer becoming a member of "Scepter 4" is as natural as a gangster becoming a member of "Purgatory".

"....."

The martini was so painful that it was difficult to swallow. The bartender's skill was not bad. It was a hint of regret that swirled around his chest.

At that time. If he had stopped him that night, 10 years ago.

He wouldn't use a sword for that. For example, he dyed himself in the underworld. If Shiotsu had said so, perhaps something could have changed.

Of course, it was more likely that he hadn't changed. Takamuro had already set foot in the world behind him. He was familiar with it. If he could change his way of life with just one word from his old friend, he wouldn't have chosen such a fierce life in the first place.

But still, he should have said something.

"I know what you are thinking, Shiotsu."

Shiotsu raised his face.

Takamuro's smile was kind.

"Because you are serious."

Unable to look directly at the smile, Shiotsu looked towards the bar counter.

There was still about half the martini left. It would come out when he finished drinking it. Shiotsu so decided. There was no word to interchange with "Purgatory". Even if he was an old friend.

Takamuro suddenly remembered when he raised the glass.

"By the way, how is Akio?"

That said.

Regrets swirled around his chest, cracking and changing color.

Akio, his childhood friend. Takamuro's old friend. She was...

"She died."

His voice, which was as hard and cold as steel, opened his eye, which was the only one in Takamuro.

As he looked at him, Shiotsu spat out those words.

"She was killed by "Purgatory"."

Like blood gushing from the wound she was closing. A red-black anger surged in Shiotsu's heart.

Unpleasant. He probably wasn't blocked at all. He just kept Shiotsu out of sight.

Akio and Hayatoshi's corpses were connected. The twins, looking at themselves, asked: Why did our parents have to die? What were you doing at the time? Was it really impossible to stop it?

Shiotsu turned away from that question. He cut it because it was the past and he only look ahead. He thought that he couldn't step any other way. He had to stop Kagutsu and "Purgatory". Whether or not he was persecuted for that duty, Shiotsu had escaped that duty.

And now, an answer to his question was right in front of him.

It was for "Purgatory".

His anger, his hateful fingers, gripped the handle of the saber, which was half exposed from the sword's bamboo pouch.

Takamuro narrowed his eyes sadly.

Shiotsu thought. He has to catch Takamuro. It does not matter if it is ancient knowledge. Shiotsu had witnessed what would happen if "Purgatory" was left unattended. A mother who cries when she gets caught in a child who has stopped moving. A boy looking at a burning house with sunken eyes. The despair of the twins whose parents were murdered and only two were left behind in the world.

If he left him alone, he would be the same again.

Immediately before trying to get out of captivity, Takamuro silently opened his mouth and...

"Hey. By the way, Shiotsu. Do you remember?"

He threw a glass of whiskey at Shiotsu's face.

Shiotsu didn't feel cowardly when he was shocked in the middle of the conversation. The fight between "Scepter 4" and "Purgatory" is a bet for the life of the other. There all the tactics are affirmed. Because you can't swear to the dead.

Thus, Shiotsu predicted the attack. With the handle of the saber he produced, he played with the glass.

By this time, Takamuro had already kicked the stool and jumped up.

He opened his one eye to the limit and put out the flames from the burned half of him. The flame focused on the Japanese sword that was drawn. He slammed the flame-covered blade against Shiotsu with his whole body.

The right hand holding the sword was cut off with his arm.

Shiotsu didn't see Takamuro's shocked face. At the same time, he drew his saber, he threw his body forward and launched a round. The blade had sliced through Takamuro's right arm without fail.

Around the same time as Takamuro, who landed while spewing blood from his shoulder, he looked back.

Shiotsu's saber pierced through his chest.

"Kah..."

With a bloody cough, Takamuro staggered and leaned against the counter.

Shiotsu pushed the saber further while he remained expressionless.

"Uh... I see... I remembered..."

With his bloodstained lips laughing, Takamuro weakly looked at Shiotsu.

"Shiotsu... Subcommander of 'Scepter 4', that is..."

"....."

"The lower end like me can win... Hey..."

Takamuro gently caressed the saber that penetrated him.

"But I was able to keep my promise."

That said, he smiled innocently.

Takamuro's body was about to slowly collapse. Shiotsu dropped the saber and hugged Takamuro. The corpse of an old friend who had died.

Shiotsu looked up at the sky with bitten lips.

After doing it for a while, he suddenly felt a look. He saw the bartender shivering behind the counter. It was a natural reaction because customers suddenly started killing each other.

After knocking Takamuro to the ground, Shiotsu contacted "Scepter 4".

"This is Shiotsu. On the way, I ran into a member of the 'Purgatory' clan and neutralized him. Send the transport vehicle to the place I'm about to say."

After finishing the proper arrangements, Shiotsu sat down.

He only had one drink left for the martini.

After holding the glass, he noticed that his hands were wet with Takamuro's blood. Shiotsu didn't clean it up. He tipped his glass and took the last drink.

The clock hands on the wall reached barely midnight, announcing that it was July 11.

EXTRA: "SUZUKI SUZU" COMMENT ON "LIMITED KINGSHIP, WAR STORIES"

Along with the final episode of "Limited Kingship, War Stories", I wrote what was decided. Because it includes the spoilers for the latest story, I've covered it. The initial plan, the comment of each story and the origin of the character's name. There are around 3000 characters, so read it when you have time.

Introduction:

"We will close the fan clan at the end of this year, so please write something during the extension period."

It was earlier this year that they told me that. 6 stories, from June to December. It doesn't matter, but the number 6 is good. This is because it is divisible by 1, 2, 3 or 6. The number 7 is also a prime number and it is wonderful. Have you already bought Seven Stories?

The theme was "everything is fine", but honestly, I felt like I had almost exhausted what I could do with K's main story. Have you ever seen K's time series chart? It's too tight and I think it's scheduling gimmick stuff, really.

By the way, we had a problem to digest. You already know "Ground Zero". The day before, "Before Zero", was also serialized the year before. At the same time, when I was serializing "Side Purple", I thought "I think it's possible to put it next to such an interesting story", but that's why I really liked "Before Zero". I am a Tachi influenced by what I like. In fact, the second half of "Side Purple" has been significantly affected.

So I offered to write a story from "Before Zero" to "Ground Zero", and it was successfully passed. I've done it, I can draw ruthless carnage in K's world.

"First of all, it's a story even before zero leads to ground zero."

"There is a demand for that spin-off from the day before the spin-off that has not yet come out."

It was not a surprise, but I stayed silent because it would be better if I could write what I liked and earn money.

As for the contents, at the beginning, like "Surugajo Gozen Game" and "Koga Ninpocho", a metamorphosis swordsman is released from "Scepter 4" and "Purgatory", and which

one wins?! I was tense! I was thinking about something like that, but stopped because the demand that was already small would be even less.

"An older brother with burned legs stands on the shoulders of his younger brother with burned arms and turns into a flame giant."

"The jealousy of Kagutsu, an acrobat who entered Purgatory to excel, defies battle."

I was thinking about that...

I had to do 6 episodes, so I wrote 2 episodes of "red", 2 episodes of "blue", 2 episodes of "red and blue", and characters like Habari and Zenjo. It was decided like this. The number 6 is good because it is divisible by 2 or 3.

It was said that the number should be about 2,000 characters, but as Clansman writes new characters, careers, and dramas, more than 10,000 characters became commonplace. You can be a writer even if you are crazy.

The title became "Limited Kingship, War Stories" after the cool word "Limited Kingship, War" that appeared in "Before Zero". It was great.

What I like most about "Limited Kingship, War Stories" is the title "Limited Kingship, War Stories".

That is why I will do something like a comment on each story.

Episodes 1 and 2:

"Butterflies & Mantis" and "Hekireki & Senden" are stories of "red" and "blue", respectively. The concept is "member of the clan who has belonged to a clan that should not belong".

Maruha was drawn as a person who was too decent for "Purgatory" and Kuse was too crazy for "Scepter 4". Kuse has inherited the metamorphosis sword fighter gene, which was the initial plan.

So I wondered what if Maruha went into "Scepter 4" and Kuse went into "Purgatory", but it probably wouldn't work. Maruha is not that decent, and Kuse has a fushi that despises antisocial organizations. In the first place, these two people are not fit to live.

Before we started, I thought, "let's kill all the new characters so they don't affect them later," so I started writing while thinking about the best way to kill them. I'm glad they both died satisfied.

Although the name comes from, it was thought that Maruha was a younger brother of Hiragi, so it came from a plant called "Maruba holly". He's a pretty faithful guy, so he's loyal. He somehow he looks like a dark Kamamoto.

Kuse is a member of the clan which is an acronym for "Q" which means "question" in the alphabet. He's just a mystery to obsessed goodness. He had the image of Sojiro Seta from "Rurouni Kenshin", so his name turned out like this.

Episodes 4 and 5:

"The Shinigami and the Hounds" and "Drunk with the King" are stories of "blue" and "red", respectively. The concept was "King and vassal", but it was a bit out of place.

The initial plan of "The Shinigami and the Hounds" was a confrontation between Habari and a blind sniper, but I stopped it because I couldn't help thinking about it. When I was thinking of a combination to face various things like Akio and Hayatoshi, Shiotsu and Zenjo, the hunting dog's good move that "the moment I heard Habari got shot, I went straight and smelled" was interesting. That is why it happened like this. Also, Magome is the owner of the metamorphosis sword fighter gene. He is not a sword fighter.

"Magome foresaw the role of Zenjo" and "Habari who knew it smiled bitterly" were ideas that came up when I approached him for a consultation within GoRA. He is very good. Regarding Zenjo, the impression of "a dog that forgets everything if food is served" was interesting.

"Drunk with the King" is, well, a comedy as you read it. The idea was from the story of Kusanagi, who was drunk and dressed as a K story, and I thought it would be interesting if Soma was drunk and woke up among the dead.

Before we started, there was an agreement that "I would not write about Kagutsu", so when I asked "how about drawing the monster level from Dragon Quest?", they said it was fine, so it happened like this. Cool, huh? I like that Kagutsu, where brains flutter.

Hayato Magome's name comes from the Japanese mythology "Ame no Makagoya" and "Ame no Habaya". The image is like a fusion accident that occurred when Anna and Totsuka were linked by the devil. I didn't realize it when I was writing, but I can see the influence of "Golden Kamuy" everywhere, like where body fluid eagerly seeps through and where superiors are happy to be scrawled.

There is nothing from Murata in particular. A person who has just died. Sorry.

Episodes 3 and 6:

"Blue Clothes & Black Clothes" and "Aiseki 1999" are stories of "red and blue", respectively. The concept is "a story about people who were killing each other" and "a story about people who were close friends who were killing each other".

There is nothing but a concept, in any case.

Personally, I like the character of Mina in "Blue Clothes & Black Clothes". A humanly weak girl with fierce ability and a fierce personality. This is probably the first time a "female member of the "Purgatory" clan has appeared...", so it was good in that regard as well. I like the fact that she could use the color of the clothes as a metaphor for my position. Also, the story of Yata and Fushimi fighting together in the basement, which came out in the comic, is also a shitajiki.

At first, "Aiseki 1999" was supposed to be a new character on the "Scepter 4" side, but I decided to use Shiotsu because he seemed like he could be used. It is a story in which the positions of the two friends separate and kill each other in the flow of time that cannot be avoided. It was also good that the killings happened by force because of Akio's sympathy. Shiotsu has only had one terrible eye, right?

The name comes from "Takemikazuchi" for Kazumada Takechi and "Takeminakata" for Mitsuna Nakata. The gods who fight.

Takamuro Kunikatsu is from the "Takamuro Shrine" dedicated to "Shiotsuchi no Oji" and the alias "Kotokatsu Kunikatsu Nagasagami".

Conclusion:

It was a lot of fun writing "Limited Kingship, War Stories". It was serialized in a short period of half a year, but I hope those who read it enjoy it.

See you soon.