

失敗禁止!

SHIKKIN

彼女の「ムリ」はもう「わかんない」



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Illustration 20-160

Shippai Kinshi Volume 01

Chapter 1 - Shocking Fact! The Maidens' Yard is a Yellow Flowering Garden!

".....Shou? How long are you gonna stand here?"

Asking this was my little sister, Hijiri Shimizu, who was attending her second year of high school.

By the way I, Shou Shimizu, was also a second year high school student. The reason we were in the same year was because we happened to be born in the same school year.

We were even in the same class.

And now, my sister was staring intently at me with her expressionless eyes, like she always did.

"Shou?"

Even though her voice was as flat as always, it carried an accusing tone. My heart suddenly froze.

Instinctively, I tried to find an excuse.

"Y-Y-You're wrong! I-I-It wasn't me!"

"...? Despite what you're saying, you're the only other person here."

I was at home.

Since I was at home, it was only natural that my sister would be here as well. So there shouldn't be any reason to accuse me, right?

However, this was a situation that didn't work out with that argument. My sister had gone into the bathroom,

"...Exactly how long do you plan on watching your little sister use the toilet?"

And I had a clear view of her panties.

I-I could even see the stripes clearly.

Wait, this is bad. This is really bad! I-If things continue like this, Hijiri will hate me!

I-I must find a way to get through this.

Damn. Calm, CALM DOWN! My heart is beating too loudly!

"Oh, right. I came here to help."

"...To help?"

"Yeah. The reason I came here was to help my cute, *sweet sister*."

"...How do you plan on helping me, Shou?"

Her expression unchanging, Hijiri became alert and hugged herself with one arm.

I suddenly got a hold of myself.

How can I help my little sister while she's in the washroom?



Think.

I must think quickly! I must mobilize every single brain cell that I have!
I just need to read her mind...!

What would Hijiri need to do after this? If I say that I was helping her
with that, then I'd be automatically safe!

...Right! That!

"I-I'll help you wipe, *dear sister*."

LIKE HELL! That line was clearly wrong!

"...Shou.....You're terrible."

Hijiri stood up and kicked me, her face still expressionless. I-I can see—!

"—Argh!"

Hijiri, it hurts... Being beaten by her makes me kinda happy though...

No, NONONO! If this goes on, Hijiri will hate me!

...Damn. I must do something to redeem myself.

As I thought this, the door closed in front of me.

The scene switched to the living room.

By the way, my sister and I were the only ones living here. Our father
was working overseas, and our mother was traveling from place to place
because of her work, never getting the chance to come home.

"Hey, Hijiri. Here's some pudding. Wanna eat together?"

"I don't want to."

"You like sweet things, don't you?"

".....Hmph, I don't."

"It's from the Lion House, you know? I had to wait in line for two hours
yesterday in order to get it."

After hearing this, Hijiri's ears quivered slightly.

Though she wasn't looking this way, her ears were certainly paying me
attention.

"It's delicious. It's made from the yolk of eggs that have been rigorously
selected in order to make the powerful flavor explode in your mouth."

"*gulp*"

"I-I wouldn't mind letting you eat it, if only you'd go to school with
me~."

"Ughh..."

"What happened just now was just wasted effort. Yeah, like water
flushed down the toilet."

“...You really think that that’s supposed to make me feel better? But still.....I decline.”

“You’re saying that, but you’re still staring at the pudding, you know? I’ll have some then.”

“.....I don’t care.”

“Ahh—it’s great. The Lion House’s pudding is superb. I can feel it melt on my tongue.”

Hijiri pouted. It seemed that she wasn’t happy.

“...Fine. We’ll go together. However, I have one condition.”

“That’s great! I got it. It’s fine, so eat as much as you want.”

As I looked at Hijiri eating the pudding, I was thinking of going to school together with her.



“Hehehe. It’s been awhile since I’ve gone to school together with Hijiri.....but...”

What bothered me was that I had to walk at least fifty meters behind her. It’s fine though.

As I thought this I held my binoculars in one hand, continuing to follow Hijiri from behind.

“Wait, now that I think about it, does it even count as going school together if we’re separated by this much of a distance!?”

It’s a really thought out strategy, coming from my sister.

“...As expected of Hijiri. She’s the Zhuge Liang of the modern era!”

I gulped in fear.

Hijiri wasn’t just the brainy type.

She had a face like that of a doll. Plus, her constant impassive expression gave her an aura of mysteriousness.

If you looked at an immobile Hijiri, it would feel like you were looking at the world’s cutest doll.

How could I break the promise I made with such a cute little sister?

All I could do was to keep a distance of fifty meters between us on the way to school.

...That’s right.

Yeah. We’re currently going to school together. I’m sure we are. I’M SURE!

“Eh, who is that weirdo...?”

A petite girl, wearing the same uniform as Hijiri and riding on a bike, approached her.

She had soft black hair and was so short that people could mistake her for a grade school student.

Surprisingly, they started walking together to school.

...Is this for real? Hijiri, who had never brought any friends home to play with, actually has...

"Hijiri has finally made a friend...Uwaah. We have to eat red beans and rice today. Aaah, my tears..."

"Hey, you, that suspicious guy over there!"

"Hmm?"

Calling out to me from behind was my friend Katou.

Katou is someone who gathers all kinds of information and keeps all of it, unconcerned with its usefulness.

"...Oh, so it was just you."

"Peeking with your binoculars so early in the morning, and while walking to school...what the hell are you doing?"

After listening to my explanation of what had happened, Katou looked ahead and nodded in understanding.

"— Aaah, just as I thought. It was to peek at Hiji."

"Don't call her Hiji, or I'll kill you."

".....Shimizu, you really look serious about it. ...Well, it's not like I don't understand how you feel. After all, she was ranked as one of the top five cutest girls at school. I might be like that too if she was my little sister."

"Katou, you bastard! Hijiri is my little sister. Also, are you trying to make her look bad? Just the top five?"

"Shimizu, your face is way too close...! There's nothing wrong if you think she's number one..."

"No! Hijiri is number one of the world. The most beautiful maiden throughout all of history. Her cuteness has already surpassed the realm of humanity."

"That's obviously an exaggeration."

"What? What did you just say? Hey, listen to me you bastard..."

"...D-Don't stare at me like that. Still the same old siscon, huh."

“What’s wrong with being a siscon...? Putting that aside, do you know who’s the one beside Hijiri?”

“...The one with the childlike figure? Her name is Karin Minato. She’s our junior, since she’s in first year. The kind of beauty that fits in the loli category. She’s so cute that even the upperclassmen know her. Her black hair smells of strawberries... That’s probably because of her shampoo.”

“Y-You even know what her hair smells like? ...You’re fucking awesome.”

“Don’t make such a big deal out of it. I just happened to catch a whiff when I brushed past her.”

“So, what’s her connection with Hijiri!?”

“Hey, calm down! Don’t shake me...! Really. You’re always like that whenever it concerns your little sister. The answer to your question would be that she met her during her club activities. Karin Minato is a member of the Flower Arrangement club. Hijiri Shimizu also seems to have entered the same club this year.”

“Huh!? Hijiri, she...!? It’s my first time hearing that!”

“Close! Too close! Your face is too close! Get off! ...Haah. It was founded this year by a wealthy family’s daughter. Her name is Chris Ryusenji. It’s called the Second Flower Arrangement Club.”

“The Second...? It’s not your usual Flower Arrangement Club, then?”

“Hmm. It seems that she intentionally wanted to distinguish it from the existing Flower Arrangement Club. Also, there are very few members.”

“...So it was founded this year, huh. How’s it different from the previous Flower Arrangement Club?”

“—No idea.”

“Eh?”

“I have no idea. For some unknown reason, despite their activities, nothing’s been leaked. The only thing that’s known is that the club members are all incredibly beautiful girls. They are the club leader Chris Ryusenji, and the members Hijiri Shimizu and Karin Minato. There’s even a rumor that only beautiful girls can enter this club.”

“W-What! Hijiri was in a club like that...?”

I was shocked. Katou rubbed his hands against each other.

“I also want to get closer to the Flower Arrangement club, Shimizu. Can I ask your little sister to introduce me to—”

Does he want to get closer to my little sister?

“If you really want to get closer to my little sister...no, if Hijiri enters your field of vision, I’ll kill you.”

“Ehhh!? Just looking at her!?”

That said, Hijiri has been quite happy during these past few days. It had to have been caused by something that hadn’t happened till now.

It was definitely because of this Second Flower Arrangement club. As her big brother, I needed to greet all the members.

Hijiri, who was walking in front of me, suddenly seemed to feel something, and her shoulders started to shake uneasily.

Incidentally, about the Second Flower Arrangement club...

Though the members were all beautiful girls, I still wasn’t sure what the club activities were.

What on Earth were the club activities that Hijiri was taking part of? ...I’ll go take a look after school.



On that day, after school, I was walking up the stairs that lead to the Second Flower Arrangement Club.

“Hmm, the Second Flower Arrangement Club is there, right...?”

Afterwards, the voice of a girl came from above.

“W-Waahhhhh...! Please, please get out of my way!”

A black-haired girl fell from the stairs.

Yep—she *fell* from the stairs.

“Eh...”

Because of the gravitational acceleration, the girl bumped hard onto my chest.

rumble *rumble* *bang*! Just like that, she and I both rolled down the stairs together.

“Wuu, that was a scary overwhelming shock.”

That voice came from the front.

I, who was lying on the floor, felt something warm on my body.

What I saw after opening my eyes was an incredibly cute face.

She had supple long black hair. Her delicate eyebrows, her thin lips, and also those big round eyes that were gazing at me...she was like a small Yamato Nadeshiko.

It was a girl like that who was pressed up tightly against my body, as if she was a part of me.

She let a shriek soon after.

“W-Wait! You, where are you...! WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU’RE TOUCHING!?”

“E-Ehhhh? I’m not touching anywhere weird...ah.”

Well, I’m tightly pressed up against her after all.

But there’s nothing I could have done unless she would have decided to get off from my body.

“My c-c-c-chest, you touched my chest!”

“What? Nah, I couldn’t have touched your chest. I felt nothing with my hands.

“WH-!? What are you saying!?”

After I said “Look,” I started groping with my hands.

The sensual feeling of her chest was totally absent.

“Ah, but you do have a bit of flesh here after all. It’s hard to see the extra fat on your belly though...”

“Nnnnaah! T-Those’re my breasts! My breasts...Uuu...Uaah!”

Shit. Could it be that I triggered some kind of psychological trauma!?

Err...At a time like this, I should throw a few compliments at her.

Yep. That’s the only way. At least I will be able to compensate for my error.

“...I think they’re rather stylish...good breasts, though?”

“EH!?”

The girl opened her eyes wide.

“It seems like there wouldn’t be any drag. They won’t pose as obstacles for archery, swimming or track.”

“Whawhahwahwhahwa!? What are you saying!?”

“I mean, you shouldn’t need a bra. It’s economical; you can save money and stuff. You’re super thrifty.”

“I thought that you were going to apologize, and yet, you’re making fun of me!? You d-demon! That was so mean! Damn it!”

The girl immediately stood up.



Then *BANG**BANG*! She kicked me twice in the chest.

“Gwaahh...”

“You shall die for your sin! Take this! And that!”

“When you’re in a position like this, I can see your panties, you know?
So—”

“So what! Are you saying that you want me to straddle your head?
Damn pervert!”

“That’s, that’s not—I don’t want to see your white panties at all!”
I just wanted to tell you to pay attention!

But why was there something like a bow tie on your white panties?
Though I felt sorry for her, I wasn’t able to look elsewhere.

The girl’s face turned to a deep red, and her thighs started moving
awkwardly.

“How did you know the color of my panties...You...How awful! That’s
just too awful—! PERVERT!”

The girl pressed her skirt on her body and ran away, shouting that.
Ahhhh...Indeed, I did something quite mean. I’ll apologize to her the
next time we meet.

While I was thinking of that, I rose to my feet. After getting upstairs, I
arrived at my destination.

“Here it is...The Second Flower Arrangement Club, just like what Katou
said.”

Fine...! Let’s do this!

After knocking on the door, I opened it. Instantly, the three people
inside looked towards me.

“Sorry for intruding.”

“Oh. Are you a visitor? That’s quite rare to see.”

The first person to open her mouth was one of the few beauties of the
Academy. Any student studying here would have already heard of her.
She’s Chris Ryusenji.

She was a second-year, just like me. But since we were in different
classes, we had never talked to each other.

“Is there something wrong?”

Her golden blond hair was dazzling. She was looking me with her
limpid blue eyes.

No matter her personality, no matter what secrets she held, she was beautiful to the point that these things would all be forgiven.

“A-A-Ahhhh—!”

The voice came from the environmentally-friendly Yamato Nadeshiko that I met earlier at the stairs.

...Wait, why do I feel that I had met her before?

Oh yeah! She was the girl whom Katou called Karin Minato this morning.

“...Oh. So you’re also a club member here.”

“T-That demon from just before! The one who imprisoned me in his arms! And who even touched my chest...”

The girl with long, black hair was staring at me with her teeth clenched.

“N-No, that’s not it. That was...an accident! Yeah, an accident!”

“Huuuuuh!? How could you come up with such a lame excuse!? For the part where we fell down from the stairs, fine! But can you still say the same for when you touched my chest after!?”

“Indeed. That was an accident.”

“He actually said that with a straight face!? Could, could it be that this guy made lying a habit of his!?”

“That wasn’t a lie. It was just an unfortunate accident.”

“G-Grrrrrrrrrr. Unforgivable! You even sneaked a peek at my panties!”

“Y-You’re wrong!”

“Do you want to say that was also an accident?”

Karin puffed her small chest, and started staring intently up at me.

“W-Wasn’t it you who showed them to me! I didn’t have the right to refuse!”

“So you’re actually treating me like a fool!? Me, Karin!? U-U- Unforgivable!”

Karin trembled as she gripped the crucifix on her chest.

“Ugh...”

Shit. If this went on, wouldn’t I have been considered as a pervert?

“T-That’s not it! I’m Hijiri’s big brother!”

“Don’t you even dare to tell an obvious lie like this one!? You pervert!”

“...Sigh. I must admit that he *is* my brother after all.”

Hijiri, who was also there, sighed as she said that.

“Ugh. Damn it... If it’s true, then, what are you doing here!?”

"I've come to express my gratitude to you people for taking care of my sister. Right, Hijiri?"

I made a thankful smile at Hijiri, who just saved me. But she coldly replied:

"...There's no need for that...go home."

"Huh, Hijiri!? Why is it like that..."

"Hehe. How unsightly. You know why? It's because of your sexual harassment. Serves you right!"

Karin said that, as if she wanted to brag about her victory.

D-Damn! If it continues like that, then I'll be thrown out.

The topic! I must change the topic.

"T-That aside, what on Earth is this club about? I heard that it was a Flower Arrangement Club, but I see neither tatamis, flowers nor kenzans."

As soon as I asked, Karin's shoulders suddenly started trembling. She then said, flustered:

"Eh! T-This, this has nothing to do with you!"

Even Hijiri was backing Karin up.

"Indeed...This has nothing to do with you."

These girls, were they hiding something from me...?

For some reason, they seemed to be very concerned about what they're hiding. This was an elder brother's desire to get a grasp on everything related to Hijiri.

"It's the first time we talked like this, club president Ryusenji."

"Ah! He dared to get pass me! What a rude man!"

"Ah. That's true. Is this the first time? I'm the Second Flower Arrangement Club's president, Chris Ryusenji.

Her smiling face was like freshly bloomed flower as she answered that.

Ah, maybe *they* are Flower Arrangement Club's flowers.

Hijiri, Chris...and even though it pained me to admit it, Karin was also a beautiful girl indeed.

Their beauty can't even be described with the imagery of a flower.

"Thank you for always taking care of my sister."

"Ah no, we are always causing trouble to Hijiri. So we are the ones who should thank you."

Oooh...! What a sensible club president.

"Thank you. But that said, what is this club about?"

Chris elegantly closed one eye.

"Ehe. I can't tell you that. It's a secret."

"As an elder brother, I am deeply concerned about what my little sister does. Can you please tell me?"

"Didn't I say that I can't tell you that? Secrets give women a mysterious aura, making them appear more beautiful. That's why you would be disappointed if you knew it."

"I won't be disappointed. At least I won't be disappointed in Hijiri."

Chris put her index finger on the bottom of her red lips, and made a sensual smile.

"Is that so? But it's still a 'no'. I can't tell you."

"Please consider it."

"Sorry. That's impossible."

As I was about to ask another time, Hijiri expressionlessly stared at me.

"...Shou."

"What is it, *sweet sister*?"

I smiled in response, but Hijiri answered me in a low voice:

"...You're a bother."

"What!?"

Hijiri's sharp words stabbed me deeply and intensely.

"But to say something like that..."

"...You're awful."

"Gah."

"...Leave me alone."

"Ugh..."

"If you inquire further, then I'll hate you."

"How can it be!?"

"...Now that you're aware of it, get out of here."

"Uhhhhh..."

"...Get out, I said."

"Damn. I-I'll be back..."

"...You don't have to come back here."

"Uhhhh. WAAHH—!"

I ran back home like that. Then, I locked myself in my room.



Chirp *Chirp*. The swallows' chirping reached my ears.

"Ahhh...the sun is so dazzling..."

This was the day after. I was in a half-dead state.

Maybe I was already hated by Hijiri.

Just the mere thought of it gives me a stomach ache. I was so sad that my pillow was damp from my tears.

Today, I finally managed to calm down a bit. I kept sitting on my bed, still stunned.

I was slowly drinking fruit juice. Since I had taken it out yesterday, it was already wet.

"Really, Bireley's fruit juice is the best. The rest of the 20% juice really makes you addicted to it."

After whispering this, I made a deep sigh.

"...That is what I would usually think."

But today, even Bireley's juice didn't taste good.

The Bireley's slid from my hand. Maybe it was fate...

"Ah..."

Splash.

The Bireley's that had just fallen down made my nightwear and my bed covers wet.

"Sigh...Are you kidding me? It's all wet now."

A large orange stain was left on my bed. My nightwear was also in a miserable condition.

"Doesn't it look like as if I just wet my bed?"

Staring at this large stain, I felt even more depressed.

At this moment, I heard someone knock on the door.

"...Shou, I heard you lament over something. Are you all right?"

"Oh, Hijiri? I'm fine."

No, wait a minute...?

Wouldn't it be bad if she sees me like this...?

"...Wait! I'm definitely not fine! So you mustn't enter, got it!?"

Creak.

"W-Wait. Hijiri—! Don't barge in—!"

My screaming and shouting didn't reach her. The door opened mercilessly.

Hijiri widened her eyes.

“.....Shou. Could it be that.....”

“N-N-NO! You’re wrong, Hijiri! Definitely wrong. It’s not what you’re thinking of!”

“...I thought that you already stopped since long ago. But you still do that...”

“I did! I already stopped doing that! HOLD ON, HIJIRI!”

I must, I must explain the situation properly to her!

“That’s not it, Hijiri! I just spilled some juice!”

“...I see. So you spilled something of a similar color to hide the evidence?”

“That’s not it, sister—! This is 100% pure juice! Juice!”

“...R-Really? You aren’t lying?”

Ah, but Bireley’s juice wasn’t 100% pure juice...I couldn’t lie to Hijiri.

“No, only 20% of that was pure juice!”

“...Woah. And what’s the remaining 80%? Don’t tell me that it’s mainly your...”

Hijiri was still as expressionless, but she seemed disgusted. This was something only I, as her brother, could understand.

“Though it’s 100%, it’s only at 20%! No, I mean, it’s 20% pure juice at 100%!”

“...I don’t understand what you’re saying...but Shou, I think I get it.”

“O-Ohhh...So you *do* understand, Hijiri.”

As if summoning all her strength to force herself, Hijiri slightly moved her chin downwards, nodding.

“I do. Bedwetting is quite embarrassing, so it’s perfectly understandable that you want to hide it.”

“That’s not it! I am not hiding anything! Err, yeah, exactly! That’s right!”

Wait a second. Why don’t I do that? It would clear this misunderstanding right away!

It’s an article that serves as perfect evidence!

“...What is it, Shou?”

I dragged the front part of my pajamas towards Hijiri.

“Please sniff this place!”

“What!?”

Hijiri held her own slender body, and immediately turned her head back.

“You’ll understand if you just sniff here. Or you can lick it! It’s just juice! Just juice, OK!”

“I-I didn’t think that you...would actually have such a habit...disgusting.”

Hijiri was looking at me as if I was some piece of crap.

“T-That’s not it! It’s not a habit, OK!?”

“I think that asking your little sister to do stuff like that is awful...”

“That’s why I’m saying it isn’t! You’ll understand after sniffing this! Do it as if I managed to fool you to do that! Got it?”

“I-I don’t want to...I won’t be fooled by you.”

“Please! PLEASE! Just a bit, just lick it a bit!”

“N-Noo...!”

“Just once and it’ll be fine. You just have to lick it once! Once!”

“If you come any closer, I’ll phone our mom.”

“That-That’s just horrible! Hijiri!”

“What’s horrible is your personal interest. You can do something like that by yourself.”

“U-Ughhhh! I don’t want to do a play like that...!”

Hijiri seemed to be shocked.

“Ha...It’s OK. Let me take care of the destruction of evidence. I’ll bring it for washing.”

“I’m saying that it’s not...”

“Should I tell mom then?”

“D-Damn...I’m saying it’s really not what you’re thinking.”

“...Take off the clothes that have been dirtied...and I’ll take your sheets to the laundry too...”

My little sister then took away, without a hint of disgust on her face, the dirtied clothes I urinated on. (It’s actually just Bireley’s! Very important!)

As she was about to leave my room, she said to my half-resigned self:

“...Shou. Tomorrow, after school...free up your schedule for that time.

There’s a place I want to take you to.”

I had no idea what those words meant, and simply took them as mechanical waves.

Despite what happened—perhaps because it was a habit of mine—I subconsciously got ready for school.

I walked out of the house and on my way to school...

An emotionless but cute voice came from my back.

"Shou...Please wait a moment."

It was the first time since middle school that Hijiri talked to me on her own accord.

If I was the same as usual, I'd probably turn my head back with a bright smile on my face.

However, because of what happened today, my moral was pretty low.

"...So, what's the matter?"

"What happened? You...seem to be very down."

"...Well."

"Oh...I understand...It's because of what just happened...it can't be helped."

"...Don't mind me...please forget that."

"...Don't feel so bad, Shou...Don't worry, I don't mind that."

".....Is that so."

"No problem...this is something common."

"No problem!? How can this be something common! There's no high-school student on Earth who would still wet his bed!"

I couldn't help but spit those words in a brutal tone. Then my little sister, for some reason, lowered her head.

"Uh-uh..."

Although her expression didn't change, Hijiri did lower her voice.

"No wait, you're concerned about me. Thanks. However, you are deeply misunderstanding some—"

At that moment, Hijiri interrupted me.

"I have good news for you."

"Huh? ...Good news?"

"As I said, I want to take you somewhere after school. It will definitely be a good help to you."

"I don't get what you are saying..."

"Somewhere like a great place."

"A great place?"

"Yep. My clubroom."

".....Eh, by clubroom, do you mean the Second Flower Arrangement Club?"

“Exactly.”

“Wait a minute. That place? Why would I go to the club that only beautiful girls can join?”

My little sister coolly shook her head.

“It’s really not just a place only cute girls can join. You also meet the requirement.”

“T-The requirement...?”

Since when did I meet the requirement to join that circle of beauties?

“...It’s all right. You would fit in well. Plus, I’m sure that it’ll help you.”

“Wait a second. Help? Uhm, help *what?*”

“As long as I consult the club president, we’ll find a way to cure you.”

“.....The hell? Even though you asserted that without hesitation, what are you talking about?”

“Consulting the club president about your bedwetting issues.”

“Hey...HEY! Wait a second. Could it be that, Hijiri, you plan to talk with that Chris Ryusenji about m-my bed-bedwetting!?”

“Yep.”

“W-Wait! I kind of have a bad premonition! Don’t you find that decision strange?”

“...Then, we’re heading there as soon as school ends.”

“Please hear me out. *Please.*”

“...Shou. Don’t be shy.”

“Hijiri. Please think about it over again–!”

While we were talking and walking to school, we had arrived at Seiryuu Academy without noticing.

As we reached the front gates, a black car passed by us.

Getting out of the car was a beautiful young lady with supple and bright blond hair. She was Chris Ryusenji.

The students nearby immediately went beside her and greeted her with a “Good morning, Miss Chris.”

She was surrounded in a split second. Her popularity was really astounding. A scene like that could probably be seen only in manga or anime.

“...Ryusenji is damn impressive.”

Chris, as if she had noticed something, faced this way. Then, her mouth formed a large smile.

“Good morning, Hijiri.”

“Hello, prez.”

Hijiri whispered to me:

“I’ll inform her of your situation.”

“Eh. Wait a sec—Damn, she’s already gone...”

I-Impossible...that was a joke, right?

Hijiri walked toward Chris. The students surrounding the latter cleared a path for Hijiri.

When she arrived beside Chris, Hijiri whispered something into Chris’s ears.

I couldn’t even stop her, so I simply stared blankly at them.

Chris then faced this way and scowled.

What on Earth are they saying? It can’t be. Impossible.

A scene that was not good at all appeared in my imagination.

“Prez. My brother wetted his bed today. What a scum. A retard. I don’t even know why he is still alive.”

“Gosh. Wouldn’t it be great if he can just die, just like that. He’s just a worthless shithhead after all. A disgrace.”

“Yep. So prez, do you know how to deal with this asshole? I want to wipe his existence off the world. I want to massacre him.”

“Bedwetting can only be forgiven until one gets into grade school!”

“Gwahahahahaha!”

The mere thought of it gave me butterflies in the stomach.

Chris looked this way again with something like an expression of disgust.

Then my sister coldly pointed her thumb at me.

“...Hey, why don’t we just that? ‘Cos this isn’t good, right? Right?”

I have been crushed to the utmost despair.

After school...

As the class meeting ended, Hijiri, who was sitting nearby, ran towards me with her skirt fluttering.

“Then Shou, let’s go.”

She took me by the wrist.

“I-It’s OK. After all, what happened this morning was just a misunderstanding.”

But at the same time, I was really curious of the activities the club was holding. Right now, I still had no idea what on Earth Hijiri was doing in there.

...What should I do then? For Christ's sake, what should I do...!

Hijiri talked to the hesitating me in a serious tone, as if she was trying to calm a kid down.

"Shou. Don't be shy. I'll help you with your curing. And so will the club president."

"U-Ugh, so you—! So you really said it to Ryusenji! Damn, even though it was just a misunderstanding. Even though it was because you misunderstood the situation...! Shit...how come it ended up like this."

".....Shou. *Please.*"

Hijiri got really close to me, and was staring at me without the intention of letting me go.

There was a scent of lemon coming off her. I could clearly see her slender eyelashes and her big round eyes.

Cute. She was simply too cute. My protective instinct as an elder brother started boiling in me.

"...Shou, don't be so obstinate...here."

My forehead had been pressed by a finger of hers. It seemed as if I was being looked after by her.

"I'm sorry..."

"...Shou...Please. Even though the first step may be challenging...I'll still be at your side. OK?"

What should I do? *What should I do?* I really want to know what the Second Flower Arrangement club's activities are.

But by going there, I was going to be labeled as a bed-wetting person. And people will know about it.

But Hijiri also wanted me to go there. And she was requesting it like that!"

Damn. What on Earth should I do...!

As I was torn inside, Hijiri tilted her head and asked:

"...Shou...You can't?"

She's so cute! So fucking cute! That's bad. Hijiri is so cute that—

"I have no problem with that! Come, we're heading there!"

I assumed a patented expression and answered back. Like this, I marched toward the Flower Arrangement Club.

"...Then Shou. We're heading inside, OK?"

My little sister looked at me with a worried expression, and opened the clubroom's door.

"I brought him here."

The members of the Flower Arrangement Club, which is to say Chris and Karin, all focused their gaze on me.

Even though this was a mere clubroom, there was air conditioning. It was probably done for an elegant girl like Chris.

The not too cool temperature was set so one could feel comfortable.

"Welcome, Shimizu."

Chris said that as her voice chimed clearly like a bell.

"H-Hello, Ryusenji."

Chris gently shook her head left and right.

"You see, I really hate my family name. So can you call me by my first name?"

She revealed a magnificent smile. That alone was enough to make my heart quicken its beat.

"C-Chr...Miss Chris."

"Haha. You don't have to add anything such as "Miss" in front, you know."

Chris, who seemed to be having fun teasing me, laughed.

She just wanted me to call her by her first name, so doing so probably didn't matter, right?

"C-C-Chris...waaah!?"

My ear was suddenly pulled forcefully. The culprit was Hijiri.

"Shou. Please change that perverted expression of yours."

"Ouch...I-like hell I have a perverted expression."

"You do" "Do not" "Do too" "Do not" "Do too" "Do not"

As we were going to continue our argument, Karin, who had been quiet until now, opened her mouth.

"You two can stop flirting now."

Karin seemed to be unhappy as she was pouting. Her arms crossed in front of her chest, in front of her petite body, she stood there firmly like one of Buddha's guardian.

“By the way, President Chris is a godly person. So stop ignoring her like that! Hijiri, Shou, who the heck do you think you are? So drop your arrogant manners!”

“Wait, who do you think *you* are?”

Even though I had planned to apologize to her properly the next time I’d be seeing her, I couldn’t help myself but make a comeback like that.

“Wha—Don’t you *dare* talk to me in that manner...bastard!”

“I’m really sorry. Please pretend you didn’t hear that.”

“Now you’re being silly. You know, I’ve already heard you! T-There’s no way I’ll ever forgive you!”

Whoa. That being said, I had really done some bad things to her.

As I thought, there was really the need for a proper apology.

“I’m truly sorry for what I’ve done...!”

I deeply lowered my head, making Karin perplexed.

“I am very sorry for making you remember such unhappy memories.

That wasn’t on purpose, though I guess I can’t use it as excuse.”

“N-No, about that...if you are truly sorry for that, I can’t get angry over that...”

That hesitation she was showing meant that victory was in my reach!

I needed to take advantage of the current situation to apologize! I could only do it now. Let’s do this!

“Plus, I think your stylish breasts are quite fine, actually!”

Karin’s face suddenly froze.

“W-What, what are you saying?”

“I’m sure there are people who like them the way they are. Don’t give a damn for those idiots who think that they are undeveloped or whatever.”

“Undeveloped? You’re such an ass!”

“Hum, you see, the less developed are your breasts, the more grandiose will your heart be. I’m sure it’s like that. Plus, you won’t have to buy a bra, which will make it super economical for you. Meaning that you won’t be the kind of woman who spends too much money. Be more confident of yourself!”

“Grrr, damn you! What the hell are you—! There’s no, no way I’ll ever forgive you!”

Err...huh? Why does she sound like she’s repressing her anger?

She lifted her head that was facing the ground a second ago. Then, I managed to see Karin's face completely red, as well as her moisten eyes.

"Stop acting like you're cool or whatever! W-What were you in your previous life then? **Because I was previously a great mage capable of commanding dragons!** Humph!"

...Huh?What the hell did she just say? That girl...

A, uhm, a great mage...?

"...Are you OK? I hope that it wasn't because I made you so mad to the point you lost your mind."

"Though you just made a fool out of the divine President Chris, you plan to do the same to me too?"

Karin's eyes started to get filled by tears. While moaning, she held her thighs firmly in embarrassment.

"Hum, I'm sorry..."

"Ugh, calm down, calm down, my stomach..."

Karin's cheeks started to get even redder.

She was pressing the lower part of her abdomen, seemingly feeling awkward.

"This is just the eighth-grade syndrome. Though it's the first time I hear of one's stomach being involved. Could it be because it bursts out of your abdomen? That's not really cool, you know?"

"S-Shut up! Shut up! Shut up! Damn, I can't hold it—!"

While shouting that, Karin ran outside, her thighs close to each other.

"...Hum. It's a shame, since I originally planned to apologize..."

Chris was flabbergasted as she was staring at me.

"Are you serious, Shimizu...?"

"What?"

"There's not a single doubt that you were provoking her. Are you an idiot?"

"Ehhhh...? You're kidding me...for real?"

"D-Don't look at me with this incredulous expression. I should be the one who's supposed to find this unbelievable."

"Shou. Don't bully Karin so harshly."

"I-I wasn't bullying her..."

"Her **trigger** is *anger*."

Hijiri, as if she wanted to inform me of something, suddenly said that mysterious line.

“Hijiri...how come that even you are saying weird stuff like that.”

“By the way, mine would be *stress*.”

“Hijiri...did you catch the eighth-grade syndrome too?”

Since we haven't been talking a lot lately, I had no idea what the hell she was saying...*Trigger*? Meaning that it could cause something to burst out?

Dang, Hijiri, even you managed to get the eighth-grade syndrome.

Could it be that this club is actually the 'Eighth-Grade Club'?

However—

However, however! If Hijiri is like that, then I have no choice but to play along with her.

Though it was a bit embarrassing, I can only try my best...!

“I understand. Hijiri, as soon as you get stressed, you can mobilize a great amount of energy. Is that magic? Or a superpower? Or are do you plan on summoning something? I understand. I totally do. Actually, your big brother also can. In my past life, I was a hero that made every single demon kneel before humans. But because of your radiance, I am now a warrior awakened by the feelings of love. My trigger is activated by the thoughts I have for my comrades.”

The hands of the clock hanging on the wall could be heard.

Chris looked at us with an expression of disappointment.

However, I had no choice. All I needed to do was to please my sister.

Yet, I only received an extremely cold line in response.

“...Huh? Shou, is your head alright?”

“Eh, wh-what? What did you just say, Hijiri? There's no way you just said, dumbfounded: “...Huh? Shou, is your head alright?,” right? I'm sure that your big brother misheard.”

“It's exactly what I said. What nonsense are you spouting? So you have another disorder aside from your bladder problems?”

“N-No, that's not it, Hijiri. It's only for your sake that I would—!”

“That's not it. Shou, could it be that you are incontinent for my sake?”

“No—wait, there's no way that's actually possible!”

“Then, you want me to 'sniff the odor of your pee' again? ...Shou, your disorder is even worse than mine.”

“NO! Though I asked you to sniff, that was to prove to you that I didn’t wet my bed!”

At this moment, Chris opened her mouth in shock—or rather, in disgust.

“...I can’t stand it anymore.”

“T-That’s not it, Chris...! This was only an accident. Rather, I didn’t wet my bed at all.”

Chris was coldly staring at me. Not good. She doesn’t trust me. Still, I continued to explain.

“That was because of the Bireley’s. Every-Everything is its fault...Damn! THIS IS A SCHEME LAID OUT BY THE BIRELEY’S.

“Aren’t you ashamed to put all the blame on a yellow drink, Shimizu?”

“You don’t have to hide it, Shou.”

My little sister was nodding, still with that expressionless face of hers.

Then she told me:

“...It’s fine. **We are all the same.**”

“.....Huh?”

I really could not understand my sister’s words, and couldn’t help but to let out a dumbfounded interjection.

We are all the same. What did she mean by that? What on Earth did she mean?”

“The club members here...we are all the same.”

Did I misunderstand something? T-This is impossible, right?

“W-What do you mean, when you say that you are all the same?”

I held the last string of hope in my heart, wishing for—no, trying to clearing this misunderstanding in my head.

However...

“We are all incontinent.”



Hijiri said that without hesitation.

“No, nononono. That’s impossible. I-I have no idea what you’re talking about. Are you OK? Do you have a fever? Let me touch your forehead...no, you don’t.”

“...It’s OK. I’m fine. I’m perfectly normal.”

“H-Huh...then...so, what the hell do you mean?”

“This is a club where the incontinent people get together to help each other. A club where we help cure each other’s incontinence.

“WHAT!?”

I couldn’t assimilate this information. No, rather, my brain was refusing to do so.

“The code term girls use when they go to the toilet is “picking flowers”. It means that this is a club where girls learn how to properly “pick flowers”. After that comes the “Arrangement Club” part. It means that you have to “arrange” the problem of “picking flowers”. “ (1)

That second meaning is damn far-fetched...!

It’s impossible that my little sister would actually be incontinent.

After receiving a blow of despair, I looked towards Chris.

Chris was nodding, her arms crossed.

“T-That’s a joke, right...?”

Chris then spoke with honesty.

“Everything is true. Even if you refuse to accept this reality, even if you are deeply disappointed in us, what Hijiri just said did not include a single lie. It’s a genuine, true fact.”

“Y-Y-You’re lying...You’re lying, you’re lying, you’re lying...!”

I unconsciously took a step backwards.

“So you actually think we would tell you such an embarrassing lie?

Aren’t you a comrade of ours? Though I feel that having a male comrade is kinda, you know...I believe that incontinent people can’t be bad people.”

“This is definitely weird! I mean, that blabber on how incontinent people aren’t bad people and stuff!”

“You are our comrade. Aren’t you the same?”

For a split second—

It was only for a split second, but there was no doubt that Chris glared at me the way she would glare at her father’s murderer or something.

However, she immediately put back a beautiful smile.

A smile that could make people believe that incontinence was adding up to her charm.

I couldn't help but shudder. Then, I managed to squeeze out a few words.

"So it means that the requirement to enter this club is actually..."

This was not some kind of club for beautiful girls—

But rather, a repulsive club for the—

"To be incontinent. That is the requirement to enter the club."

Chris put her beautiful, delicate hands on my shoulders...

"Let's do our best."

...and said that in a graceful manner. However—

—However, something like that...there's no way I'll ever accept it!

Before I managed to recover from the shock, I was already speaking.

"Hey, hey— Stop screwing with me."

My voice seemed to come from the bottom of my body.

"How could I leave my little sister in this so called *club*?"

A club aiming to cure each other's incontinence? Don't give me that crap.

How can my sister be in such a place...!?

My stomach was burning as if someone introduced molten metal in it.

There's no way, *no way*, that I will ever acknowledge that club.

"We're leaving, Hijiri."

Even though I said that, Hijiri simply shook her head.

"...No. I don't want to leave."

"Hijiri. Don't you find this club very strange?"

".....Even so, I wish to stay here."

Why are you being so obstinate? Clearly, nothing good will come out of it even by staying here.

"Shimizu. Why do you want to take Hijiri away?"

"The reason is obvious. Because she won't be cured even if she stays here."

"Why is that?"

Chris asked me that question. I took a deep breath, and answered in one go.

“So what good can come out from hanging with a bunch of incontinent people? It can only lessen your pain. You find people that are kind of like your comrades. Heh.”

“Then, may I ask you what’s wrong with that?”

What’s wrong with that? Isn’t it crystal clear?

“After having your pain lessened, your determination to cure your incontinence would weaken. You’d be satisfied by your current situation! It’s by being unhappy of your situation that you will gain the strength to change that. This club is ridiculous. Simply *ridiculous*.”

“Do you really think that it works that way?”

“Think about it carefully. If a person finds his or her incontinence exposed, wouldn’t it cause the people linked to that same person to be also exposed? How many people are there in the club? Three people? Wouldn’t the risk be multiplied by three?”

“Oh. So that’s how you think it works.”

I was staring intensely at Chris.

“That’s why there’s no way I’ll ever acknowledge that club!”

Chris, feigning complete seriousness, said:

“Even if it means disregarding your little sister’s opinion?”

“If it’s for Hijiri’s own good, I won’t hesitate to do so.”

“Haha. What a quick answer...I see. So, what do you think, Hijiri?”

Hijiri, who had just been apostrophized, was staying silent and didn’t say a single word.

“Hijiri. What are your honest feelings about this?”

My little sister opened her mouth to say something, but then closed it. She seemed to be nervous, which was quite a rare sight.

“...Shou.”

“What?”

“Shou, you idiot.”

A small, stingy pain could be felt in my chest.

“...No matter what you say, I won’t back off.”

“...Idiot...Idiot, idiot, IDIOT!”

To think Hijiri could actually display such an unyielding resistance...Seems that she’ll hate me even more after that.

So be it. If that is necessary to save Hijiri, then I don’t mind doing it.

I bit my lips, waiting for her next line.

“...I...”

“Hmm?”

“I’ve never made a single friend before that.”

“I know.”

“It’s impossible for me to get one while hiding such a secret.”

There was a sudden jolt near Hijiri’s stomach.

“That’s why when you wetted your bed, I, I was truly happy...!”

“...Ugh!”

“I was truly really happy. So happy that my tears were almost overflowing.”

“Hijiri...”

“Right now...I’m also...stressed right now. B-Because I didn’t want you to discover my secret. However, if it comes to that, I’d want to let you know...my s-secret...”

Oh. Now that I think of it, Hijiri’s trigger is *stress*. From all I’ve heard so far, I presume that this trigger refers to triggering the desire to go to the toilet. Right now, the stress is probably causing her to want to go there. That is probably the reason she is moving so awkwardly.

“That’s why, S-Shou...I want...want to know...that this...this club is very, very important to me...so *please*...”

Hijiri kept staring at me.

Her face still wasn’t showing any expression. However, I could see that she was extremely sincere. Only I could understand that emotion being conveyed to me.

Gosh, really. Damn it. What now!?

Now that she was so serious in persuading me, there was nothing I could do.

Though I shouldn’t be that bad of a guy, right?

Am I not simply thinking for Hijiri’s sake?

“Shou...”

I’m sure that it’s with the help of this club that Hijiri has been saved. From that prison named ‘solitude’.

“I get it...I’ll comply with your wish.”

What the result of this decision will be, I still do not know.

Nevertheless, I said that to Hijiri, and then left the Second Flower Arrangement clubroom.



That night, Hijiri even went to my room.

However, she stayed silent and didn't say a word. She simply kept staring fixed toward my eyes.

"...Hijiri?"

I was staring at her face alike to that of a doll.

After a while...

"...hum, Shou. I'm sorry that I've never told you that."

"Told me what?"

"...About my body's condition."

"Oh. About that, you don't have to worry about it. I'm not angry."

"...Also...uhm...T-Thank you for today...That's all. Good night.

Hijiri immediately turned her back at me and left for her room.

At this moment, I had completely forgotten about a certain person's existence.

There was still a girl in the Second Flower Arrangement Club who didn't acknowledge me.

Chapter 2: Entrance Test! The Self-Proclaimed Archmage Arrives at the Second Flower Arrangement Club!

"No. Don't. I won't accept this. I definitely — won't accept this! No way will I allow this pervert. Never! Ever! Besides, he's not human to begin with! He's a demon transformed by the darkness! We're being eyed upon! Ahh, it's so terrifying!"

It's Monday, during the second week, and we're in the clubroom.

Since I've allowed my little sister to remain here, I naturally wanted to join too.

And because of that, Karin has so vehemently protested against it, so forcefully that her glossy black hair was about to stand up.

"But Minato."

“I-It’s not Minato! It’s Shinryū no Miya!”

“...Err...what?”

“Minato doesn’t sound cool at all! I don’t like it! Please take note of the mood, Shimizu!”

“Well...”

It didn’t matter whether it’s Minato or Shinryū no Miya, but it certainly is awkward playing such a childish game with her.

“Then, Karin.”

“P-Please don’t call me by that name! I’ll be stained by you!”

“S-Stained by me!? But Chris and Hijiri have allowed me to join the club, you know?”

“U-Ughhhh...”

“You seemed very polite to Chris yesterday. Is it really alright to behave the opposite way now?”

“Uu...”

Karin then looked behind me and stared at Chris.

After her eyes met Chris, Karin’s words sounded forced for some reason.

“No problems! My power is second only to the Lord’s! In other words, if the Lord strays from the path, it’ll be my job to correct Her!”

“...what do I do now, Chris?”

“Oh my, how *dare* you call President by Her name! That’s a disrespect to Her!”

“Yeah...there are already so few people in this club. It isn’t good to have someone object now, am I wrong?”

“That’s right, President. Let’s hurry up and chase this guy out. Let’s throw him out through the window and send him back to Hell.”

Karin waved her arms as she said such terrifying words.

"Hey, we're on the third floor. I'll be thrown straight to hell."

"Hoho, aren't you from there anyway? If not, let me beat you to a pulp using my favorite 'Shubalz Javelin'!"

Karin showed an evil grin.

"...What's that 'Shubalz Javelin'?"

"It's my enhanced weapon. After equipping it, my speed will increase by about five times, and my attack, defense, hitpoints and other parameters will increase as well. In my previous life, I've ridden an ancient dragon, and it has remained loyal to me, transformed itself, then followed me to this current life so that nobody other than me can ride it!"

Heh. Karin puffed her flat chest.

This girl is a freakin' idiot. I'll just pretend that I didn't hear that and just ask the club president, Chris.

"Chris, what should I do now?"

Chris appeared to be troubled at first, and then, she grinned as if she just thought of something.

"Alright then. How about we have a club entrance test?"

"...A club entrance test?"

"Yes, that's correct. The condition is to make Karin allow you to join the club. That's all."

"...So Karin just needs to say to me something like 'Please join the club', right?"

"Or she can say 'I'll let you join'. You can bait her into saying it, but no violence allowed."

Kukuku. This cackle echoed through the clubroom.

"There's no way *I* can possibly submit to such a man. Continue to struggle. Come, and I'll force you to give up! Let me teach you the taste of despair!"

Baban! Karin then spreaded her arms wide and threw a threatening glance at me.

But curiously, or rather, expectantly, I was not scared at all.

As I continued to stare at her in surprise, Karin curled her lips happily.

“Hoho! So you’re scared and unable to say anything now, are you? Is that so? Right, that’s how it is. I’m the reincarnation of an archmage, and you’re just a monster that came out from hell.”

“No, no. You’re kidding. All these settings are impossible.”

“How foolish you are, denying things you don’t understand. How stupid, vulgar, nonsensical. Then, take this! My super move— Super Movie King Cannon!”

“Eh...?”

What’s with that mysterious word...how am I supposed to react?

The self-proclaimed Archmage Karin placed her arms in a wrapping motion, as if she was holding a sphere, and was saying things like ‘Nununu’, ‘Ku, my power, don’t go crazy now’.

For some reason, I, as an onlooker, felt *very* awkward.

“Hi-Hijiri, what in the world is this...?”

I asked Hijiri, who was reading a book with an emotionless doll-like expression.

Her pretty, petite face turned towards me, as she said:

“...She has always been like this.”

“Sh-she’s been doing such embarrassing things all this time!? This girl!?”

“...Yes.”

She nodded and shook her little chin slightly.

Karin, however, proceeded to ignore our conversation as she continued with her strange pose.

.....Such a terrifying person.

“HAAAAAA—!!!”

Karin pushed her hands forward, and looked as if something was flying from her palms.

I could only stand around blankly, not knowing what to do, but Karin too remained as silent as I am.

“...”

“...”

“P-Please say something, Shimizu.”

“What do you mean by that?”

“I hope you can understand without me telling you.”

“Ahh...I hope you'll stop playing such games that hurt me when I look at it. You're already a High School student.”

“No! That's not it!”

“Your parents will be sad, right? Do you dare show this in front of them?”

“That's more wrong now!? Haaah! Haa! That's it!”

“What's that exactly!?”

“Seriously, why is your understanding that bad!!”

“How can I make a proper response to that?”

“Ughh! That's why, I say, it's your turn now!!”

“Huh!?”

“It's your turn now! I just fired a Super Movie King Cannon at you. How're you going to respond to that?”

“I'll think that person is an idiot.”

“That’s—not—it—! I mean you should be preparing to defend this attack and defeat me! If you can beat me, I’ll let you join the club.”

“Meaning?”

“You have the right to use a defensive skill to defend against my attack, or respond with an attack.”

“Eh, ehh...that means I can only call out a skill with a name like that and beat you...? What kind of battle is that? Isn’t that too silly? Right, Hijiri?”

I asked Hijiri but the latter seems to be telling me, *just give up*, as she closes her eyes.

“Then make your move, Shimizu.”

“Eh— ...then, I’ll dodge.”

“Not possible.”

“Why?”

“The Super Movie King Cannon can track an enemy down. This move from me, Archmage Karin, can destroy a country in one hit!”

“Why does it even need a tracking function!? It’s a weapon of mass destruction!!”

“In the past, I was in a tough battle against a demon tribe that used its country as a hostage. But afterwards, I finally managed to develop the Super Movie King Cannon. It’s 1.5 times stronger than the previous Movie King Cannon, and has a tracking function added.”

“I DON’T NEED SUCH INFORMATION! I DON’T HAVE TO DEAL WITH IT SERIOUSLY! I DON’T WANT TO REMEMBER IT!”

“And it can also distinguish between ally and enemy and only hurt the latter. It’s a map destruction weapon that’s very useful, like the Cyflash or the Psycho Blaster.”

“...Wh-What’s that Cyflash, Psycho Blaster or whatever?”

“It’s fine if you don’t know. Anyway, Shimizu’s evade failed. Ahh, this Shimizu demon died. Yay, it’s over, I win.”

“...There’s no way I’d accept this outcome. That skill of yours is way too broken. If someone who can use that appears in a game, it’d be really boring. Any attack on the enemy would be a one-hit kill.”

“A game is different from reality. And will the corpse please stop talking? Oh, sorry, I meant the pile of *ash*.”

“Reality...? You...”

“OK, I’ll welcome any sort of challenge from you, but only once a day.”

“WHAT!?”

“It doesn’t fit reality very well for a loser to challenge me many times, right?”

“REALITY AGAIN!? GO LOOK UP THE MEANING OF THAT WORD IN THE DICTIONARY!”

“Anyway, this is a game I play with my friend every day. Don’t think about beating me so easily.”

What’s with this nonsensical battle...!? Is her friend that much of a headache inducement too!?

Or maybe she had no choice but to join in as well. If it were the latter, that’d be truly pitiful.

“Bye then.” Chris smiled as she waved at me slightly.

Anyway, it looks like I have to win this battle if I want to be in the same club as Hijiri.

For some reason, my heart felt heavy.

●▲

I was on my way to school the next day, and because Hijiri ran off first, I had to go alone.

If possible, I really hope we can go together every day, but this is too much to expect.

“Yo, Shimizu. What’s wrong today? What’s with the frown? What happened?”

My friend Katou has appeared beside me out of nowhere, and called out to me.

“No, it’s nothing much, actually.”

“Really? Ah, it’s about women, right? You’re despairing over your grim future with them, right? I know, I know. I too tried going around confessing to others when the new semester started, but it’s not working.”

I know, I know. Katou said this as he revealed his shameful acts, but this wasn’t something I could empathize with.

“Whatever, Katou, your method definitely won’t work...”

“If you spray an area with a machine gun, you’ll hit something, right?”

“You definitely won’t be able to hit if you fire without even aiming.”

“You must know this though, Shimizu. Listen to me; I used to think this way, so I did it.”

“Did what?”

“I stood in front of the school gate and shouted ‘I love you! Anyone will do. To everyone here, anyone, would you please go out with me!’”

“You’re an idiot, Katou. And your stupidity is reaching new heights.”

“Who’s an idiot? It’s true that I may not be able to hit if I aim at one bird, but if I aim at a flock of birds, I may be able to hit one, right? See, I’m a genius. Definitely.”

“I’m pretty sure only a desperate pervert would do that.”

“In that case, I’m going to confess today too. Confess, confess, confess...OK, I made up my mind. I’ll confess to the next girl I see.”

“Ahh, is that so? Do your best then.”

“...That’s so cold of you. I said I’m going to confess to the next girl I meet.”

“Yes, yes, do you best then. Speaking of which, I want to ask you something.”

“Hm, what do you want to ask from me?”

“That first-year student you told me about recently, Karin Minato. Do you know what kind of person she is?”

“Hm, Minato. Karin Minato? Her face is considered top-class in our high school, but of course, Chris Ryusenji looks better.”

“Is that so. Karin deserves her place up there. Though of course, that is if Hijiri isn’t included on that list.”

“...So you’re calling her by her first name when she’s not around? How pitiful you are. Since you’re like that, I’ll tell you this.”

Katou clears his throat, and says,

“Well, it seems she gets angry a little too easily.”

“...I don’t think it’s just a little.”

“Seems she has no friend.”

“Ahh, I can understand.”

“Hm, perhaps she’s so cute that the people around her don’t find her approachable.”

“I’d like to cross off that possibility.”

“But it seems she has one very close friend.”

It’s true that there’s a person who has been playing that weird game with Karin.

This person must be that ‘important friend’ Karin talked about yesterday.

“They’ve been friends for a long time. It seems they’re always together.”

As we walk on, talking about Karin, I suddenly noticed familiar black hair. This person with the smooth, long hair is riding a bicycle to school; it's that Karin we're talking about.

"Ho-How can that be..."

Beside me, Katou suddenly let out a cry of pity.

"...What is it, Katou."

"I've already decided on confessing to the next girl I meet. I've already decided..."

"Ahh, I can understand why you're so distraught. Such a pretty girl...well, appearance-wise only."

"No. That's your secret crush right? There's no way I can betray you."

Katou said that in sorrow. There were all sorts of misunderstandings flying around, but I still feel my chest heat up.

"Damn...looks like I can only give up now...but still, I feel that if I don't do something I've decided now, I won't be able to do it in the future. But...no, I can't keep my mind out of this. Sorry, Shimizu, don't look at me."

"No, it's fine...don't mind. You should go ahead."

Katou looked at me with teary eyes.

"Is it really alright...? You, then..."

"Ah, it's fine...in all sorts of ways."

"Thank you, Shimizu! I'm so moved!"

Katou charged forward and screamed,

"Minato! Karin Minato!"

Karin's bicycle then screeched before halting.

She turned to face us, her black hair fluttering.

"I like you~! Please go out with me!"

“Fuck off. Please disappear. From here as well as from every parallel world and every time axe.”

“W-Why! Do you hate me!? Even though we haven’t even talked to each other before!?”

Katou passed meaninglessly to the offensive.

But by that logic of his, what’s to think of confessing to someone one has never talked to before?

“We never talked to each other before, but I despise you.”

Karin mercilessly slashed Katou with a single line, and the latter froze there like a statue.

She then seemed to have noticed me, stepped on the pedals, and cycled towards me.

“...Shimizu, that was your idea just now, wasn’t it? You can’t beat me, so you actually sent this assassin to launch a psychological attack on me. You’re more despicable than I thought. I expected nothing less from a demon.”

“No, that’s not it. You’re wrong...”

“Then you want a showdown here? Super Movie—”

“W-wait, wait a sec!”

“Humph, so you want to run away?”

“Who’d like to do such a thing in the middle of a large street like this one!?”

“It’s true that it’s dangerous to involve the people around us. I’ll wait for you after school then.”

Karin then turned away and rode off to school.

Katou, half-resuscitated now, looked shaky as he moved towards me.

“Oh? Are you mimicking a zombie now, Katou? That’s quite a performance you’re pulling here.”

“Shi~mi~zu~~~”

“W-What now, Katou? Your voice sounds way too menacing.”

“Why were you t-t-talking to Karin Minato so intimately!? Damn you! I’ve always treated you as a friend! So you two have been dating!?”

“N-No, we just happened to know each other.”

“I didn’t hear quite clearly, but I heard enough parts from that! At least, it’s a *conversation*, right?”

And then, Katou started mimicking the voices. He sounded disgusting as he tried to imitate Karin’s voice.

“ ‘Shimizu! Are we going to do it here? A passionate kiss?’ ‘Ohoho, not now, only on this large street’ ‘Okay then. I’ll wait for you after school! Please suck my lips as much as you want’ ...It was something like that, right!?”

“Beside that being plainly wrong, you even added a load of bullshit...”

“Damn it!! I don’t know any Shimizu now! I don’t know that guy! Wahhh!!!”

Katou exclaimed as he ran to school.

“...What the heck is this?”

I stood alone under the morning sun, muttering.

On the same day, during class.

While I was taking notes as the teacher was writing on the board...

Tak, tak, tak...I felt something really uncomfortable on the back of my head and my neck.

Ah, seriously, it’s annoying...

While the teacher’s still writing on the board, I looked behind.

Katou was a tad slower than I was as he averted his eyes, but there were rubber scraps all over his desk.

...This bastard.

I again turn to the front. Tak tak tak.

It's really annoying me. Really, this bastard.

My legs start to tremble as I get more furious.

"Ah."

It was Hijiri's voice, and this time, there was definitely no doubt it was hers. I glanced aside, and found my little sister looking at me.

She was saying something to me with her hand covering her mouth.

"(Brother, are you alright?)"

Actually, I didn't manage to hear it, but I can guess approximately what it was about from the movement of her mouth.

This was something that came with the bond between siblings, telepathy.

"(I see that your legs are trembling a lot)."

"(Actually, I can't stand this anymore. I'm almost at my limit.)"

"(Leave it to me)"

"(Ohh?)"

Hijiri nodded confidently, and then stood up and raised her hand.

"...Teacher. May I request something?"

Wait, she's not going to report Katou to the teacher, right? There was no need to go to that far...but that was for my sake.

Well, I guess it can't be helped. Sorry Katou, but you'll have to become a sacrifice for the sake of love.

The teacher, in his forties, who was writing on the blackboard with chalk, turned around.

"What is it, Hijiri Shimizu?"

The stares in the classroom gather upon Hijiri.

She immediately blushed as she fidgeted her legs. Her hands are placed on the desk, "Erm" and her hips sway back and forth.

But why's she being so fidgety...?

No way, is she nervous? Is she going to urinate at this moment now?

The teacher must be thinking of this too as he asks Hijiri,

"Do you need to go to the toilet?"

"Yes."

"Go then."

The teacher agreed without hesitation. Well, obviously.

Hijiri, just leave me alone for now. Handle your own business first.

Hurry on now.

Since there's telepathy between us, she's probably able to understand what my feelings are.

However, Hijiri taps her toes at the floor and says softly,

"It's not me, my brother needs to go."

"Me!? Has my feelings not gotten through at all!?"

"...Br-Brother, you don't have...to...hold it in. Hu-Hurry up, and go...ah..."

Hijiri's voice became demure, probably feeling tense from everyone's stare being fixated on her.

"Y-You're forcing yourself too, aren't you, Hijiri?"

"I...am...not...forcing....myself..."

Maybe her misunderstanding was that *I* wanted to go to the toilet?

Rather than being annoyed by Katou?

She was doing this for my sake even though she might end up going to the toilet as well?

Hijiri's kindness caused me to nearly black out.

"Then, Shou Shimizu, hurry up and go then." The teacher says in a flabbergasted tone.

It's probably hard to say "I want to go to the toilet too" with such an atmosphere going on.

No, looking at her hip movement, Hijiri probably can't move from where she is.

I can't let her continue to be the focus of attention.

She's trying so hard for me. I wipe the tear welling in my eyes.

Then, I definitely can't allow Hijiri's panties to be soaked.

I stand up and raise my hand.

"Teacher, I want to go to the toilet too!"

The teacher's obviously slightly taken aback by my sudden declaration, "O-Okay..." and answers.

"Can I bring Hijiri along as well?"

"What do you mean now? Are you unable to go to the toilet yourself?"

Oh fuck.

Ughhh!

Why is this guy asking this *now*? WHY IS HE ASKING THIS!? Argh!

But well, this is a question to be expected.

Hijiri's in a more precarious situation than me. I have to bring her away from here no matter what.

What do I have to do? Well, that's obvious.

I opened my mouth.

"Right! I can't go to the toilet alone!"

Rumbles ... *murmurs* ...

“J-Jesus Christ...” “The Shimizus have an issue. And quite a big one.”
“...Hm, of course.”

There’s muttering throughout the classroom. What do you mean ‘of course’!?

No, now’s not the time to worry about that!

“Let’s go then!”

I approached Hijiri and went to pull her with my hand, but her feet didn’t move.

“S-Shou...”

Hijiri’s knees were trembling. It seems she’s unable to walk now.

I bent down, slipped an arm under her knees, and another to support her back.

Carrying her like one would carry his bride, rryinged her like one wouledd carry his bride, I lifted her up, and started running.

“Hurry! We can still make it! Argh! The nearest toilet is under repair!?”

What do I do now!? Do I go to a toilet in the other campus!? Or upstairs!?

If I run off to another campus building, will Hijiri be able to hold it in during that time...!? I guess not.

“Can I go upstairs while carrying someone...? No, I got no choice!”

“I’m, fine, ngh...that’s why, ah...S-Shou, don’t force yourself movedtake the first step to the second level.

I moved my leg with much difficady, and nearly miss the step.

dBut even so, I had to keep climbing. I cont wasinued to climakingp like this.

Dwouldn’t this time, I was cautiously making sure that we wouldn’t sway up and down.

“Ah, I, can’t hold, it in. Shou...”

“It’s alright, Hijiri. Just hang in a little longer. Just a little longer. Hang in there.”

“Nn, ah, uu...”

“Wh-What is it now, Hijiri?”

“A-A little came out...”

“Sorry...but it’s still alright. It’s not that devastating.”

“Yes...”

But at this point, it’s obvious that I can’t delay this any further.

I won’t care about the burden on my legs now. Let’s charge upstairs!

“WOOOOO!!”

I charged up the stairs with such momentum, and arrived in front of the toilet.

“Okay, here’s the flowering garden now...! Go on, Hijiri...!”

I gently put Hijiri down, but her knees fell on the floor, weakly.

“Nn, ugh...”

She placed her hand on the wall, and tried to stand up like a newly-born ell. She was basically Clar walkately fell down...no good? She can’t walk such a short distance?

“Th-Then, S-Shou...”

“What is it, Hijiri?”

“Sorry...for embarrassing you...just now. But...may I...make a selfish request...?”

“No problems. Just say it, Hijiri.”

“S-Shou, hauu... I can’t walk...support me...”

My little sister’s face turned redder, and tears could be seen in her eyes.

“B-But for me to go to the women’s washroom...”

“No need for that. I can use...the mens’ too...please...”

Hijiri’s breathing was becoming erratic.

“No...I can’t let you enter the men’s, Hijiri.”

“I’m sorry...Shou.”

Again, I carried Hijiri up, and reached for the women’s washroom door.

An irritating feeling pricked painfully at my heart. This is a place I wouldn’td even during cleaning time, but I had no choice choice now.

The door opened.

The inside wasn’t too different from the men’s washroom, but the tiles in the men’s were blue, while the ones here were pink.

And there was no urinal here. ThinInstead, tgere was a rowto be expected. Instead, tgere was a row of cubicles, and in a certain sense, it was a majestic sight. I carried Hijiri all the way to the nearest flowering garden.

“It’s fine now. I’ll wait for you outside.”

I turn my back on Hijiri and raise a hand to wave.

“Nn...thank you, Shou...”

At this moment, moment, there’s someone in front of the toilet, and the opening of the door looks like it’s in slow-mo.



My heart was about to explode. It's over, it's over, it's over. It's all over if they see me!

I hurriedly snuck into the second closest cubicle.

Someone walked in. Since there's no shriek, it would seem she hasn't found me out.

Looks like I'm safe.

Hijiri's bewitching voice then came from the next cubicle.

"Nn, ha...ah, haa..."

That was Hijiri heaving a sigh of relief.

...Either way, that was a close call.

If there was a single misstep, Hijiri's social position in school would be doomed. If her reputation as a girl with incontinence issues became known throughout...

I suddenly recalled an incident from the past.

And before I realized it, I was already clenching my fists tightly.

—At that time, I couldn't save my childhood friend. I don't want to go through such an experience for a second time—

I definitely mustn't let Hijiri suffer..

For her sake, I have to hurry and join the Second Flower Arrangement Club. The club president, Chris, must have all sorts of information concerning Hijiri. I need to get her to share them and think of a counterplan.

The best scenario would be to approach her directly, but she was a popular girl surrounded by many.

It seemed very difficult forle to approach her, so I must join the club and talk to her directly.

Because of this, I have to make Karin submit to me no matter what...

Upon hearing someone walk out of the washroom, I opened the cubicle door with a reinvigorated determination.

And at that moment, I found a girl in front of me. Our eyes met.

“A-AHHHHHHH!!”

Looks like there were two of them who entered the toilet at the same time.

“I-I DIDN’T MEAN IT!”

I left these words and covered my face with both hands as I ran out of the women’s washroom.

On that day, in the clubroom after school.

“Hohoho. So you come again without learning your lesson! As expected of a demon from Hell. Even after being burned to ashes, your regenerative abilities are really impressive.”

She’s saying such painful words with even though she has such a cute face. If she’s a person in some fantasy world, she mig-t be rather popular, since she’s a loli-Archma non-fafortunately, we live in reality, a non-fantastical world, a world without superpowers battles.

This is reality—ordinary as it is.

“Thison the offensivem is my territory. Since you’re on the offensive, you can attack first, Shimizu.”

She’s telling me to attack first, but what do I do? I should be some demonic monster from Hell, right?

Appearing in my mind is a large gorilla with long horns on the head and wings on the back.

“I’ll spit a fire blast and attack you with sharp claws!”

“My turn to attack then. Fha, hahahaha! Do you think yourpreadedish attack can work on med? Haa!!”

Karided hder arms wide and wasached forward. She posed looking like she was going to push something down.

“Dragon Fang Defense Array!”

Karin looks rather pleased.

“What sort of effect does it have?”

“Please understand from its name that it negates attacks, Shimizu. This is a defensive skill that uses the attack called Dragon Fang, and casts a defensive wall made of dragon fans around the user. It can even defend against the strongest fire-based magic in this world.”

“Which world are you talking about now...?”

But I have to find a way to beat her.

“I’ll negate my sharp claw attacks, fire another fire blast to hold you off, and fly into the sky!”

“Okay. I’ll tell you something a little useful, Shimizu. The important thing is the attack name. Use an impressive sounding name to scare the opponent player and then force him to submit through relevant logic. That’s how the game goes, so at least put some effort in naming your skills, okay?”

“I know it! That’s the game called A Stupid Game, right? I know that!”

“Eh, you’re so noisy. Basically, you’re not allowed to deny what the opponent has come up with, so try coming up with something that sounds really amazing and best me. But I guess you can’t possibly do that.”

In other words, I’ll have to come with some embarrassing Eighth-Grader Syndrome logic, and force the opponent to think ‘I can’t beat that’. What in the world is that? If I can’t poke holes in the opponent’s setup, I can think of whatever I want to come up with? Wouldn’t that mean this person with Adolescent Delusions is a tough customer to deal with?

In that case, I can only fight back using m. That was how I felt in Young Boys Manga. That was how I felt.

“My turn now. Lightning God Ray G thetling!”

“Uugh!!”

“Three light bullets break the demon Syourizu’s at supersonic speed, and another hits your head. Checkmate!”

“Not yet. It’s just a decoy. After being beaten, my true strength will be awakened. I’ve only used 5% of my true power up till now.”

“It’s fine to consider revival as one turn, right? Then, my turn. Again, Lightning God Ray Gatling! And before this, this is a one shot even on a Demon Lord, a mere demon can’t handle this. Don’t underestimate the Archmage Karin! Mu, Muhahahahaa!”

“Then, there’s a Great Demon Lord more amazing than a Demon Lord, right, Archmage Karin? It lends me strength to beat you, and I get a super power up. Also, if I roar, a hundred...no, thousands of my allies will rush over. Now I should be more powerful than you, Archmage!”

“Actually, I’ve been fighting using only 1% of my strength. Super Movie King Cannon, fire! Phoosh, there goes the reinforcements! Done!”

“That’s cheating! You came up with that setting later!”

“I thought of that right in the beginning. Beroberobaa!! You’re finished! Then, tell me what’s the proof that I came up with an excuse! Besides, how can the strongest Archmage in the world lose?”

“Damn...you, Karin.”

“Ahahaha. Whining like a loser dog after being unable to beat me? You’ll show how pathetic you are the more you whine. Ahahah!”

“Damn it! That’s all for today! I’ll be back!”

“Right, see you tomorrow...but it’s Wednesday tomorrow, so there’s a break from club activities. I’ll wait for you two days then.”

Our Seiryu is allowed by Academy mandates that no club activity is allowed on that day Wednesday, so all clubs have to take a break on that day.

Unfortunately, I’ll have to wait till Thursday for my rematch, I guess...?

●▲

After that defeat, was slightly by Katou, and we chatted for the entire night.

I was somewhat late as I returned home, and then what happened to encounter Karin.

This petite black-haired girl was wandering around alone.

Maybe I can spy on her and find a way to beat her.

And just like that, I remained like this and observed her from slightly far out.

Two High School girls walked towards Karin.

One of them had heavy makeup, and the other looked very haughty, her arms folded.

"...So she has such friends huh? What kind of friendship do they have?"

But it seemed a little weird. The girl with thick makeup grabbed Karin by the arm, only for the latter to shake her off.

I'm a little curious as to what they're hook, and moved over a little closer.

Suddenly, the haughty girl shook her shoulders and started laughing.

"Ahahahaha. How funny, this girl here is still doing it."

"...Hah, what's so funny about it? Such an uncouth person."

"But high school student playing that childish game does it matter to school student."

"So what about that? Why does it matter to you?"

"Eh. I'm a little concerned. We were haughty before, but that doesn't bother me if there's nothing I mocked Karin.

"Don't bother me if there's nothing. You're in the way."

"Don't say that. We're still friends, right? Come on, say something. Some of those embarrassing lines."

Karin narrowed her large eyes and glared at the girls.

“Didn’t I let you say something, you fool? You don’t have any friends and boyfriend, right?”

“Of course I do! Someone important...”

The girl with thick makeup grabbed the silver cross dangling on her chain and shook it hard.

“Can you still make friends wearing such an embarrassing necklace? That’s amazing.”

“Nnatedh...”

Ah...seriously now. This girl really hated them, I guess.

“Hey, that’s embarrassing already.”

Upon seeing me approach, the haughty girl clicked her tongue.

“Who are you?”

I glared at the two girls and said, “You’re from the high school near downtown?”

“Guh...!” The two girls let out a groan and didn’t say anything as they lowered their heads.

“If you do get lost, report to the school, st.”

The haughty girl clicked her tongue again, said “let’s go” and left.

“*Coughs* wa”

I glanced at Karin, who was coughing non-stop.

“...Are you alright?”

“Th-Thank you very much...you managed to chase those two immediately...”

There’s some life regained in Karin’s expression as she looked at me.

“It’s really amazing.”

“...I-It’s nothing. This really isn’t anything big.”

Then, I asked Karin a question I’m more concerned about.

“A-Anyway, who are they?”

“They used to be my e werends, but that was when we wOh righten.”

“I see. Oh right, I think they just mentioned it.”dI never thought we’d meet here. They’re the ones who taught me about anime and mangas a long time ago.”

“...I see.”

Oh? Isn’t our relationship a lot better than before?

Very good. If there’s such a development, there’s no problem for me to enter the club.

“Then Karin, about joining the club.”

Upon hearing me say this, shn expression ofe immk gave an expression of shock, and then glared at me angrily.

“I-I won’t soften my stance just because of this. I definitely won’t allow you to join the club!”

Karin called out and escaped into a convenience shop nearby.

...Tch. Looks like I can only beat this Karin head on.

And so, two days later, on Thursday, I suddenly realized something.

If I think about it seriously, how can I possibly win if I don’t really understand the rules?

And so, Iwasealized that the best way was to ask somebody very familiar with the rules.

Of course, even if I told Karin ‘Please tewon’t e how to beat you’, she won’t possibly teach me that.

And so, I decided to ask Karin’s friend.

According to the information I got from Sayama Kyouko, an airhead. She has because of her hair, and because she often narrows her eyes, she looks very tired.

I arrived at the same place Katou told me about, and called for Sayama Kyouko.

And then, a sleepy-looking girl appeared in front of me.

“Sorry for calling you out. There’s something I want to ask you.”

“Well, that’s fine though. May I know who you are?”

“I’m Shimizu, a Second Year.”

“So it’s Shimizu. Are you the older brother of Karin’s upperclassman?”

“Yes, that’s right. Well, you’re Minato Karin’s friend, right?”

The moment I asked this, Sayama showed a slightly gloomy look.

But she immediately changed to a gentle smiling face.

“Yes...at least I admit.”

These words had such a that I was wading behind them that I was momentarily at a loss of words.

“Is that so? There’s something I want to ask you.”

“Something you want to ask me?”

“Yes. Are you the one who plays that weird game with Karin?”

“Uu!” Sayama let out a groan, said “Yes” and smiled weakly.

From this reaction, it seems she too knows how strange that game is.

“Actually, I have to use that to beat her.”

“Eh? You shouldn’t do that too...? I honestly couldn’t tell...”

No! Please don’t look at me with that kind of expression.

“...Then, how do you normally play? Do you know a way to beat her?”

“Sorry. I do play this with Karin, but most of the time I just watch her play and do nothing. If she wins lots of times, she’ll feel a lot happier.”

“...To think that you can even play such a game with her, Sayama.”

“Because I like to see Karin smile.”

She was such a magnanimous girl.

“I see. So you don’t know how to win either.”

“Sorry. Ah, Shimizu, I want to ask you something.”

“Eh?”

“What activities does that club do?”

“W-Well..”

“Karin said something like ‘What’s flower arrangement? Is it a shortened form of...I can’t say?’...but if it’s flower arrangement, isn’t it weird not to let others know?”

“Ah...Ah well, I don’t really understand either.”

His goal was really, I couldn’t say that its goal was to treat incontinence issues.

“I see. Karin wouldn’t tell me this either. It seems she’s been hiding something from me for a long time...”

Ahaha. Sayama started to laugh in a lonely manner.

“Did something happen?”

“No, it’s just that I wonder if I’m really Karin’s friend.”

“Because there’s something she’s hiding from you?”

“Yes. Karin looks a lot happier with the people in the Second Flower Arrangement Club than when she’s with me. It makes me a little jealous. It’s really unsightly, isn’t it?”

Sayama looked a little hesitant, and said,

“Erm, I do apologize for saying such things the first time we meet...but if you know something, I’ll be really grateful if you tell me what it is...I think I can accept whatever truth it is.”

“Whatever truth it is?”

“Yes.” Sayama shows me a serious look.

“I see...okay then.”

“I’ll try and talk things through with Karin next time. I really have to talk with her.”

Once this conversation ended, I left the first years’ corridor. I intended to ask a question, only to be requested with something. I guess I better tell Hijiri something without affecting her reputation negatively.

And so, on that day, I ended up losing to that person with Adolescent Delusions, Karin again. What can I do now...?

On the day I lost to Karin for the third time, I sat there at the park’s swing, thinking alone.

There was a group of elementary kids making a ruckus at the climbing frames and the slide.

“I had used my power but I can’t beat her at all...!”

She had used all sorts of ridiculous logic cringey attacking me with schemes so cringey that I never thought of before.

And I can only use the knowledge of things I’ve seen before. Karin has her own knowledge and also the Eighth-Grader power that continues to churn inside me. What should I do...what should I do...?

I witnessed a scene near me, and widened my eyes.

“That’s it...!”

This is it...there’s no other way.

On the following day, during Friday’s club time, I arrived at the clubroom early, waiting for Karin.

I drank the red tea Chris had prepared for me, and enjoyed this peaceful atmosphere.

Hijiri had already arrived, reading a book as she was enjoying the elegant afternoon tea time.

I then said to Hijiri with a very gentle voice,

“Hijiri, your brother here will definitely win this for you.”

Hijiri raised her face, paused for a little while, and said,

“...Yes, Shou...I'll cheer for you—”

Before Hijiri could finish her sentence however...

“Hello!”

Karin walks in.

Tch! She actually interrupted Hijiri's encouragement to me—

“Hm, you're here again, Shimizu—no, you're here to admit defeat again, aren't you? Have you gotten addicted to losing? Ohoho.”

“So confident, aren't you? Useless self-conceitedness will only lead to your destruction.”

“Oh ho, self-conceitedness? Who do you think you're telling this to? I'm a gaming professional, a representative of Japan after all. Who do you think you're talking to? Now is your last chance to act as if you are strong. Now is your last chance to act as if you are strong.”

“Oh? So a mere Shimizu is being so cocky now. Do you think you can beat *me* here?”

I started to say, isn't that your previous incarnation? When did you change your profile again. But even so, I didn't say that—but rather,

“But aren't you quite amazing, Karin?”

“What do you mean?”

“You’re able to come up with so many profiles. Of course, that’s what you think of right at the beginning, right?”

“Hahahaha, so you finally understand? Not bad. That’s impressive of you, heheh.”

“Since you’re able to come up with such cool profiles, you’ve come up with some lousy ones, right?”

“Lousy skills? Haha, how can there be such a thing? I only have super moves.”

“My profile is based on your own...it’s fine if I use that, right?”

“Sure. As long as the name and profiles are such that the effects are clear.”

“Got then. Then, since you’re attacking this room today, you can attack first.”

“Oho, how I misjudged you here, Shimizu. Since I’ve had a misunderstanding of you up till now, I’ll upgrade you from *abomination* to *flea* then.”

“That’s quite an upgrade there. But I’m still a demon, right?”

“A fly-type demon.”

“I think I got an impressive one here. Is that it? That’s quite an upgrade.”

“Are you talking about Beelzebub? Don’t get cocky. You’re just a henchman fly under him.”

“...I see.”

“Then let’s begin! Lightning God! Divine Fusion Wave!”

For some reason, this person’s skills here don’t resemble that of an archmage at all. Well, it feels more like a bruiser’s skill, or is that just me?

“That sounds really strong.”

“Hahaha! Isn’t it? Isn’t it? Basically, this skill is a fusion of God’s and demon’s incompatible powers, and added with a dragon—and my lightning element—”

Karin continued what seemed to be a long explanation. This and that.

But...is it really alright if I do this? I started to ask myself.

I can definitely win against Karin, but this is a skill that comes with a large risk.

To be exact, it’s a skill that’ll cause others to lower their opinion of me, thinking that my mind is weird.

“Hey! Are you listening, Shimizu? I’ll show you a super cool technique!”

“Ahh, I’m listening.”

“Really? Eh, nevermind. How do you intend to dodge this super move, Shimizu?”

I closed my eyes and took a deep breath.

I recalled the time I should have ended, the past I loathed.

If I want to fight against her, I have no choice but to do this...!

I shouted,

“BARRIER-!!”

“Huh!?”

“BAR—RI—ER!!”

“Wh-what is that?”

“A barrier.”

“How can anything like that work...?”

“You can’t nitpick at the opponent’s profile, right? So what’s wrong with that? That’s what I decided on.”

But that’s not enough. There’s still something more embarrassing.

“K, Urk,! I-I’m attacking now. Barrier destroying array! Add on! Lightning God Ray Gatling! The demon Shimizu’s barrier is now destroyed, and the next attack will go for him.”

“Ah, I’m no longer the demon Shimizu.”

“WHAT!?”

“I’m the super strongest man now.”

“What’s that!? Such an embarrassing name. So ridiculous.”

“Shut up, that’s something I decided!”

“But isn’t your profile setting too random!?”

Right, it’s a super random setting. If I think normally, I won’t be able to beat an Eighth Grader, but they all have a weakness. They—care too much about whether it sounds cool or not.

Then, I can only cast aside whether it’s cool or not, and seek only for pure power.

The only thing that can beat an Eighth-Grader Syndrome, is a Second-Grader Syndrome...!

“Haha, no matter how strong you are, it’s impossible for you to dodge this homing attack that can take down even a Demon Lord. Your barrier is shattered. You want to use another barrier? I’ll break it again.”

How naïve... how naïve she is.

“Super duper barrier that can negate an attack that breaks the barrier!”

“What!? Then, I’ll summon a dark matter attack that can destroy everything in this world. Calling in Dark Matter!”

“It’s a super invincible mode that negates any attack!”

“Uu, uuu! What’s that, what’s that...!”

Karin stomped on the floor unhappily.

“Also, double speed, supersonic mode begin!”

“Th-then, the Dragon Fang Defense Array meant to counter attacks.”

“I’ll use the death-death ray that’ll kill any enemy once I use it!”

“I-I’ll dodge!”

“It’s useless! It’s a sure-kill attack on the enemy. You lose!”

“It counts even without hitting?”

Karin exclaimed with a shocked expression.

“That’s how it’s set up. You can understand from the skill name, right?”

“Uu, uuu. That’s too much. You’re so shameless, Shimizu, you’re too much.”

Karin’s face is blushed red, and her legs started twitching.

“No, no. Unforgivable. Idiot. How shameless.”

Her slender waist continued to rock back and forth, and she continues to raise and drop one drop.

Is she that unhappy?

“Don’t, seriously, I can’t hold it. No. No more!”

Karin cried out as she prepared to turn and leave the classroom, but I grabbed that small shoulder of hers.

“Wait! I just won, right? You’ll let me join the club now, right?”

“Leave that alone. Let me go! Please let me go!”

Karin continued to stomp as she hollered.

“Are you thinking of running away like that?”

“Have you had enough? Please let go of me!”

Pak. I got kicked in the shin. During this time, Karin ran off while maintaining a weird posture of clutching at her thigh.

I see...! This girl’s trigger is anger. So her incontinence was triggered by my Second Grader Attack?

“Wa-wait!”

But Karin stopped at a corner not too far from the clubroom.

“Karin! I caught up to you...!”

But someone’s right in front of Karin.

It’s Sayama Kyouko, and her thin thread-like eyes were staring at Karin.

“I have something important to say to you today, Karin.”

“Wh-what is it!? Please wait for a while, Kyouko! I have something urgent to do now!”

Sayama then grabbed Karin by the wrist.

“Nope. I won’t let go unless you have a proper talk with me, Karin.”

“Le-Let go of me. Now’s not the time for that!”

Karin said hurriedly.

“I want to talk with you seriously. You always throw a tantrum and run away, but I hope that you can listen to me today.”

“I, said already, please let go of me! Now’s not the time for that! I have an emergency!”

Sayama then said with a slow yet serious voice,

“I’m sorry, but I just hope you can talk with me, just for today. If you find me annoying, I won’t bother you again. So just for today.”

“Ah, ah, no no. I’m really, not joking here. Please let me go. I beg of you, Kyouko.”

Karin’s hand is being held, but her feet are still moving.

“No. Do you treat me as a friend, Karin?”

“That’s what I think! That’s what I think! So,”

“I really like you, Karin. I view you as a very, very important friend to me.”

“Yes! Yes yes yes! I know that, I know that! Let go of me!”

“So to be honest, I feel very lonely because you’re hiding something from me. Of course, I won’t say something stupid like friends shouldn’t keep secrets from each other, but you’re bothered about that, right? I want to help you out in some way. So, so, I hope you can tell me.”

“I-I can’t say it.”

...It’s true she really can’t talk about her incontinence issues.

“Then, I’ll tell you a secret of mine. Actually, when I eat a cup of ice cream, I like to lick of the ice on the other side. Eh, ehehehe...”

Sayama certainly looked embarrassed when she said it, but obviously, this was not on the same level as that of incontinence issues.

“That’s enough already! Really, really now!”

“Now, tell me your secret too, Karin!”

The atmosphere is tense, but I can’t do anything other than watch.

Karin’s fidgeting got more intense.

But Sayama did not mind at all, and even got agitated as well.

“Now then, Karin, please tell me!”

“I definitely can’t say it! I can’t say it! Anyway, please let go of me!”

“I won’t let go!”

“Please let go!”

“No!”

Karin’s face showed a look of despair, and her face is no longer red, but rather, closer to blue.

“Ahh, I can’t take it anymore. No more. Ahh, uu. Nn, nah...ahh...”

“Ka-Karin?”

Sayama let out a troubled voice.

Karin then closed her eyes.

“...Everything about Sayama...”

She’s ostensibly out of breath, and after letting out this teeny-weeny voice, she hollered with a voice completely different from before,

“I HATE EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU, KYOUKO!! NN...I HATE YOU! GE-GET AWAY FROM ME! SCRAM! I DON’T WANT TO SEE YOU!”

“Th-that’s...”

“I TOLD YOU TO HURRY UP AND DISAPPEAR! YOU’RE ANNOYING! HAVEN’T YOU REALIZED THAT!?”

Sayama’s face contorts, and it seems she’s about to break into tears immediately.

“U, uu!” She runs off while sobbing.

As she turns around, I seem to see some transparent drops. Those must have been tears.

Karin didn’t give chase as she merely stood around.

Sayama run off for a while, and then turned back to look again.

She probably hoped Karin will chase after her, but Karin’s not moving a single inch. She’s unable to.

And so, Sayama stared at Karin in a lonely manner, before running off.

Karin’s anguished groans echoed in the empty corridor.

“U, ugh...uu, hic...”

“Karin...”

“Kyouko...I’m sorry...”

“What in the world, Karin? You’re already crying in sadness now. Why did you say such harsh words?”

“B-Be-Because I can’t hold it in anymore. I don’t want Kyouko to know...I don’t want to be hated by her...”

“Then you have to chase after her and apologize. Hurry up and handle your problem in the toilet.”

“B-But...uuu...”

“What now?”

“I-I can’t move....”

Karin said while letting out tears.

“...Seriously. Guess I’ve no choice then.”

And so, I can only move Karin all the way to the flowering garden.

I continued to wait in front of the garden, but Karin just wouldn’t come out.

Is she alright...? Just when I’m starting to get a little worried, she finally walks out from there.

Her shoulders were slumped weakly, and her legs swayed feebly. There’s no life on her face at all.

“Uu...what did I just say to Kyouko...?”

Guh—Karin nearly collapsed on the floor.

“H-Hey!”

I hurriedly carried Karin up.

“...I’m really...the...worst.”

Karin started to stutter,

“I did such a thing to Kyouko...even though she...made her way...here...intending...to...talk to...me...I...I...”

Karin really doesn’t like me carrying her, but she’s not complaining as she continued to mumble.

“What...should I do...?”

My uniform’s drenched by her tears.

“Shimizu...”

“What?”

“Why, do I, have no friends, anymore...I-I’ve been, working hard...”

“...What do you mean?”

“In the past, I made friends, through the game. So, I, I kept...”

“...?”

“I...*never had any friends before*. But, I managed to make some, through that game. So, I-I’ve been doing it—even now.”

Karin sighed.

Ah, I see...

She just can’t forget about her kindergarten times.

I guess she made friends through that stupid game, and right now, she’s still clinging onto that illusion. That must be the case; even till this point where she has broken up with her kindergarten friends.

“Ah, because of this reason?”

“Eh...?”

“Did you think you can make friends through that Eighth-Grader game?”

“I can. I can do it. I already made some...!”

“That’s not right. Well, a normal conversation can gain the same effect, I guess. So, that’s—”

“No way!”

“...Why?”

“I’ll feel scared about making friends normally. I feel pain when I show them my weaknesses. It feels like everything will disappear. Ah, but even without conversing normally, even if I don’t show my weaknesses, I don’t have any friends left...haha, ahaha...hiic.”

Large teardrops rolled down from her eyes.

...Jeez, I guess it can't be help. There's no other choice after seeing this now.

I don't want to repeat the mistake I made back then.

"Karin, listen to me."

"...Eh. So it's because of that game after all...?"

"Do you think that has anything to do with this?"

"Eh...?"

"No, isn't it. There's nothing between your Eighth-Grader antics and Sayama leaving right? That girl, Sayama, accepted your condition, right? Didn't she play that weird game with you? Is there a reason to make friends?"

I grabbed Karin by her slender shoulders and said,

"That girl's not angry because of that, isn't it? No matter whether you're normal, have Eighth-Grader Syndrome issues, or just flat out weird, it doesn't matter to her—definitely."

"...B-But."

"Karin, what...do you wish for?"

I stared at Karin's eyes earnestly as she wiped the tears off her face with her hand and answers,

"I-I want to make...amends...with Kyouko..."

"Then, do you know what you'll have to do?"

".....I can't do anything. I-I've been fooling Kyouko all this time...I didn't trust her, and lied to her again...I'm the worst."

Karin shook her head from side to side.

"It's very simple. Just say one line. Say it to Sayama."

"...That's—"

“Ahh.”

“Is it really fine if I say that?”

“I allow you to.”

“...Ha, haha, when have you become so amazing.”

“I’ve allowed you to do so, so hurry up and do it. I say. How long are you going to keep latching onto me?”

The moment I said this, Karin’s face turned red, instantly.

“Wh-Wha-what about you, Shimizu? How long are *you* going to keep latching onto *me*.”

“But I just said that line already. Besides, you’re in good spirits now. Hurry on now.”

“Humph! I don’t need your help here.”

And then, Karin took her cellphone out and dialed Sayama’s number.

“...I’m calling her.”

“It’s better to apologize to her as soon as you can. The longer this drags on, the worse it’ll get. Doubt will cause disbelief in others, and the affection will drop.”

“I know that!”

Karin exclaimed while the phone’s still at her ear.

“What do I do? She’s not picking up...”

“...I see.”

“Ah! Hello! Kyouko!? ...Eh...uu...she hung up.”

Karin’s cute face contorted in sadness.

“...You want to apologize immediately, right?”

“Yes...I know where her house is, but she may not come out. Kyouko’s stubborn.”

Maybe it's because of their relationship as friends that she knows something I don't.

"Then, how about this...let's see if you can catch up with her."

"Okay! I'll go then."

"Right. We'll decided our match next time. Go on now."

But Karin lifted her head up at me, obviously not looking confident at all.

"Well..."

"What else?"

"I'm a little scared of going on. Please, do you mind going with me, Shimizu...?"

"Didn't you say you hate me? Why're you asking me for this now?"

"Hijiri doesn't seem adept at interacting with others, and Prez, she may not have interacted much with normal people. That's why I want to ask of the most normal person here, you."

This is Karin's request.

"So, please help me..."

This girl needs help, and this is a good enough reason for me to nod.

"Alright, leave it to me."

"Okay! Let's chase after her then! I want to catch up with her on her way home no matter what!"

Karin and I arrived at the bicycle park.

"Over there."

She pointed at the bicycle with a sharp angular frame.

It has a black frame, and has a unique offense-oriented sharp; it looked rather cool.

"This is my favorite machine, Schwarz Javelin."

“Ah, the thing you talked about in the clubroom.”

“Sorry, Shimizu, but can you ride it instead?”

“No problems.”

“I’m, still a little uneasy about exercising intensely...”

“...You’re ready to cycle that fast?”

“Yes. It’s hard to tell whether we can catch up timewise, and my leg strength alone may not be enough. Please take care of this, Shimizu.”

“Got it.”

I answered briefly and leaped on the bicycle. The seat’s a little low, probably to fit Karin, but it’s nothing big.

Karin put her feet on the bar sticking out from the rear wheel, and stood on it.

The long hair swayed past my neck, and I could smell the scent of strawberry.

“Then, please go out through the front gate!”

“Got it!”

My legs exerted strength, and I felt that this is the first time that I’ve ridden a bicycle so quickly.

The scenery quickly passed by me, and we quickly exited through the main gate.

“Please turn red at the next traffic light.”

“Oh, we’re here.”

I slowed down slightly, and turned around the corner at a pretty fast speed.

Karin’s petite body embraced me from behind, probably to prevent herself from falling.

“...Shimizu, this is the first time I let someone else handle Schwarz Javelin.”

“Ah, I see. Is there anything wrong with that?”

“This is my very, very important machine. So, so...”

“So?”

“Please catch up to her.....I believe in you.”

“...Hey there. Well, I'll do my best...! But is it really alright for me to handle such an important bicycle?”

“It's not a bicycle! It's Schwarz Javelin!”

“I see.”

“...You really fought seriously against me head on, Shimizu.”

“Hm?”

“And you won in such an embarrassing manner, in front of Prez and Hijiri.”

“...I don't want to remember that already.”

And I'll say your Eighth-Grader antics are more embarrassing. Right, that's definitely the case.

“You must have been able to do that because you summoned your courage. You didn't care about whether it's cool, how it looks. You just worked hard. So please, show me that courage.”

Karin exerted more strength in her embrace.

What's with this development? My heart starts to race, and maybe it's not simply because I'm riding on the bike furiously.

“Shimizu.....I like you.”

“Wait, whaaaat?”

Karin then chuckled, and added with what seems to be a very embarrassed voice,

“As compared to the beginning.”

“...I was wondering if that wasn't the case.”

I answered while pedaling as fast as I can.

“...But I guess I really do like you somewhat...so please do your best so that I can get back something more important to me, okay?”

“...You're quite shameless.”

“Yes, you're right. I've decided to throw aside my shame and pride to get back something important.”

Karin sounded rather gentle.

“It must be the same for you, Shimizu. You can do anything for Hijiri.”

“...I guess.”

“I really like that about you. I too want to be like that. No, I *want* to become like that. So, please look at me, and cheer for me. Please help me when I seem unable to do it.”

“That's if I'm helping.”

“Either way, I don't care about my shame or pride.”

“You never had any anyway. Those Eight-Grader...”

“Maybe that's how it is.”

“Well, I guess I can. I'll help you anytime if you really end up in trouble.”

I've arrived at a road I'm unfamiliar with, and as I was rushing too fast, my energy's almost depleted.

“Just a little more to Kyouko's house.”

Damn. I might not be able to make it.

No—wait, that's!?! There's a girl dressed in our school's uniform, walking dejectedly.



It's the short hair I saw before. That's definitely it!

I pedaled with all my strength.

Like me, Karin too has something important, and has said that she can do anything for that something.

She must have felt the same as me.

The Schwarz Javelin raced on with a speed befitting its name.

Karin and I formed a sharp red javelin piercing through the sunset, a flash that will not reflect light, and can absorb some darkness. I guess it's because of Karin's influence that I'm having such thoughts.

"Please wait! Kyouko!"

"Right! Wait!"

The person in front of us leaped in shock, and turned to look at us.

"Hii, hii—!"

And then, she run away, looking like she's scared of something.

But the Schwarz Javelin can't be dodged. It's a homing type attack. The homing bicycle charged straight forward and passed Sayama. At this moment, I forcefully turned the handlebars right and braked.

Screech—!

The Schwarz Javelin howled like a beast under the red sunset, and became silently.

Karin then gently jumped off the bicycle, in a light manner as if gravity doesn't exist.

"Kyouko, I've something to tell you."

Karin said in sing-song.

"Karin..."

"Kyouko, please listen to my apology."

“Yes...?”

“Kyouko, I hope you understand my secret.”

“What’s going on? Didn’t you say those harsh words, not wanting to see me again?”

Tears welled in Sayama’s eyes.

“I was lying.”

“Lying?”

“My heart and secret are so *hideous*—but, but, but! My feelings for you are true. You however, not me, are the one who can decide if they are true. If you think I’m lying, Kyouko, the important thing in my heart is a lie then. But—but!”

Karin’s stares fixed upon Sayama, and she said,

“But if you say this is true, there’s still a pretty thing in me.”

“What are you saying?”

“I guess it’s weird to apologize in this way when I’ve come to apologize. But, this are the most truthful words I’ve come with. From now on, I’ll tell you the truth. These words I say are true.”

I can’t understand what kind of logic this is, and what’s she saying actually.

But because of this, what she says is true, or at least I believe.

“Kyouko, I’ve hiding something from you...I-I...”

She’s unable to continue further at this point. She can’t say anything.

But she seemed intent on shaking off her hesitation as she shook her head, and then shouted,

“I HAVE INCONTINENCE ISSUES!”!

“...Eh?”

Sayama frowned, and that expression seems to be saying, *what does that mean?*

“When I get angry, I just feel like peeing. It’s because this is so embarrassing that I never told you of this.”

“How can that be such a stupid thing? Are you making fun of me, Karin? That’s really shameless of you. That has nothing to do with hiding what the club does!”

“You have reasons for not believing me, but that’s true.”

“Then, what do you do in that club, that flower arrangement club?”

Not good! That question...

But Karin didn’t reveal the secret.

“Actually, I can’t say anything about that. It’ll be bad for them. But because they know about my nature, I don’t feel tired when I’m being with them.”

“...Karin, that means you’ve been stressed out by being with me...?”

“Just a little. But, from today onwards, from today onwards, since you know my secret, and if you’re still willing to be my friend! I won’t...Kyouko!”

“Please don’t say anything more now! I’ll just feel hurt hearing them. I too feel anguished now. You actually said such a stupid lie.”

Kyouko gave an exasperated expression as she shook her head.

“Seriously, can I go back now? Is it fine? Thanks for everything up to this point.”

“P-Please wait a moment.”

Karin reached her hand out for Sayama.

But she missed, and didn’t even hit the shoulder.

Let alone her apology, even her Incontinence Issues were doubted.

I do feel a little apologetic, but I still have to speak up..

“Sayama, I’m here to complete what you requested.”

Sayam looked at me weakly.

“...Shimizu’s brother...”

“Didn’t you ask me to tell you what Karin’s hiding?”

“...Yes, I did...”

“That time, you did say ‘I can accept the truth, no matter what it is’, right? In other words, you intend to believe when I say what Karin’s secret is, right?”

“That’s, right...”

“Then why don’t you believe! She summoned her courage to personally say this to you! If what Karin says is true, can’t you imagine how difficult it’ll be for her to say this?”

If I compared this to my relationship with Hijiri, I’ll definitely never say this. Definitely.

“...”

Sayama seemed to be thinking about something as she remained rooted.

“This girl, Karin, may end up hated, despised by you. But after considering all these, she still took the risk to rebuild her relationship with you. This is what she’s thinking.”

“...But, that’s—how can I simply believe it?”

“You’re undoubtedly an important person to Karin, Sayama. If you know this now, I hope you’ll listen to what Karin says...this is what I can say.”

Karin merely stared at Sayama. Her teary eyes were filled with fear, timidity, but she’s not running away.

“...Kyouko. Please believe me. If you don’t, go ask Hijiri or Chris! So, please, please...!”

Sayama took that stare upfront.

Their eyes were fixated upon each other, and they probably communicated something through during this time as Sayama's eyes widen.

"N-no way. That's..."

"That's the truth."

Sayama then closed her eyes tightly, or I guess she did. Her eyebrows bent into a frown.

"I'm sorry. I'm sorry, Karin! I-I doubted you...even though you summoned your courage to tell me the truth..."

"It's fine. It really is, Kyouko. Can you accept me, for who I am...?"

It'll be rude to continue listening to her conversation.

And so, I turned to leave.

Since I've arrived at a place slightly far away from home, it'll definitely take me so time to get back.

People all have weaknesses. Hijiri and Karin's in particular are different from the norm.

And because of this, it's hard to say it.

But with this knowledge, they'll definitely understand each other further, become intimate with each other, and continue to think for each other.

I stared at the auburn sunset, praying that those two can get along well.

On my way back, I could hear a screech approaching me from behind.

"Shi—mi—zuu!!"

I turned to that voice, and saw a beaming Karin in front of me.

What now? There was no need for this question.

Karin rode the bicycle close to me, and leaped onto the floor.

“Ehehehe. You want to know the outcome, right? You wanna? You want to, right?”

“Nope.”

“Eh, you don’t mind, Shimizu? Uuu, I came all the way here to tell you.”

“No, I already knew.”

“Oh? You knew?”

“Everything went okay, right?”

“Th-That’s true...how did you know?”

“I can tell from your face.”

“Oh ho, so you know from seeing my face. It means you may actually be....”

Karin grinned happily and put her hands on her cheeks.

“Wait, don’t make a weird misunderstanding here.”

“Fufu, ahahaha. I see. So Shimizu, you have feelings for me...KYAAA!”

“What now. Seriously, you...”

“Ah, don’t! Don’t do it, Shimizu! Ahh!”

“What are you twitching your body for? What do you imagine me doing in your mind!? Is that a new method of torture!?”

“B-But, you’re unexpectedly reliable, and it’s good that you don’t hate me...? Or rather, it’s good to think about this from time to time, to do this from time...”

“Ah seriously! You’re noisy! Shut up!”

“You’re unexpectedly a man of your word, I guess...? But, that’s not bad either, maybe...? I guess.”

“Alright now, let’s go home.”

“To-Together?”

“...Well, until we’re halfway through.”

And so Karin pointed at the Schwarz Javelin.

“D-Don’t you really dislike letting others use this?”

“...It’s fine if it’s you, right, Shimizu?”

“So riding it a second time is no different from riding it once, I guess.”

“And I think I’ve been shot down.”

“Hm?”

“By the bad status called love.”

“...Huh? What did you say?”

“Nothing at all.”

“Let’s go then.”

“Okay.”

For some reason, Karin showed what looked like a very blissful smile.

And then, she said something I’ve been hoping to hear for a long time.

“Shimizu, please join the club.”

“...It’s fine?”

“Yes! We’ll go to Prez together next week!”

Chapter 3 – Recruiting a Member! A red-haired girl who absolutely hates to lose!

“Kukuku! So you’ve come, Shimizu! I’ve been waiting.”

It was the following Monday at the corner of the staircase near the clubroom.

Karin has her hands on her chest, happily puffing that flat chest of hers.

“...Have you been waiting? Sorry.”

Upon hearing me say this however, Karin’s face reddened a little, and kept flailing her hands in front of her face.

“...Ah, no...I didn’t wait for long. A-Anyway, let’s go meet the Lord now!”

“Going to meet the Lord now sounds like coaxing someone else to commit a double suicide you know.”

“A-A double suicide with you and me? I-Isn’t that like what lovers do? I-It’s so embarrassing!”

She covered her face, shook her body from side to side, and hummed away...what’s with that reaction?

“Anyway, let’s go see Prez, who’s pretty much the Lord, and greet her then.”

“Oh, okay...”

And so, Karin and I passed through the clubroom door. Chris and Hijiri were inside.

“Prez, I brought him here!”

The blonde, rich lady sighed and crossed her slender fingers.

“...So you’ve been shot down, Karin.”

Karin reaches her hands in front of her and frantically denies.

“I-Impossible! I-I haven’t fallen in love! I-I-I just got caught in a bad status!”

“...I only asked if you lost. Why’re you so panicky?”

“Ah, ye-ye-ye-yes, that-that’s right! I understand! I agree now!”

“I-Is that so? Well, it’s fine. I’ll allow Shimizu as a club member then.”

Upon hearing this, I opened my arms wide at Hijiri, seated at a chair reading.

“Alright, I can help you now, my sweet sister!”

But the only response that greeted me is the flipping of pages.

“E-Erm, Hi-Hijiri...?”

I approached Hijiri and waved my hand in front of her eyes.

“...Shou...it’s embarrassing. Please don’t do this again.”

“G, ghh...!”

“...Do such things at home.”

“! It-It’s fine to do it at home? Really?”

Has Hijiri finally opened her heart to me?

“...Ah,e-erm, Shou.”

“Wh-what now?”

There’s no change on Hijiri’s face, but she was starting to sweat.

“...That’s not it. It’s just your misunderstanding, S-Shou...I still have something else to do.”

Hijiri shut the book, stood up, and hurriedly left the clubroom.

“Hi-Hijiri...what exactly do you want me to do...?”

As I watched Hijiri walk out of the room, Chris said to me,

“Then, our new member Shimizu, there’s an order for you coming from the president.”

“Ehh? So sudden?”

“Since you’ve become a member, the president’s orders have to be obeyed! There’s no problem now, is there?”

Chris shook her blond hair and proudly points her index finger at me.

“O-Okay...”

“I want you to recruit a member.”

“Eh? No, but, this club’s condition...is a little unique...”

There’s no way there’s such a person now. It was already a miracle having three of such here.

Just as I was frowning, Chris closed an eye and said,

“You should know about Kaede Kaijyou, right?”

“Kaede!?”

Karin covered half of her face with one hand as she said unhappily,

“Convince that rude person who’s been refusing to submit to Prez?”

“Karin, that girl is troubled too, right? I want to help her.”

“Prez, you’re so kind, wanting to help such a person...as expected of the Lord.”

Karin’s eyes were dazzling, and as I stood beside her, I remembered the girl who’s in the same year as me.

Kaede Kaijyou is an energetic girl from our year who’s athletic, or rather, full of spirit.

And she’s cute enough to be a match for the Second Flower Arrangement Club.

“I hope you can coax her to join.”

“Eh? Coax? Erm, the condition here, is that, right...?”

“Right.”

“No way...NO WAY! THAT ENERGETIC AND CUTE GIRL...!?”

“That’s right...! Kaede Kaijyou too has incontinence issues.”

Chris said such terrifying words without hesitation.

“...Are you serious?”

I really wanted to put my head in my hands. Actually, I'm doing it now.

"It's definitely true. I've tried to advise her many times up till this point, but I've been rejected every time."

"About that, can't it be just a misunderstanding? There's nothing more annoying than to be harassed about such an issue, right?"

"No, my sense of smell tells me this."

"Through the scent!?"

The moment I asked this, Chris let out a chuckle.

"Right. There's a sweet orange smell from her...that's not it! It's instinct, instinct."

"Well, I guess that's the case."

Thank goodness. It seems there's no scent of incontinence here.

"Hm, anyway, Kaede's very stubborn, and wouldn't join the club."

"Isn't it good? If she doesn't want to, she won't."

"But Kaede's being troubled by that issue. There's a trigger condition for her, and she's suffering for being unable to say this to others. I want to help her..."

"It's true that this is really hard to say to others..."

"So I request of you, save Kaede. I alone can't do it..."

Chris lowered her head as she muttered.

Damn, can you please stop showing such a sad expression? How can I turn her down after seeing that?

"...No choice then. I understand."

The moment she heard this, Chris lifted her face and smiled.

"— Ah, thank you, Shimizu. I'm grateful for that."

"Then what do I do? Can't I tell her directly?"

"I guess it's impossible to convince her through normal methods. That girl rather, no, really hates to lose."

Chris said,

"If we can make Kaede admit defeat, she might be able to be more honest."

"Hates to lose...?"

"Kaede's a pretty girl, so it seems she often gets confessions, but she always comes up with one answer."

"With what exactly?"

"It's fine if you can beat me, right? Something like that."

"...Wait, the conditions for winning are so vague. What if she loses?"

"She won them all up till this point. There's all sorts of contests, but she mostly competed using her body."

"Using her body!? As in, erotic manners...?"

Ah, Chris' face reddens.

"Wh-What are you misunderstanding about!? I'm talking about soccer PK matches or tag! These are the contests I'm talking about!"

"...Soccer? If the soccer club guys come along, she won't be able to win, right?"

"No, they basically lost to her, you know? Her athletic sense is rather unique. She even beat the boxing and the karate club, with many taking her on at the same time."

...How strong is this Kaede anyway? I definitely mustn't get into a fight with her.

On the next day, after school.

I arrived at the classroom where Kaede Kaijou belong.

I caught a student who's about to return home, and asked him to call for Kaede.

"Kaijyou, this person is looking for you!"

The person who appeared in response to this call is a pretty girl with dyed red hair..

She showed a feisty smile on her lips, and her large eyes were staring at me, ostensibly overpowering me.

"What do you want from me?"

She, dressed in a jersey and the uniform skirt, has her hands folded as she stood there.

She really is a pretty girl who gives a lively impression.

"I'm Shimizu from the second year. I have something to say to you. Do you mind coming with me?"

"Huh? It's not something that can be said here? It's probably just a confession or something, right? Hurry up with it."

"No, that's not it, it's not a confession! I hope we can change locations."

I glanced around, and saw that Kaede's classmates are staring at us.

It's impossible to say 'Do you have incontinence issues? Do you wish to join the second flower arrangement club' at such a place.

"Then, what do you want to say to me? You're a weakling who doesn't dare say this in front of others. Is it because you're embarrassed? Ha!"

This person was saying such shocking things.

Even though the onlookers were all facing us.

I was refusing to say this because of Kaede's dignity, but she's obviously trying to blow her cover.

"It doesn't matter what you say, you know? Hurry up and say it now."

Kaede spreads her arms wide and shrugs.

“No, I can’t say it. It’s a little weird at such a place...”

“Such a demure guy after all. Are you even a guy?”

“It’s really something I can’t say. It’s for your own sake.”

“Huh? For my sake? That’s really unbelievable, Alright, say it then.”

“...In-in other words, Kaijyou, I know your secret. You’ll be really bothered if I reveal it.”



“Humph, I’ve no secret that’ll cause me to be troubled once others know. You’re trying to hook me up through this method, right?”

Urgh...what do I do now...!?

Kaede’s right at the edge of a cliff, and she doesn’t know that at all.

But I can’t push her down this cliff at all.

“Hey, what’s with you!? You weakling!”

If I make a single misstep, Kaede will be dealt the death penalty social-wise.

“...Actually, I’ve been sent over by Chris Ryusenji.”

“Eh, ahh... AHH!?”

Kaede’s mouth is half-ajar, and her eyes widen.

“...You understand your situation now, right? I know your real secret.”

“Yo-you bastard...! You want to threaten me...?”

Kaede shuddered.

Her eyes were teary as she spoke softly, and she’s almost about to break down into tears.

“Didn’t I say we can’t talk about it here?”

However,

“N-Not at all! I don’t have any secrets! Just tell all you want, damn it!”

She’s trying to act tough now. Amazing.

She’s able to act tough till this extent.

“I-Is-Is it really alright? You do have one secret at least, right?”

“None! None at all, I say! Come on! Tell it right now! Now!”

Kaede’s healthy long thighs were starting to twitch.

Her eyes were raised up, and she was glaring at me angrily.

But her ears were fully red now, and her toes were tapping on the corridor.

The pressure I felt at first is no longer there.

“K-Kaijyou, I think it’s best that you don’t force yourself...”

“I-I-I-I’m not forcing myself here! I definitely won’t take a step back!”

“Please!?”

“I won’t!”

Why does she hate to lose this much?

“I-Is it really fine?”

“Ku, y-you want to go this way, make fun of me, right...uu, damn..It’s leaking out...”

“Leaking out?”

Don’t tell me Kaede now was unable to hold it in?

When did I pull her trigger?

Is it when she said she’s going to pee...

“Y-Yeah, exactly, lick it! Right, I’m asking you to lick it! ”

“Eh...? L-Lick it...?”

I tilted my head to think, as Kaede stamped on the floor.

She seemed to have regained her spirits as she said excitedly,

“Hah! Is there something wrong with your head? L. E. A. K. IT!”

“Lick...don’t tell me you meant to say *leak* it out?”

Kaeda pressed on her abdomen as she jumped.

“Ughh, I mispronounced it...Th-That’s too much...you monster.”

She then sat on the floor.

Oh, damn, if this keeps up, she won't be able to explain her way out of this.

"...Sorry, it's my mistake. It's okay to pronounce it like you do."

"Tha-that's right..."

And so, Kaede showed a relieved expression.

"Sorry. It's really embarrassing to be in front of so many people. Can we go somewhere else? Please."

Upon hearing me say this, Kaede nodded.

"O-Okay then. It can't be helped since you say so. Let's go somewhere else.....I'm saved!"

Before I realized it, there were people from the other classes in the crowd.

But that was to be expected.

I noticed Nakanishi from our class, staring at us with those irritating, effeminate eyes.

I heard he's from the infamous boxing club.

He was staring at us with a phone at his ear.

Kaede and I arrive at an empty classroom.

"...Then, now that we're here, tell me what you want."

"As I just said, I came looking for you on Chris Ryusenji's request."

"Ah. I did hear you say that just now. That black-hearted princess...tch."

Kaede frowned as she said that unhappily.

It seemed that she really hates Chris, just like what Karin has said.

She then appeared to think of something as she whispered,

"Ah, the Second Flower Arrangement Club, Shimizu. Are you Tofu's older brother?"

"...Tofu?"

“Ah, I was brought to the club a few times, and spoke with Tofu.”

“Wh-who’s Tofu.”

Is there still a member I don’t know of? This nickname Tofu doesn’t seem very healthy. It exuded a squarish vibe of something trembling all the time.

Kaede then opens her mouth,

“Hijiri Shimizu.”

“How on earth is she Tofu anyway!?”

“She seems somewhat insecure...and her mind is as shaky as a block of tofu, I guess.”

“How’s Hijiri insecure in any way?”

“‘My brother will hate me for this nature I have...’ she was shaking like tofu when she said that.”

“Why would Hijiri say such things?”

If she was really worried about that, I’d feel happy instead.

“...Hm, it doesn’t matter anyway. It’s not like I hate Tofu, but I really hate Chris. She’s definitely planning something horrible.”

“Chris really isn’t like that, Kaijyou. She’s sincerely worried about you.”

I recalled the seemingly worried expression on Chris’ face.

“Ha, that’s impossible.”

“It’s because she’s worried about you that she wishes that you join the club. It seems like you’re suffering, or so she said, when she asked me to ask you to join it.”

“No. How can I possibly go to such a place? Chris is there.”

“Why are you saying such things?”

“Because that person exudes a repulsive scent.”

“...Because she’s the same as you?”

I finally asked.

“Y-You idiot! That’s not it! I’m not like that!”

I didn’t mention incontinence, but Kaede was still waving her hands frantically, jumping on the floor.

...This was basically no different from admitting it outright.

“I-I don’t have any incontinence issues!”

Ahh—! She just said it. This girl just said it.

“Do you understand now, Shimizu!?”

“Ahh, yeah. I just understood everything from what you just said.”

Kaede rubbed her hands gleefully.

“Oh, that’s good.”

“...So you do have incontinence issues after all.”

“Hm...WHAT!? H-How did it end up like that!?”

“I never said anything about your secret, but you mentioned incontinence...”

“...Ah, ahh, ahhhhhhhhhh!”

Kaede gritted her teeth and clamped her thighs together.

“I can’t accept this! I got baited again! Ugh, damn it. Uuh, ahh, auu...”

Speaking of which, there was a similar situation just a while ago.

“Don’t tell me your trigger is... ‘regret’, isn’t it?”

“How do you know!? A genius...you’re a friggin’ genius, right?”

“...It was just a natural conclusion.”

“Argh...I lost to your wisdom...Well, I lost. Do whatever you want with me.”

Kaede collapsed onto the floor.

“Come on. Feel free to chop me or fry me...you’re the winner.”

Kaede’s soft thighs were poking out, and I can see the cute panties under her short skirt.

N-No. I can’t look! I looked away, and then said,

“B-But we never talked about how we’re going to fight this out.”

“As long as you say what it is, it’s definitely my loss. That’s because I’m already...”

“Don’t say it like that...”

“You want me to join the club, right? OK...since I lost, I’ll join.”

Kaede said forlornly.

She had lifeless eyes, and spoke with an indifferent tone.

I really couldn’t find myself getting used to this Kaede. It was simply unbearable.

“No, it’s not like this, Kaijyou! I’m here to advise you to join, but it’s meaningless if you don’t join out of your own will. If you don’t want to, you don’t have to.”

“...Shimizu.”

“Because it’s not right to make you join after beating you when you don’t want to.”

“Then why did you look for me...”

“Well, I heard you’re troubled. You may feel a little more relaxed if you join the Second Flower Arrangement club. I hope you don’t join because you’re forced to, I think.”

Kaede’s expression relaxed somewhat.

“You’re...a decent guy. I said that I’ll follow whatever order you want if you beat me though.”

“Didn’t I say this—”

The moment I opened my mouth to say this, the door to this classroom opened, even though it was unlikely for anyone to come here.

“Oh my, so you’re here, Kaede.”

That frivolous tone belonged to a guy with long, brown hair and piercings.

A group of guys followed him. There were about ten of them or so.

One of them was Nakanishi of the boxing club.

In that case, does it mean they’re all from the boxing club?

The guy with brown hair and piercings said to Nakanishi,

“You were pretty sharp-eyed there, finding out that Kaede Kaijyou is not in a good condition. Good job.”

“Thanks for the compliments, senior!”

“Ahh. It’s awesome for this to happen before graduation. There’s no better opportunity to beat Kaijyou than right now.”

I asked the boxing club members as they kept laughing,

“Hey, wait a second. What’re you talking about?”

“Ahh. You can go back now. Leave the rest to us.”

The brown-haired piercings guy gave a thin smirk.

“I’m asking you what are you talking about?”

“We want a contest. We’re here to compete with Kaede Kaijyou.”

The guys were staring at Kaede, who was on the floor, smiling.

...Ahh, I’m getting the feeling that they are up to no good.

“Well, nope. Kaijyou’s fighting against me now.”

“It’ll be your loss then. So hurry back now, second-year kid.”

The brown-haired guy was grinning condescendingly at me.

“Stop kidding around.”

“Hm, alright then. You can join in too. We’re challenging Kaede Kaijyou here after all. You said you’re fine with a challenge anytime, right? We’ll play tag...no, how about this. We’ll fight. We’ve been beaten badly by you the last time, so at least we may take our revenge, right?”

The guys closed in on us, probably intending to surround us.

These guys...are going to beat a girl who can’t even move?

Damn, what can I do?

Kaede’s secret will be revealed at this rate!

I definitely mustn’t let this happen!

Kaede was unable to exert any strength at all, and her breathing was becoming frantic. It seemed she was at her limit.

If this keeps up, her incontinence issues will be exposed.

I started to recall that scene from my past.

A remorseful memory. An event I still regret. No matter how much I regret what happened and the remorse I felt, I can’t go back anymore.

That incident when I couldn’t save my childhood friend.

Kaede stared at me.

“I’m fine...Shimizu. Run away first. I’m...no good...”

“How can I leave now? How about you refuse their challenge, Kaede?”

“...I can’t...run away now.”

She gritted her teeth hard to a point where they were clattering, and her fingers were scratching the floor.

“There’s a lot of them, and you’re alone. Just turn them down.”

“Even so, I still can’t run away...”

Ahh, seriously. Fine then.

I understand. You have your reason for being like that, right?

Then, let me do something for you.

I declared,

“In that case, I’ll help Kaede Kaijyou!”

“Well, fine. That’s still a 10 vs 2.”

The guy with brown hair and piercings laughed as he raised his fist,

“Don’t cry when you’ll get hit.”

“You’re damn annoying!”

I sent a kick at the brown-haired guy while the latter was about to punch me.

“Gak!”

To get on my sister’s good side, I went through all sorts of training.

During elementary school, I thought those who ran faster are more popular, and I trained to run faster. When I felt those who could fight are more popular, I went to a judo dojo my friend’s parents opened.

In the end, my sister didn’t like me because of these things, and I didn’t discover any unique talent.

But it’s useful for such situations.

While the guy was sent flying, I picked Kaede up and charged at the other guys.

“Run! Kaede!”

Using this momentum, I charged out of the empty classroom.

“Sh-Shimizu...why, must you...”

The brown-haired piercings guy can be heard shouting “You guys! GO AFTER THEM!”

And then, the guys from the boxing club hurried after us.

I noticed from the shadows on the floor that there was someone reaching towards me, and I bent forward to dodge.

“Damn! Wait! You bastard!”

“You’re annoying! Don’t you find it embarrassing that you are ten guys ganging up on a single girl!”

I started to speed up as I exclaimed that.

My Achilles tendon was aching, and it felt like it was about to snap. Even so, I did not stop.

I got hit from behind.

“It hurts...”

I tumbled, but managed to maintain balance.

I’m almost there. Almost there.

“Kaede, get inside!”

I pushed Kaede into the women’s washroom.

And proceeded to block the door.

“Hurry in! Leave this to me!”

“S-Shimizu...uu.”

“Hurry up, I definitely won’t allow them to get past me.”

“So-Sorry...wait, no...ahhh...”

Kaede then stumbled into the toilet and disappeared.

Kak, the door was now shut.

I was surrounded by the guys from the boxing club.



“Sorry, but I won’t let you through. I just promised this.”

“Huh? What’s the point of delaying a little longer. Do you think we do not dare to enter the women’s washroom? Or are you hoping for help? Nobody will come. Hardly anyone uses them on this floor.”

The one attacking was the brown-haired piercings guy I just kicked down.

A fist came flying at me.

I took it on the forehead, and countered with a low kick.

Even though there were ten of them, only three at most can attack at the same time as I’m fighting with my back on the washroom’s door.

I can’t beat them all, but I can at least buy some time!

The number of hits I was receiving was gradually increasing.

My shoulders. My wrists. My thighs. My legs.

I kept getting hit and kicked several times, until I nearly ended up collapsing.

“How long are you going to keep this up? You’re a pain in the ass...!”

Thud. I received a heavy punch from a member, and I fell onto the floor.

“Gu, guh...”

I can’t do this anymore—

However, the moment I thought that, the washroom’s door swung open.

“...Excuse me for keeping you waiting, Shimizu...I’m sorry. Leave the rest to me.”

Kaede’s voice felt relieving to me, as it echoed right in front of the washroom.

The brown-haired piercings guy turned pale, and murmured,

“Ka-Kaede...! Are you not feeling sick?”

"I'm fine now."

"No, that's not it, it's not like that. I wasn't actually serious just now."

Kaede flew out like a cannonball with her fist raised. The brown hair guy used another member as a shield.

BOOM! The member acting as a shield was sent in the air. *BAM,* he was sent flying to the wall, and once his back crashed into it, he was unable to move.

"Alright then. You want to challenge me...how gutsy of you."

Kaede showed a smile on her pretty face, and turned around to kick another target.

"Gack!"

The number of boxing club members was gradually decreasing.

"W-We don't want to fight anymore. It's our loss...ugh!"

"Hey there. How useless are you? You're the ones who challenged me, you know? Right? Hey!"

It was an overwhelming victory.

Kaede easily beat the male members of the boxing club, who all probably had undergone some training prior to this fight.

None of the attacks managed to hit her, as she was punching and kicking everyone.

"Looks like you're the last one."

The only one left is the brown-haired guy who retreated to the back.

"What's this...! Th-That sudden change in your mind is too despicable! What kind of joke is this!?"

The brown-haired charged at me.

"Y-You're fine even if something happens to this guy! Kaede Kaijyou!? Are you ready to see this guy's hand being snapped if you come over!?"

The guy twisted my wrist while I was collapsed on the floor.

“Grrr...”

Kaede gritted her teeth, and once I see this, I shouted,

“Kaede, why’re you stopping? Leave me alone and finish this guy off already!”

“I-I can’t. I can’t pull such a cruel thing on you after what you did to save me...!”

“Now then, Kaede Kaijyou, just admit defeat already, and surrender, or I’ll snap this guy’s—”

Kaede clenched her fists hard, and let out a wincing voice.

Her legs were clamped together, and she was starting to fidget again.

“...It’s...my...”

If Kaede admits defeat, she will have to listen to what these guys say?

I definitely must not let that happen...!

I struggled to raise my body up.

Crack...there’s a weird sound coming from my twisted hand.

“Ugh!”

“Ah...! You, you bastard. You snapped your own joint...!”

“You’re the most despicable one!”

My unharmed hand sent a vicious punch at the brown-haired guy.

“Gah...”

The guy collapsed on the floor.

“Ha, haa...”

“Sh-Shimizu. That’s so reckless of you...”

“...Well, you were feeling troubled, Kaijyou, right?”

“It-It’s for my sake...?”

“So I couldn’t leave you alone. I was the one who started this anyway.”

And maybe this was a form of redemption for being unable to save my childhood friend.

“I-I see...Wh-What do I do now? This is the first time I got saved by someone...”

Kaede’s face reddened.

She curled her lips and says,

“I-I don’t know what can I say, bu-but I think I kinda like you or something...it’s weird, right? We just met and still...”

“Don’t worry too much. I was the one who made the decision to help you anyway.”

Kaede closed her eyes, and her fingers on both hands were rubbing on each other.

“S-Shimizu...it’s possible that I-I-I...”

Speaking of which, Kaede looked a little bit weird. She seemed to be fidgeting again.

Her voice sounded a little vague, letting out ‘ahh’, ‘erms’ from time to time.

...Don’t tell me she wants to pee again.

Speaking of which, I guess she’s definitely unhappy about being saved by someone like me. No doubt about it.

“Are you alright, Kaede?”

“I-I’m fine.”

“You can’t hold it in now?”

“I-I don’t know why my heart feels like it’s being pinched. It is hard to endure this feeling...”

“...Then don't endure it anymore.”

Kaede's face reddened.

“Sh-Shimizu...you mean...”

I brought my mouth to Kaede's ears so that the boxing club members near us can't hear me.

“Shimizu, uu...I can feel your breath on my skin...I-it's embarrassing, ahh...”

Kaede's was breathing faster and faster.

“Your, face, is, getting, too, close...nnn...”

I then whispered at her ear,

“...Kaede, hurry to the washroom again.”

“Eh...What're you saying?”

“I'm saying that before it happens again, if you need to pee, hurry up.”

“Sh-Shimizu! Could it be that you...!?”

“Quiet down. They may hear you. Hurry up—argh!”

I took a hit to the stomach. It didn't hurt that much though.

But it was so sudden that I found myself fall onto the floor, again.

“Grr! Okay, I get it! I'll join the Second Flower Arrangement club! You better be ready!”

And so, I successfully managed to coax Kaede into joining the club.

Chapter 4

A few days have passed since I saved Kaede.

I led her to the Second Flower Arrangement club.

All the members were gathered in the clubroom.

“Welcome back, Shimizu.”

Chris stood up and walked to us with an elegant posture.

“So you’ve finally decided to join us, Kaede. I’m glad.”

She showed us an innocent, noble smile as she reached her hand at Kaede.

But Kaede slapped the hand aside.

“Humph, I did say I want to join the club, but I never said I wanted to get in good terms with you guys.”

Her slightly raised eyes were widened. That’s a feisty expression.

Upon seeing this, Karin raised her hands and exclaimed,

“Kaede! What do you think you’re doing to our Lord, Prez—”

Chris, however, stopped Karin from moving forward.

“...Kaede? Have I done anything to you? Why do you hate me this much?”

“No reason at all. My instincts are telling me that I can’t let my guard down around you.”

“...Doesn’t it seem somewhat illogical from you?”

“I don’t feel good after seeing you. Is there any other reason needed?”

“What exactly do you not like about me?”

“Your pretentious face annoys me, that arrogant voice of yours annoys me, your aloof thoughts annoy me, and most importantly, it seems you’re the only one hiding something. This is the only thing I’m really angry about.”

I looked on at these two, who definitely have a tense relationship going on, to a point where I could picture sparks flying in the atmosphere of the clubroom.

Even Hijiri was staring at them. She probably sensed how bad it was, I guess.

I too held my breath, waiting for Chris' reply. The latter smiled at Kaede.

"It seems you have a huge misunderstanding of me."

"...What misunderstanding?"

"I'm not hiding anything at all. After we get together for a little while, I suppose you'll understand. Let's do our best together in the future, shall we?"

"Tch. Your attitude's annoying too."

Chris ignored Kaede's criticism as she said,

"We're all troubled by a certain thing."

Ahh...that thing.

"Because of that, we're in the Second Flower Arrangement club."

"Hold on a moment, won't it be a little better to avoid saying that the Flower Arrangement club members are all like that?"

"Why? It's already common knowledge that the Flower Arrangement Club promotes the virtue of picking flowers."

"WHAT KIND OF COMMON LOGIC IS THAT!? APOLOGIZE TO ALL THE FLOWER ARRANGEMENT CLUBS IN THE COUNTRY!"

"...Shou, you can't deny the reason for the club's existence."

"WHY'RE YOU SAYING SUCH THINGS TOO, HIJIRI!?"

"...The Flower Arrangement Club does such things."

".....Is that so. If you say so, Hijiri, I guess that's the case."

"And so, to deal with our secret condition, I propose to hold a special training this weekend."

"Huh? Any idea coming from Chris is not a good thing!"

“Anyway, it’ll be this Saturday. We’ll gather at the family restaurant near the train station.”

A special training in a family restaurant four days later...?

...I’m getting a bad feeling about this. But it might just be me.....right?

The following day’s Wednesday, after school. It was the day clubs do not have any activity.

“Yo, Shimizu. Since there’s no club activity today, go home with me!”

BAM! Kaede slammed the classroom door hard as she said this.

All the stares in the classroom were gathered upon me.

“W-wait, isn’t that Kaede Kaijyou?”

“Why’s she with that Shimizu...”

There were annoyed stares coming at me along with those voices, and I hurried over to Kaede.

“Why’re you looking for me?”

The moment I asked this, Kaede blushed, and she turned her head aside, saying,

“I-It doesn’t really matter! Anyway, it’s not good to think too much of the little things!”

...As expected, I have no idea at all why this girl just called me out.

Is it because we’re in the same club now? Well, fine then.

“I get it. Let’s go.”

I said this, and pressed Kaede to go first. We walked side by side along the corridor.

“Hey. Y-Y-You’re too close! M-Move away from me a little...”

Her face was red, and she was waving her arms frantically.

“I see...is this far good enough?”

“T-This isn’t going home *together* anymore! A, A little closer...”

I obeyed to Kaede’s troublesome demands, and asked her something I was very curious about.

“Speaking of which, did you not say that you’ll go out with anyone who beats you in a match?”

Poof! Kaede’s face immediately turned red, and it was even spreading to her neck.

“W-What..what’s with this? You want to go out with me, Shimizu? But we never made such promise before. We didn’t, b-but, it doesn’t mean I’m not unwilling. B-But, ahh...”

Poof! Steam was rising from her head, and she then stopped.

“Erm, hello. Kaijyou?”

She continued to remain like that, and said with a very soft voice.

“Ka, ka, ka.”

“Ka?”

“Kakaka, kaka.”

“...That’s a weird laugh.”

“Ka-ede...is okay...I guess...?”

What’s going on now? Why is she saying her own name now?

Was she hoping for me to call her by her first name? I considered that thought, and opened my mouth,

“Ka-Kaede?”

BAMF! I have been pushed hard, that my body shook.

“D-Don’t call me by my name so suddenly!”

“Didn’t you let me call you by this name, Kaede!?”

The moment I called her by her name, Kaede jumped in shock.

“Ku, uu. It’s too much...! Calling me by my name so many times...”

“I have no idea what you’re saying now!”

“Y-You have to bear responsibility for calling me by my name, you know?”

“WHAT KIND OF RESPONSIBILITY IS THERE FOR DOING SUCH A THING!?”

“W-Wait a moment...”

“Ah, okay...”

Kaede pressed her hand on her chest, and inhaled deeply.

“Sorry. I’ve calmed down now. T-Th-Then, y-yo-yo-you want to, go out with me, right, Shimizu?”

“No, not at all.”

“Eh? No-not...at all?”

“I’m telling you that’s not the case.”

“Ah, ah, uh...? I’m okay, right? I-If you wish to though...”

“Don’t force yourself, Kaede.”

“It’s embarrassing...calling me, Kaede.”

“I know you’re honest.”

“H-Hm? What do you mean?”

“You’re serious about fulfilling that promise, right? As long as you’ve made a promise, you’ll obey it no matter what it is, and never go back on your word, right?”

“Ahh! Of course!”

“But there’s no such thing about us dating because of losing against someone. The most important factor is what your heart thinks.”

“N-No, that’s not it. I’m saying, well, my heart...”

“D-Don’t force yourself, Kaede!”

“I-I’m not forcing myself. I do have feelings for you, Shimizu...!”

“It’s really not good to force yourself to be determined like this, Kaede.”

“No, I said it already.”

“And it’s like how you push me aside when I try to approach you, right? You hate me, don’t you?”

“No, w-well...! It-it’s because it’s awkward, you know?”

“Don’t force yourself, Kaede! I have no intention of going out with you. Just relax.”

“Shimizu, you! Just listen to me!”

Kaede’s shouts echoed as we walked back home. She was really someone who likes to trouble the people around us.

On the next day, Thursday, we were in the clubroom.

Hijiri will be coming a little later because of class duty, and Chris hasn’t arrived either. In other words, Karin and I are the only two around.

Speaking of which, I never actually apologized properly.

I did apologize for what happened the first time we met, but for some reason, I made Karin angrier.

I think it’s better to apologize properly. Definitely.

Meanwhile, Karin swayed her glowing black hair as she hurriedly looked away,

“I-I’m not looking at you at all!”

“No, it’s weird for you to be like that. Why must you deliberately say it out?”

“Sh-Shut up! I’m not talking to you right now, Shimizu.”

She turned her face aside.

“Uhm, Karin, about that.”

She turned her head some more,

“About what happened at that time...”

She turned her head further.

“...Forget about it.”

“Eh? What now? You’re too much! Why aren’t you saying anything more!”

“You’re really troublesome. Can I just ignore you?”

“I-Ignoring someone else is not something a human should do!”

“But you just did so, right?”

“I-I’m fine here! I’m an Archmage!”

“By your logic, am I not some beast in the darkness or something?”

“A demon! A devil!”

“Okay, okay, that counts, alright?”

“You’re the worst! Shimizu! You’re an idiot!”

“I guess.”

Guh! Karin was glaring at me, and there seemed to be tears in her eyes.

“What do you mean by that? Please talk with me seriously!”

“Ah, I’m doing that now. I’m being serious.”

“Aren’t you just answering me without thinking!? That’s so casual.”

“Didn’t you not want to talk with me at first?”

“That, isn’t, because I didn’t...uu...! A-Anyway, what did you want to say anyway?”

“Ahh...well, there’s something I can’t really talk about, but I have to.”

I’m wondering about how I can go about doing this, and paused slightly.

“What’s it that you struggle so hard to talk about...i-is it a confession or something...?”

“Erm.”

“Are you overwhelmed by my extraordinary cuteness...? Hoo, ohoho, eheh, hehehe.”

“I’m saying...when we first met—”

“Are you saying that you fell for me at first sight? Is that it...? I-I see, oho, ohohoho.”

“No, I think I did something really bad back then. You’re really angry about it back then, and I did apologize late, but ended up enraging you further...”

“Ahh! Speaking of which, I think I heard something rude being said about me!”

Karin placed her hands in front of her and clasped them together.

“Eh, have you, by any chance, forgotten?”

“I-I-I-I still remember it...I guess?”

Karin turned her eyes aside and argued back.

“Hm, either way, I’m really sorry about that.”

“I won’t forgive you! You want to pass it off after saying such harsh words?”

“But didn’t you forget it all already?”

“I still remember! I do! I remember—it—very—clearly—!”

“Ah, well, I guessed as much.”

“A-An-Anyway, you must pay for this, Shimizu! Your sinful life needs to be purged! You need to repay this with equal value.

Well, well, Karin however folded her arms as she muttered, pondering.

“...Well, as long as it’s not beyond common sense.”

At this moment, her face suddenly turned red, and she placed her hands on her cheeks.

...What's she doing now? Her body's twitching away.

"Ahh. Th-the-there's still this, but it's really filthy...no...! Th-this isn't right! It's not like that! Victory determines justice. I'm justice. There's no way there can be anything wrong with whatever an Archmage does! Okay!"

"...Have you thought of what you want to say now, Karin?"

"We-we-well! Shimizu...do you have a girlfriend?"

"...Currently no."

Or rather, I never had one ever since birth, but I decide to specially emphasize on the 'currently'.

Why did I say it in that way? But well, it's not a lie anyway.

"Th-the-then!"

No wait, a confession now? No, don't be mistaken here. There's a chance I'll be mistaken, or rather, isn't it embarrassing for me to be so sensitive about this and associate it with love?

I have to listen to what she says fully first.

"A-Ah, what do you mean here?"

"P-Pl-Please be my underling!"

...What in the world did this person just say?

But as expected, it's not a confession. So that's how it is.

"Pl-Ple-Please be a-an existence that always wa-watches over me...!"

Is she feeling unwell? Even her neck's all red as she declares this.

"Sorry, but I don't think I'm able to do this."

I don't know what sort of requests I'll need to fulfill if I became her underling.

“Ugh, i-is that so...”

Karin’s shoulders slumped weakly.

“But, I’m not going to give up! No matter what Icicle Edge pierces through my chest...! Just wait and see!”

She exclaimed while putting a hand on her waist and pointing a finger with the other.

The next day is Friday, and on that day.

“Yo, I’m here to play, Shimizu!”

“Ugh. What’re you doing here, Kaede!?”

Karin stood in front of Kaede, blocking her way.

“For what? I did join this club though?”

“Suddenly joining a club? That’s very suspicious! Don’t you really hate Prez? You should be a phantom club member!”

I casted aside their words away from my mind, and start to think about Hijiri’s issues.

What exactly can I do to raise the affection levels...?

“I still hate Chris now, but, th-the-there’s someone, el-else I want to see. That’s why I joined...”

I’m a little concerned about Kaede glancing at me, but right now, the important thing is Hijiri.

“K-Kaede, don’t tell me, Shimizu, too!?”

“Huh? What do you mean by ‘too’? ‘Too’. Karin, don’t tell me you too...”

“So what? What’s your previous life as, Kaede? I was an Archmage!”

“I’m me in my previous life! And my future life is me!”

“I can’t communicate with you at all, Kaede!”

“What right do you have to say anything about me!”

...Why's it so noisy here? Well, never mind.

"Anyway, I-I'll take Shimizu then..."

"D-Don't kid around! Shimizu's my contracted monster familiar, you know!? I can't hand him over to you so easily!"

"Contracted monster!? What are you saying! How about you be a little less conceited, Karin!? You're neither busty nor tall anyway!"

"Wh-What does this have anything to do with breasts!? Don't get cocky because they shake about!"

"Ho ho. So you're envious of them."

"Not at all. Pero pero pero! My existence alone is of utmost importance to this world! I'll use my magic to protect this world in all sorts of ways!"

"Huhu, such a delightful head you have."

"Oh oh. So you know, you finally know! This is as delightful as a New Year, Christmas and birthday celebration! This is how my head is! Oh ho ho!"

"Ugh...! Damn! *I don't know what's going on at all, but it sounds really amazing...!*"

"You're now trembling in fear, aren't you! Ahaha!"

"Let's settle this then! Come on!"

"I-It's alright? Let's ask Shimizu who he likes then!"

"Oh ho? Just ask who he likes? You don't seem confident here, Karin."

"Of course! Of course I do! Let's ask this irreversible question then! I-I don't care if you regret it then! Shimizu, Shimizu!"

Hijiri, Hijiri, Hijiri, just when I was thinking about her, someone suddenly shook my body.

Once our eyes met, Karin's face immediately reddened.

"E-Erm, S-Shimizu...p-pl-please, k-ki-kis."

“...Er, what? What’re you saying? I can’t hear you at all, Karin. You just bit your own tongue, didn’t you?”

Kaede, who was beside her, then charged over to me, seemingly ready to push Karin aside.

I couldn’t see her expression as her head’s lowered slightly, but it seems her neck has turned red too.

“S-Shimizu. P-ple-please go-go out with me instead of Karin. I-I won’t make you regret this, got it?”

“Ah! Please don’t get in the way, Kaede! You’re sneaky!”

“You’re annoying! Can’t you just watch quietly?”

...What’s with this situation? I had not managed to hear them clearly, so I didn’t know what they meant. How should I interpret the term ‘going out’?

I started to draw conclusions in my head.

First, I’ll have to exclude the possibility of a boy-girl relationship. Thinking about it randomly, it’s totally unrealistic for these two to confess to me at the same time. Both of them are already tragic people, beyond pity, but at least they’re absolute beauties. That’s impossible for someone like me.

In that case, I should think of it as them wanting me to accompany them to buy something. If it’s at that level at least, I guess it’s nothing much.

While I was thinking at the moment, their arguments were becoming incessant.

“So what about you, Kaede...! You have that incontinence issues!”

“Wha-What’re you saying!? That’s yourself, right!?”

“Shut up! Hah!”

Karin wanted to grab Kaede, but failed as her head got clamped in return.

Her arms were flailing away, but she couldn’t reach the latter.

“Your lips below are already dripping wet, Kaede!”

“What’re you saying, Karin! You! Do you know what this means!”

“I don’t really understand well, but I saw it on the internet before! I-It probably refers to those who can’t control their bladders, right!?”

“Then aren’t your lips below soaking wet!?”

Hey...what’re you two arguing about?

And speaking of which, these two really don’t get along at all.

“Wait. Both of you two. Calm down. What. Ah, it’s that, right?”

“Who do you choose, Shimizu?” “Which side?”

“I’ll go out with both of you, so stop arguing already.”

““!?””

“You two may be thinking about this for my sake, but I’m fine going out with the two of you.”

“You’ve become so shameless now, Shimizu!?”

“Ku...why’re you saying such shameless words...!?”

...? They’re talking about shopping, right? Why are they so shaken up?

“Besides, it’s not good for a girl to say something like the lips below. Not good at all.”

“Eh, Shimizu? You don’t, like that after all...? Wanting to go to the toilet suddenly...?”

...Going to the toilet suddenly? Holding it in? Outdoor play?

“I think it’s really bad for a girl to be like that.”

Lewd girls are bad after all.

“I-I’ll get this nature of mine treated! ... So that I won’t have incontinence issues anymore.”

So Karin was such a lewd girl?

“I-I’ll get it treated too! Definitely! ... My incontinence issues”

Even Kaede too!?

“Ah, yeah...it’s better to get that treated.”

But well, upon thinking about how some pretty girls are so lewd, I think something just rose in my heart.

“So you’ll go out with whoever gets their condition treated. Is that okay...?”

Karin asked as she showed a weird expression.

“Ah, it’s fine.”

“That’s absolute!” “Absolutely!”

Both of them looked really amped up for this.

...Looks like there’s a need to treat not only their incontinence issues, but also their lewdness. These two are really troublesome.

“...If there’s a need to go shopping, I can go out with you.”

And then, on Saturday, we, the second flowering club, have gathered at a family restaurant.

“Today, we have gathered here...”

Chris folds her arms and rests them on the table.

Her blond hair was like a blooming flower, swaying away, ostensibly showing the difference from a peasant. The impression she gave was that of a highly refined princess, and her one-piece skirt seemed to enforce this.

“...in order to hold a welcome party for Kaede and Shimizu.”

“I-Is that so?”

Unlike me, who was feeling a little happy, Kaede showed an unhappy look.

“...I don't feel happy at being welcomed by you. I do feel a chill however.”

“Ah, you're not happy at all, Kaede? That's a pity though. Shimizu, you do feel a little happy, right?”

Chris leaned her body over to me. Ah, man, I can almost see the breasts and all. They were obviously bigger than my sister's. Of course, Hijiri's are stylish too.

“Hey, Shimizu, where are you looking at? Aren't you quite the pervert?”

Chris covered her chest with her hand as she said that.

And before I could deny it, Karin, who was beside me, slams the table.

“Shimizu! Th-That sort of l-lewd thing sh-shouldn't be done! I-If you have time to think about it, why don't you practice one of your magic first?”

“No! Why must I do such a painful thing!?”

Uu. Karin folded her legs unhappily, and her red checkered miniskirt swayed. She had a similar red tie, a black jacket, a cross pendant, a skull necklace, a dragon-shaped bracelet. She still looked the same with all the painful-looking ornaments on her.

“Where're you looking! Are you looking at my ample breasts after seeing Prez's?”

“THAT'S BLASPHEMY! AND THEY'RE NOT AMPLE!”

“You're lying as naturally as you breathe!”

“DON'T RANDOMLY ADD A LIAR NATURE TO ME NOW, WILL YOU?”

“...I hope you'll say something more *romantic*.”

“Why are you looking for romance in a family restaurant? It feels like everything I can say will just fade away.”

“Like maybe...”

She then paused at this point, before continuing with a serious look.

“I see that your eyes are dazzling like the stars. Even if millions of enemies attack, I’ll protect you, for I’m your Knight’. Something like that—”

“Woah...that’s a terrible feeling on your side. What’s with that?”

“It’s not terrible at all! You’ll feel your chest tighten! Tighten! I’ll explain it to you then, you idiot Shimizu! It’s—”

Karin started gesticulating, intending to explain herself, but I stopped her with my hand.

“Better not.”

“...Really! It’s because it’s you, Shimizu, that.”

I suddenly turned to the front, and found Hijiri staring at me.

“...Fascinated?”

“No.”

Chris said this, seemingly intending to stoke the flames.

“But it’s because Karin allowed it that Shimizu can join the club.”

“...Chris? You don’t seem to be happy about this?”

“How can that be? Since Karin has agreed to it, is there a reason why I have to be unhappy about it?”

Karin stood up, ostensibly jumping.

“No I didn’t, but I thought...since he looks so pitiful...that I might as well let him join. Right, and I still owe him one. I’m not someone who doesn’t know graciousness, so at least I thought of putting him at the lowest level, as my underling. Shimizu’s so useless, so I’ll take care of him as my butler for the rest of his life.”

“Ah, erm, that’s a little...”

Karin whispered as she tugged at the bottom of my T-shirt, her eyes glancing up at me.

Ah, this girl certainly is cute. My heart started to race.

A sensation of pain then struck my foot.

“Ow...”

I looked below the table to see my foot being stepped on. It was Hijiri.

“Shou, you’re being fascinated.”

Hijiri and Karin started to squabble, and suddenly, a chill struck me.

I looked around, and see Chris glaring at me with an unhappy look.

“...You’re starting to get cocky, cheating away my cute club members...”

“C-Chris, what did you just say?”

But Chris suddenly reverted back to her princess-like smile. Was it my imagination that she was glaring at me?

“In that case, how about we give Shimizu a nickname?”

“What? You’re doing that now?”

“Because it’s easy to confuse between the two Shimizus.”

“It’s alright, isn’t it? Everyone just calls Hijiri by her name—”

Chris then raised a finger and said,

“Shishi. How about that?”

“No way!? Why do I feel malice in that!?”

“Eh? Why? You don’t like it? I can’t understand at all.”

“Because this means—!”

No, wait. Hold on, let me look around. Right now, I might say that we’re being watched by the people in the family restaurant.

At this table, everyone seated at this table other than me are wonderful beauties. I nearly forgot because they're pitiful girls with incontinence issues, but they're pretty enough that even idols would feel inferior to.

What'll happen if I suddenly start explaining what Shi Shi is? There'll be uncomfortable stares on me while we're here.

"Alright, it's decided then. No problems, I suppose?"

"There's a problem here! Spare me already!"

"I don't understand here. Is there anything wrong with that? Do you mind explaining?"

She whispered as her lips curl into a smile.

Ahh. This girl's definitely an actor. She definitely knew. There's no way she didn't notice.

"I don't know either! But I don't like it, okay?"

Chris asked me while tilting her head. It's cute, to be honest, it's really cute, but if I admit defeat here, I'll end up being called Shi Shi.

"No? (Wink)"

"Ah, ahh...well...it can't..."

Not good! I'll end up surrendering if this keeps up!

Hijiri, Hijiri. Lend this helpless me your strength...!

Once Hijiri's eyes met mine, she tapped her fingers on the table twice, anxious.

Alright! Recharge complete!

"How can I accept this!? No way!"

"Tch, Shii then."

"Ugh..."

To be honest, I do have issues with this one, but it's much better than Shishi.

And so, I became Shii.

...Damn it.

“Now that that’s settled, let’s get to the main point! Everyone, finish this up!”

Chris’ finger is pointing at a **golden liquid**.

This is something fresh prepared by Karin and Hijiri on her instruction.

“A-Are you serious, Chris...? It’s dangerous to drink that.”

“It’s because it’s dangerous that we have to drink it.”

“Wait...how does your screwed-up logic work?”

Chris waved her hair back and declared,

“Today’s training is a contest of endurance! Everyone is to drink this herb tea!”

“A-A contest of endurance?”

“Right. Everyone, bring your face closer...actually, this is to hold it in once you’re at your limit. Once that happens, your limit may improve. This is the club activity of the Second Flower Arrangement club.”

“Oh, I see. That’s a really wonderful idea, as expected of Our Lord!”

“...Prez, I have a question.”

“What is it, Hijiri?”

“Why do it at a place with so many people? Can’t we do it at your residence or some other member’s house?”

“It’s for your sake, Hijiri. Your weakness is that you’ll feel nervous from getting stares, right? You have to overcome this.”

“...But it’ll be disadvantageous to me.”

“You’re right, but because of this, you can show Shii your cool side. The more likely you’re going to lose, the more you’ll be able to show that coolness.”

Hijiri widened her eyes, and nodded her head firmly.

“Wait, being cool and holding it in has—”

“I’ll do my best.”

It was useless for me to dissuade Hijiri as she agreed to this proposal.

“Ah, and also, it’ll be a little boring if nothing happens to the loser. How about this: the loser has to pay for what everyone ordered. Let’s begin then.”

Upon hearing this, Karin, who had been quiet up till this point, got suddenly pumped up.

“That’s a wonderful idea! The perfect idea!”

“Eh, Karin. That’s a lot of money you have to pay if you lose, you know...?”

“Haha, you’re a fool, Shii.”

“...Shii?”

I feel like I’ve been called in some weird way.

“The winner has it all free. It’s fine as long as you don’t lose! Nothing will happen as long as you don’t let it out! Will this Archmage Karin lose? No! That’s impossible!”

Karin clenches her fist as she stands up.

Is it impossible to avoid this competition now?

I turned to Kaede, who had been quiet till now, and said,

“Erm, Kaede, it’s better not to do this. There’s definitely no good outcome from this.”

At this point, I noticed,

Kaede’s eyes seemed to be on fire.

“...What? Did you say something, Shimizu? How laughable, these people actually dare to challenge me. Alright, so be it. I’m really looking forward to it now.”

Not good. It’s not working on her at all.

I’m the only one objecting to this. Considering at the mood here, I might end up being dragged along.

Chris completely ignored me as she said,

“It seems everyone has agreed. The procedure is simple. First, we’ll drink 5 glasses of dandelion tea. After that, we’ll add on to the drinks based on the situation. The first one to the garden loses. Dandelion tea is a herb tea famous for allowing easy excretion, extremely potent in this regards.”

And thus began the prelude to war.

No no no.

Hold on a moment. This development is sketchy no matter how I think about it.

Hijiri, Chris, Karin and Kaede finished up glass after glass of herb tea in front of me.

I didn’t have a choice as I brought the herb tea to my lips, wondering, Hijiri will undoubtedly suffer if this contest continues, and if she fails, it’ll be an absolute tragedy.

“Erm, Hijiri.”

“What is it, brother?”

“Are you forcing yourself here?”

“...Eh?”

I was preparing to continue my attempt to convince her, but she showed a lonely expression.

“...I see....You don’t have faith in me, Shou.”

“N-No, it’s not like that.”

“It’s fine...I’ve been avoiding you, Shou. It can’t be helped that you don’t trust me.”

“Wait, I don’t mean that. I just don’t hope that you fail in front of the public like that. Ahh, fine. I just need to go to the toilet.”

That’s how it is. Why didn’t I notice this immediately? I’m really an idiot.

“Sorry. It’s a little dangerous for me. I have to go to the toilet. Consider this my loss—”

Just when I’m about to continue, Hijiri grabbed my arm.

“...Shou, this won’t do.”

“Why?”

“...I hope you’ll have more faith in me.”

I’m being watched by Hijiri’s slightly raised eyes, and my heart suddenly tightened.

How cute—! Her eyebrows are really long and—!

“Of course! How can I not possibly trust you, Hijiri?”

“Then, I’ll hope you’ll show that faith in this contest of endurance. I won’t allow you to admit your loss because of me.”

I still tried to insist, but Hijiri responded with an emotionless expression as she showed her patented gloom.

“...As expected, Shou...about me...”

“Ahaha! The Shimizu little sister has a tofu personality after all! I don’t have a chance of winning here, huh?”

Anyone other than Hijiri can admit defeat. Once there’s someone willing to admit defeat, the contest will be over.

The sound of a cup being put down can be heard. Karin has just finished her last glass of herb tea.

“Kaede! There’s a rare chance I’ll see you rolling on the floor foolishly, right?”

“EH? Karin, what do you mean!?”

Kaede too has 5 empty glasses in front of her.

“I’ll definitely win this contest!! Oh ho ho! My stomach’s definitely going to be fine, for I am protected by an Ancient dragon! And if I beat Kaede, it’ll be like me being treated first! In other words, Shii’s life is mine!”

“Hold on! Why’s my life being used as a stake!?”

“Huh! Let’s get this contest started!”

“Ehhh? Even Kaede agreed to this!?”

But these two completely ignored my protests as they glared at each other.

“You dare to defy the Great Karin? How foolish you are! Absolutely foolish! I’ll rip your insides out, crush them, connect your insides with this world and send you to your doom, Kaede!”

End of the world, attaching the insides together?

“Wait, Karin, you can’t take back what you just spat out, you know?”

Kaede looked like she got hit somewhere as she glared back at Karin, apparently wanting to overpower the latter.

“How can I possibly do that? Don’t you know what it means? Are you an idiot? Idiot idiot, idiot!”

I thought she was just saying that to rile up the opponent, but there was still something I’m a little curious about.

“E-Erm, Karin? Do you even know what that means?”

“Not sure, but please don’t interrupt, Shii.”

“Right! She just tried to pick a fight with me. That’s enough reason!”

“Or rather, what I spat out, I’ll make Kaede swallow it!”

“Eh, bring it on!”

“I’ll burn you good! Like a well-done steak!”

Karin raised her arms as she shouted, but she just looked like a pitiful child no matter what.

At this moment, she suddenly stopped her cries.

“Speaking of which, I’m hungry. Sorry, I’ll have some steak, well done.”

“You’re right. There’s still some time till our showdown. I’ll eat something too.”

“...I want some pancakes.”

Hijiri said after she let out a little rumble.

Afterwards, Karin, Hijiri and Kaede ordered some obviously abnormal items.

Chris was the only one looking bored, pouting as she was combing her blond hair.

“Aren’t you eating anything, Chris?”

I try to talk to her, only to get a cold response.

“I’m not hungry.”

“...I see.”

Hijiri, Karin and Kaede are indulging themselves.

Chris and I didn’t order anything, and we look really bored.

But there’s nothing else we can really talk about. Our eyes met again, and Chris turned her stare away impatiently.

During this boring time, the price recorded on the receipt continued to increase.

The total is 21600 Yen.

The details are as follows—

-Me—280 Yen (Drinks)

-Chris—280 Yen (Drinks)

-Hijiri—5150 Yen (Drinks and lots of sweets)

-Kaede—6280 (Drinks and lots of food)

-Karin—9610 Yen (Drinks and lots of food)

“Wait, how much have you eaten exactly!? Karin especially!! You’re able to eat almost 10,000 Yen worth of food in a family restaurant!? Is your stomach a black hole!?”

“Iven dab dood, See?”

She continued to chew and guzzle down the food.

“What’s so bad about it, Shii...? You know, I normally don’t eat outside...”

“Eh? Are you really short of money...?”

“Very.”

“But, well, that expensive looking bicycle...”

“! You’re talking about Schwarz Javelin!? Oh ho! So you can tell it’s a high class item, right!? Actually, I spent 150,000 Yen on it, and another 200,000 on modifications.”

“So expensive! The price’s amazing, in a completely different way from those television shopping stuff!”

“I spent all the money I earned from new year funds, pocket money and part-time work!”

“...Here’s an idiot. We have an idiot who doesn’t plan here .”

“Planning? That’s something ordinary people would do, Shii.”

“You sound as if you’re not!”

"If I have a superpower that can override everything, I'll have a way even if I don't have it!"

"How can there be such a thing!?"

"Of course!"

"I say, part-time...? Karin, you can do part-time work...?"

"Of course! How rude!"

"Then, what kind of work are you doing?"

"Oh ho. What do you think it is? Guess."

"I know. Rubbing your dad's back?"

"!? No!"

"...Shou, I think it's plucking the white hairs from her father's head. 10 Yen per strand, or something like that."

"How rude!? At least break away from the father part, please!"

"Then, do you massage your mom's shoulders?"

"And please break away from the massage part! Someone please help me! Is everyone an enemy here?"

"Wait, that's not right. How can Karin possibly do such a thing?"

"Ka-Kaede's right! You're a good person after all, aren't you...?"

"Don't cry now. You must have gathered a bunch of kids and cheated them of their money by declaring yourself to be an Archmage, right?"

"That's not considered part-time work! Isn't it! P-Prez~"

Karin started to let out a quick flow of tears as she turned to Chris.

"...Yes, Karin. I think it's better to do that in front of adults."

"A-Adults...?"

"Yes. Those that find you pitiful might give you money."

“U-Uwaahh! You’re too much! You’re really too much!”

Karin tapped at the table a few times, and puffed her cheeks and said,

“It’s just an ordinary part-time job! At an ice cream shop!”

We all exchanged looks.

“Y-you mean, working normally...?”

“...Unbelievable.”

“Don’t get cocky there...”

“...I can believe Karin there.”

Only Chris changed her own opinion.

“Uu. Prez, I was doing it seriously. I was really happy at the ice cream shop.”

“Eh, that’s right. I know that you’re a capable girl, Karin.”

“Right, right, as expected of you, Prez. More interestingly, when talking about a double ice cream, I feel like I’ve become an alchemist.”

Chris then asked with some trepidation,

“...What does that mean, Karin?”

“ ‘Oh ho ho. Chocolate and strawberry ice cream...you mix them together, forming a new chimera, a creature born out of darkness! Show yourself immediately! Strawberry chocolate ice cream!’ Something like that.”

“...A-Anything goes as long as you want, right? As long as you don’t say it—”

“Sometimes, I’ll say it out, but nobody said anything, so it seems it’s okay.”

““““Ehh...?”“““““”

If I think about it, it’s really an annoying ice cream shop to go to.

Chris, who just asked her, immediately looked aside and changed the topic.

“Hm, alright then, but the price difference is too unfair.”

It’s a very weak attempt at changing the topic.

But upon hearing this, Karin let out a whimper.

“H-How can that be! Now’s not the time for such words! Prez...!”

Chris showed Karin a gentle smile.

“It’s fine. It won’t be disadvantageous to you.”

“Prez...”

“And so, I propose a team battle.”

Chris smirked.

“A team battle...you say?”

“Right, a team battle. A team battle of 2 vs 3. Which side goes to the toilet first loses, and the losing team pays the tab.”

“Team...”

As I pondered, Chris stared at me intently with those blue eyes of hers.

“Shii, don’t you want to protect Hijiri?”

“Hi-Hijiri...?”

“The Shimizu siblings can be on the same team. If you win, you’ll protect your important little sister, right?”

“I see...alright then. In this case, I’ll accept this.”

I probably won’t end up urinating. At least, there’s still some space until the time I need to go to the toilet.

The chances of Hijiri losing will be reduced, and even if we end up losing, she’ll have less to pay for. In that case, there’s no reason for me to refuse.

My eyes met Hijiri's, and my little sister continued to maintain her lifeless doll-like expression as she nodded hard.

"...Shou, let's do our best."

"Ahh!"

At this moment, Kaede raises her disapproval.

"Hey, wait. I never agreed to this, right?"

"...You don't want to take part in this contest?"

"That's not it. I just don't want to be on the same team as you, Chris. Same goes for you too, Karin. You're my rival vying for the same thing."

Once she finished this line, Kaede glanced at me for some reason.

"I alone is enough."

"But Kaede, if you lose, that'll be quite the price you have to pay, you know?"

"You still don't understand, Chris. For contests, the more dangerous it is, the more my fighting spirit can be riled up! Winning's all about ones and zeroes, no other outcomes."

Kaede chuckled as she bared her fangs.

And seemingly in response, Karin let out an evil cackle.

"So I'm with Prez? It's impossible to lose now. This is the combination of the Lord and the Archmage. How can small fries like Shii, Hijiri and Kaede be our opponents?"

"Then let's change our seats then. Karin, come to my side."

"Got it, Prez!"

"Come to me then, Hijiri."

"Got it, Shou."

Hijiri arrived at Karin's seat, and for some reason, Karin was requested to sit at where Chris just sat.

Kaede remained at the original birthday seat.

So in the end, it became something like this.

Wall Wall Wall Wall Wall Wall Wall Wall Wall

Me Hijiri Wall

Kaede Table Table Table Table Table Wall

Chris Karin Wall

Wall Wall Wall Wall Wall Wall Wall Wall Wall

Once the teams have been sorted, Chris stood up.

“Since the game’s still in a stalemate, I’ll go get another glass.”

“I don’t need it though?”

“You’re the only one not drinking? I won’t allow it.”

“No. Nobody knows whether you tamper the stuff you bring later on. I’ll get mine myself.”

“...You actually don’t believe me? How mortifying. I feel like crying.”

Chris said with a slightly anguished expression.

And then, she headed off to get four glasses of herb tea.

Moments later, Kaede grabbed her own glass of tea.

“Here, Karin, Hijiri, and Shii.”

Chris deliberately placed out the glasses in front of each of us by herself, probably for our sake. I’m a little surprised that she can be so considerate of others.

“Drink up then.”

Everyone started to drink his or her herb tea upon Chris’ command.

As Chris watched me gulp down the tea, I felt like her the corners of her eyes have contracted to form a grin.

Her expression didn't feel right. Hm, it seems the herb tea is a little different from before. Did she add something else? This princess really loves to play such pranks.

After a while.

It's a bit simplified to say that, but in fact, nothing really happened.

On the table surface, everyone was pretending to look calm.

But it was actually different.

It has been one and a half hours since the 6th glass was gulped down.

Kaede switched her legs, folded it and said,

"I-It's sure is easy, isn't it? You're almost about to give up now, right?"

Her voice was trembling a little.

Her legs are trembling as she switched them.

Karin answered with a pale expression.

"I-It's easy, right? A lot easier than hunting dra-dragons."

"Haha. What a coincidence. I'm still able to go on."

But I could obviously feel their legs trembling under the table.

There was sweat appearing on their foreheads too.

"Nn, ugh—! I-It's true! I can still hang on."

As Kaede was showing an expression of suffering, Chris said to her,

"Then, Kaede. If you find it easy, you should be able to drink some more tea, right?"

"Haa, ugh, what a stupid question. Speaking of which, nn, what about you?"

"I'm still fine here."

"I-In that case...how about another, two glasses?"

“...If you’re fine with that, I might consider.”

“Th-Then! I-I’ll get them!”

Kaede immediately leaped up, ran to the counter, and got another 4 glasses of herb tea.

The moment she sat down, she put the glasses to her lips, and gulped them down.

“...You see? I’m done here! Come on...i-it’s your turn, Chris.”

“I think I’ll pass.”

“What did you say!?”

“I only said ‘I’ll consider’, didn’t I?”

“Ugh! You...! How despicable!”

Kaede stared at Chris with a murderous intent, ostensibly wanting to kill her.

Chris then said happily,

“Kaede? Isn’t it your fault for not confirming it first? Or did you think it’s a despicable person like me is at fault for saying something you misunderstood?”



“Ugh, uuu...! Ahh!”

Kaede gritted her teeth as she nodded away.

“For-Forget about it...ngh, ugh.”

But Chris continued to hound on her.

“But Kaede, it’s rare of you to get some herb tea. Isn’t it a pity not to drink? Come on, there’s still another 2 glasses.”

“Ngh...th-that’s...yours...you...!”

“Really? Did I say I want you to help me get them? Are you going to leave behind what you took? Kaede?”

“...I...I’ll drink it! It’s, fine, right? I’ll drink it!”

Kaede put the glass to her lips, poured the tea into her mouth, and wiped it.

“But I never said that I’ll have you drink it. What I mean is that I can help you drink it if you can’t. How unfortunate, oh ho ho.”

“You...ngh...ahh! Wooahh, ahhh, abaaaa! Grrr!”

Kaede’s expression contorted because of her dissatisfaction, let out a weird sound, and sprawled herself on the floor.

“Ka-Kaede...? What’s going on, suddenly...? I-I see...! The trigger, right? Chris is really a scary person...!”

I turned to Chris in shock, and then turned back to Kaede again.

Kaede was pressing on her abdomen, her forehead slamming onto the table.

“Hey, Kaede? You alright...!?”

“...I-I’m, alright!? Nghh! B-But, p-please, not now...pl-pl-pl-please don’t, ta-talk to me, ngh, for now..”

“Oh ho. One down.”

“Chris, why do such a cruel thing...?”

“This is special training, you know? It can’t be helped that she became like this.”

The Second Flower Arrangement Club president has turned into a hunter, putting her hand on her cheek, and smiling at Hijiri and me.

“And well, we’ve been watched by the people around us since just now – it really is ‘nerve wrecking’, isn’t it?”

She said this to Hijiri.

The latter’s body jerked, and she looked around.

“...They’re, really watching us.”

“Have they realized that you want to go to the toilet?”

“...Th-That’s imposs-ible.”

Hijiri’s face reddened like a ripe tomato. I think that’s a little overboard, right?

Hijiri has the nature of being incontinent when nervous.

“Chris, if you dare do anything to my little sister –”

“But Shii, this is for Hijiri’s sake, you know? This is something I have to do for her future.”

Chris showed a smile with her beautifully shaped lips.

“You’re feeling embarrassed now, aren’t you, Hijiri? Everyone’s watching you now, you see?”

“Uu. It’s very troubling.”

Hijiri, seated beside me, had her legs folded differently this time.

“I-It’s fine, Hijiri. That’s not the case. We’re all being watched, not just you.”

“Y-You think we’re being watched too, brother? I-It’s certain after all then.”

Not good. If this keeps up, she won’t be able to hold it in.

This Chris is really an evil woman. She still can attack her opponent, huh?

If this keeps up, Hijiri will be embarrassed, and she'll also lose the contest! She might be over her limit now.

"You don't want to be watched either, right Chris?"

"Yeah, but so what?"

Chris remains as composed as ever. I tried using other forms of attacks, but I couldn't see her being rattled at all.

And during that time, she continued to attack Hijiri.

"Ugh, damn...what can I do now?"

I have to protect Hijiri.

Ahh...right.

I looked over at the black-haired girl sitting opposite me.

Sorry, Karin, but your trigger should be anger, right...?

N-No...this can't do!

Even if it's for Hijiri's sake, I can't bring myself to harm the innocent Karin.

If she gets incontinent under such a situation, Karin...!

But if this keeps up, Hijiri...!

I gritted my teeth hard in the face of such helplessness, and I find myself having difficulty in breathing.

"Ugh...what do I do, what can I do...!"

As I clutch my head, Karin said to me with a rather weird voice.

"Shii...I understand you, your pain. I can feel it..."

"Karin...can you understand my troubles now? What exactly can I do now?"

“You have to keep living on with your troubles, ponder seriously, and think of what exactly should you do in the future.”

“But I don’t have much time left...”

“Those with power have troubles, and their decisions may decide the future of humanity. This definitely is painful, isn’t it?”

Karin said while showing an anguished expression. Erm...huh?

“Wait, Karin...? What do you think I’m frustrated about?”

“In other words, that’s the trouble, Shii, a demon reincarnated has. You’re troubled by how different your thoughts are from your human self in reality. You won’t admit you’re a human. ‘I can destroy everything if I get serious, but is that really good’. Is it that kind of trouble?”

“!? Aren’t you being too rude here!? I’m not going to have such thoughts that’ll harm others!”

“H-Harm...? Are you saying that I harm others!?”

“Ah, no, that’s not it...”

“Oh ho. When things don’t go your way, you’ll be able to calm down by thinking about this. ‘These foolish people, don’t get cocky. Once this Archmage gets serious, you all will be turned to ash immediately’. Once you think of it this way, you find them pitiful, and your rage will subside...”

“...Karin. How pitiful you are. My tears are flowing...”

“Wh-Wh-Who’re you calling pitiful!? You’re too much, Shii! Be careful that I’ll use my magic to wipe you out!”

“Well, Karin...there’s no miracle or magic in this world, you know?”

I intended to educate Karin and convince her, but her body started to shudder.

“There is! There! Is!”

“There’s no record of any fantasy world in this world, you know? No magic, no demons, even dragons don’t exist!”

“There used to be! The annual records of the Lost Era! Magic’s currently being used secretly by the government! It’s kept confidential from ordinary people! Why don’t you understand!”

Karin was panting hard, and the surrounding stares gathered upon us in a terrifying manner.

She then started to repeat her motion of standing up and sitting down.

“W-Wait, sorry, Karin. I have no intention of angering you.”

“You are denying this after all the nonsense you said!? You devil!”

While we were engaging in this, Chris continued to attack Hijiri.

“Oh my, there’re so many stares on us now. Are you embarrassed now, Hijiri?”

“Uu, ahh, I’m not. Mm...not tense at all. It’s fine. Ahh...”

Woah! Hijiri’s in trouble! Got to help her! But what do I do...!?

I couldn’t find an answer.

I definitely mustn’t make Hijiri lose control of her bladder.

If I admit defeat now, Hijiri has to pay.

I can’t let Karin, Kaede or Chris lose control either.

It’s best for the opponents to go to the toilet themselves.

“And so, yes...uu...they exist. You idiot, Shii!”

It’ll be very dangerous to keep making Karin angry. She seems to be over the limit now.

...Alright then, I’ll try calming her down a little.

“Ah yeah, okay. I understand. It exists. Right.”

“Ahh—! You’re just putting it off! Ngh...are you treating me as a fool now!? Ngh...!”

“No no, I really understand now, okay? It really exists. Yeah. It really does. There is magic. There is magic.”

I start talking like the Chinese in the mangas or some other things, but for some reason, Karin got angrier.

“Ugh...miracles and magic do exist! Nn...I can’t use it now, uu...but because I’m the reincarnation of an Archmage, I have very good, nn, talent! Definitely, soon after, haa, I’ll be able to use it! Ah. Shii, you...”

Seriously, why’re you so angry now?

Either way, Karin’s at her limit too.

No, wait...! Something’s wrong now...?

My lower abdomen starts to hurt. Am I, at my limit too...?

“Wooahh!? Wh-What’s with this...!?”

I have the urge to urinate, and this urge strikes my head at a supersonic rate.

I can feel pain. What’s this? I can’t understand at all. Impossible.

T-This is the first time! I think I caught something.

Ah! Speaking of which, Chris deliberately placed the drinks in front of everyone just now.

And the smell was a little weird too. Don’t tell me, she added something inside...?

“Ch-ris, did, you, add something, to the, tea...?”

“Why would I do that? Are you being senile now?”

Oh ho ho. Chris says as her lips curled fiendishly.

“How, despicable...”

“I don’t know what despicable are you talking about however? Speaking of which, Shii, you seem to be in pain. Did you drink something strange? Aha.”

“Damn you...”

I started to break out cold sweat, and three out of five seated at the table are shaking their thighs in a terrifying manner.

Kaede remained still like a corpse. This place seems to have an abnormal feel, I guess.

If there’s such a table, I don’t want to get near there.

I wonder, trying to distract myself, but it’s not working at all.

It hurts, it’s dangerous, I’m about to pee. But I can’t. If I go to the toilet, Hijiri will lose.

“Un...”

It’s tough, but even so, I have to hold on. Hijiri’s face appears in my mind.

Your brother here will work hard for you!

It’s alright. The protagonist of a shonen manga will show his strength for those important to him, for friendship.

Once that happens, he definitely won’t fail.

Love an friendship. These are keys that reverses a situation.

Hold it in. Hold it all in. Lend me your strength, Hijiri.

I glanced aside at Hijiri, and her face was contorted in pain.

“Un, I can’t, take it anymore, brother.”

“Are you, alright, Hijiri...? Karin, will definitely, have to, go to the, toilet...”

“Huh. You’re, an idiot. Humph, this great Karin, will never, haa, ever, haa, admit defeat, ngh, in such a place. Ngaah.”

Amongst us, Chris is the only one smiling.

She even takes out her cellphone and start taking pictures.

“Ah, I’ll take this for research and record the facial reactions for comparisons to the usual. There’s no weird intention here.”

She...!

No, I’ll leave Chris’ matter aside first. I have to end the contest first—

“Karin, you can’t, reveal...your ugly state, at such a place, here...hurry, up and go...”

“Yo-You’re annoying. I-I’m fine...! You Second-Grader!”

And then—

Karin’s the first one to reach her limit.

“I-I can’t hold it in anymore! Ahh, unn...I, I want to pee now! I want to pee now!”

She wants to stand up and leave her seat, but Chris intercepts her.

No way. Did you set Karin at this place, surrounded by the wall, for this purpose...?

Chris, what did you do here...!?

If she does this in front of the public, Karin...!

But as my stomach’s aching too much, I can’t voice myself very well.

“Please, Prez! Let me through! Please let me through!”

“Oh ho. That won’t do. We’ll lose if you go now, Karin, won’t we?”

“Please forgive me...please forgive me! I can’t, take it anymore! I want to go! I’m sorry, it’s my fault. Please forgive me!”

Chris raised a leg to impede Karin.

The latter bends her body, and climbs up Chris’ thigh, ostensibly crossing an obstacle.

“Un, ugh, once I surpass the Lord, I’ll reach the ideal land in front...! I shall, surpass the Lord! I shall surpass the Lord! Surpass the Lord! Babel! Lend me strength!”

Karin called out the name of the tower destroyed by God, in an attempt to surpass Him, and continued to trudge forward little by little.

At this moment, I feel something soft on my knees.

“Shou...I can’t, take it, anymore.”

Hijiri, on my side, wants to pass by me from above.

And it feels as if Hijiri’s sitting directly on my thigh.

It’s a small space, so she can’t really pass by me easily. Hijiri, stuck between the table and my legs, ‘uu’, let out such an alluring sound.

On a side note, Hijiri’s soft butt is agitated a certain part of my body.

Not the waist, but the lower abdomen. Something slightly below the belly.

I use my hand to hold it down, and the urge to pee quickly rises to a higher place.

“Nn. Ahh.”

I exclaim. There were wails of Hell from all over our table.

Chris, the only one remaining calm, sighed and said,

“I guess it can’t be helped. It’s a draw this time.”

Before she even finishes, Kaede jumped up.

“A-A draw!? Guess there’s no helping it now! Ahhh!”

Kaede, who had been remaining as still as a corpse, rushed to the toilet with a terrifying moment.

There’s a was a women’s cabin, a shared cabin, and a men’s one.

In other words, they can only use two toilets. One of them will be unable to make it.

Kaede's using one now, so there's only one left!

Hijiri's the next one to charge out.

"Sorry Shou, I'm going."

"Pl-Please wait! I want to go first!"

Because of Chris' interference, Karin charged out a little later.

Both of them sprint to the toilet.

"Don't get in my way! Hijiri, please, move, aside!"

Karin grabbed Hijiri by the shoulder and overtook her.

"No, Karin, I'll be first."

Hijiri tried to outdistance Karin.

But Karin opened her arms wide, blocking any exit.

"Hah! I won't let you!"

And so, Karin escaped into the toilet. The toilet's a cubicle, so once inside, it'll be her win.

"Haa."

Karin seems to have felt that she has won, and heaves a sigh of relief.

But my eyes widen at what happened next.

Hijiri's hand reaches for Karin, who has gotten into the toilet, and grabs the latter by the shoulder.

"...Victory, is mine."

"Ah!? Hijiri!? That's cheating!"

And so, Karin's pulled out.

The difference in physique decided the difference. Hijiri was not too big, but Karin was shorter than an ordinary person, and doesn't have much muscle.

The door's closed, and locked.

Karin slams her hands at the door.

"Open the door! Please open the door! Hijiri! Hijiri! Kaede!"

However, there's no response from the door.

"Uu, please! Please! Please! I-In that case, how about two people together! It's settled! No problems! I can stand up, you can sit, Hijiri! So, please!"

rumbles

I too press my belly as I head into the toilet.

Great. It's empty here. There's a urinal and a cubicle, a common public toilet design for men.

"Haa~"

Just when I let out a sigh of relief, the door's opened.

"I-I don't care now. This works too!"

I turn over to the door, and found Karin coming in.

"Wait, ho-how did you get in!?"

"It's an emergency!"

There might be someone who had said before that other than sleeping, one is most defenseless when using a toilet. If I remember correctly, it was written that the best place to attack was in the bathroom, and this referred to fighting or assassination.

Right now, I thoroughly sensed the truth in those words.

My body couldn't move. That thing can't stop.

Karin ran in...it's so embarrassing.

It felt as if something that can't be seen has been seen, but in fact, it was.

"Argh! Don't look, Karin! You pervert!"

“You’re annoying. I’ve no interest in your abashed look, Shii!”

Karin then grabbed the door handle.

Kak. But there was the merciless sound of something being jammed.

“Kya! It’s locked here too! Uu, uwahh!”

“Argh, guess there’s no choice!”

I released it all out, packed my stuff, and grabbed Karin’s hand.

“Wooah! Wash your hands! Please wash your hands!”

My guess was that since Hijiri and the rest were done with the toilet, it’ll be much better for her to go there rather than wait at the men’s toilet.

And so, I brought the teary Karin into the women’s washroom, and manage to solve everything.

I guess it was because of Karin’s ruckus that the stares in the family restaurant felt more stinging than ever. Hijiri was in a worse state than before, so we decide to head home.

On a side note, the contest just now ended in a draw, and the bill was shared equally amongst the 5 of us.

Karin kept opening and closing her purse, and she lowered her shoulders dejectedly.

“Uu. My purse, my purse. I’m surrounded in agony...”

I sigh weakly. *Oh ho*, Chris seems to have thought of something, and lets out this laugh.

“You seem rather happy, Chris. Did you have that much fun?”

Upon hearing this question from me, Chris looks down.

“Yeah, I am. This happy...hm, it hurts.”

“H-Hurts? What do you mean?”

“No, I’m really happy. This is the first time I have such a bustling gathering.”

Chris said this with a weak voice in the midst of this damp, nocturnal air.

Hijiri and I headed straight to home immediately, and since I was feeling a little tired, I immediately returned to my room.

“It was really noisy...it’s great that Hijiri looked that happy ...”

I lied on the bed in my room, and on my face a smile was naturally formed.

“I’m tired. I’ll take a shower and go to bed early.”

I muttered to myself, got a change of clothes, and headed to the bathroom.

For some reason, the lights inside are switched on.

“I forgot to turn off the lights? Never mind then. The water should be hot now.”

I reach my hand for the door.

“...E-Erm, brother. Wa-Wait...”

There’s a monotonous, yet panicky voice coming from the bathroom.

“Eh...!”

But it’s already too late, for I have opened the door.

Hijiri’s lying in the bathtub, widening her eyes, a rare sight at that.

Her cheeks then reddened immediately.

H-Her breasts were unexpectedly larger than when she’s wearing clothes—! No!

“So-Sorry!”

“...Ah, ahh. Wh-Why, Shou...I don’t you no...how shameless...”

“N-No, it’s not it, Hijiri! It’s not like your brother wanted to see...”

I exclaim, and Hijiri lowered her shoulder dejectedly.

“Y-You don’t have any interest in me...?”

She lost confidence because of me!? Well, I have to praise her!

“No, that’s not it, Hijiri...that, well, your breasts, are nicely shaped, you know...?”

Upon hearing this, Hijiri immediately lowered her body behind the bathtub.

She merely showed her face, her hands, and her small shoulders. Even her shoulders and hands are red.

“...H-How shameless...”

“Ehh!? What do I say then!?”

“...I-It’s enough. Anyway, pl-pl-please close the door...”

“Just close the door!?”

I close the door before I even finish my words. And then, I put my forehead at the door.

Uu...I did something bad...

Just when I was thinking about it. Bam! An unsteady sound rang.

And then, ‘uwahh...!’ I heard this.

“Hi-Hijiri—? Hello!?”

There was no response to my call.

“Hello?”

I started to feel more anxious. No way. What happened...

“Hello, hello? Hijiri, I’m opening the door now...?”

I opened the door, and find Hijiri collapsed on the tile floor.

“Hijiri!”

I rush into the bathroom without hesitation, and carried Hijiri up.

“U, uu...”

“You alright!?”

She probably slipped while intending to exit the bathtub. She might have panicked because of me.

Hijiri had been tense when we were in the family restaurant. Maybe she was tired as a result.

I wrapped Hijiri’s beautiful body with a towel in the entrance to the bathroom.

“...Did you hit anything? An-Anyway, I’ll send you to the room first.”

I lifted Hijiri, and then, she said in a vague tone.

“Brother...I’m sorry for...troubling you.”

“It’s fine, don’t worry about it. And sometimes, I’m happy that you cause some trouble for me.”

“...Un.”

Hiiri answered softly.

“Ah, I normally can’t tell what’s going on from your expression no matter what happens. It makes me a little worried.”

“...Really?”

“Yeah.”

“...I see...but Shou. You looked worried and panicky whenever I used to cry, so I chose not to let you find out...”

Hijiri seemed to be saying something behind me, but as it’s too vague, I couldn’t hear clearly.

“Hijiri? What did you just say?”

“...Nothing. Nothing at all.”

“Really? Your expression wouldn’t change, and you’re always alone, so I’m rather worried. But it seems you’ve been a lot happier recently.”

“...Yes. I’m really happy, being with everyone today.”

"I see. It's good then. Your room's here."

As long as Hijiri's happy, I'm happy.

I gently placed Hijiri on the bed.

At that moment, her face entered my sight, and there's some warmth to it.

"Eh...? Hijiri, did...you just smile?"

I'm really happy to see that kind of smile.

I really am.

I felt something warm filling my heart, and almost choked on it.

"...No, I'm not smiling."

Hijiri answered in a stubborn manner, but she was clearly showing a smile on her face.

An expression cuter than anyone else's.

"Really?"

"...You seem happy though, Shou."

It's true that it's a strange club activity.

Filled with strange members.

It's better not to join, since it's so dangerous.

But even so, if Hijiri can show such a smile...

...If Hijiri could feel a little happiness, none of these things matter.

That's what I personally thought.

Chapter 5

It was the second day after that training, and as I was making my way to the campus, I saw Chris get out of the car.

Several students ran over to her.

But Chris looked at me, and then said to the students,

“Do you mind letting me pass through?”

“Eh? But why? I came all the way here to see you, Chris.”

“Yeah. At least we can go to the classroom together...”

Chris showed a look of pity to the students, and then said with an icy voice,

“...Is there anything you’re unhappy with?”

“No-Nothing!” “Of course not!”

She didn’t look at the panicked students as she immediately moved straight towards me.

“Good morning, Shii. It was fun two days ago...did Hijiri say anything?”

“No, Hijiri seems rather happy, but are you really fine with it?”

“What do you mean?”

“The girls just now seem to find this a pity—”

Chris then says with a nonchalant tone,

“What’s wrong with that? Those girls definitely will be fine, even if I’m not around.”

“Eh?”

“And I don’t know their weaknesses after all.”

Chris says half-jokingly.

“We-Weaknesses...?”

“Right. If I know that, won’t I feel relieved when I’m with them? I definitely won’t be betrayed in that situation.”

I frowned, not understanding what Chris was getting at.

“I’m joking.”

But Chris merely laughed it off.

I could tell, from the smile two days ago, that Hijiri had been happy recently, and I felt happy as a result.

It was Monday, but there was no club activity. Back when we were returning from the family restaurant, Chris said, “Everyone worked hard on a rest day, so we’ll have a break on Monday”.

And so, I arrived at the clubroom.

The Second Flower Arrangement club had always made Hijiri happy. So I headed there to clean up the room.

“...Eh? There shouldn’t be anyone in the room today. Why’re the lights switched on?”

As I felt intrigued by this, I opened the door—and at the same time. Chris’ alluring voice rang inside the clubroom.



“NAHH!”

“Huh...? What’s with this voice...”

“SO CUTE~! KARIN AND HIJIRI ARE SO CUTE!”

Chris was rolling on the large sofa she brought up. Her short skirt was rolled up, and her snowy white thighs could be seen from time to time. There seemed to be some sheets of paper scattered around her.

Chris squealed as she took them and rolled around.

Her pretty blond hair danced along with her movements.

“AHH, SO GOOD! SO GOOD! WHY ARE YOUR ABASHED EXPRESSIONS SO ALLURING! AHH! I DON’T GET IT AT ALL! I DON’T GET IT AT ALL!”

To me, you’re the one I don’t get at all.

During this time, there was paper coming out from the printer.

Chris tossed aside the paper in her hands, and took the new pieces from the printer.

“UN, *SMOOSH*, KARIN *SMOOSH*, KAEDE TOO*SMOOSH*!”

Chris continues to kiss the paper, and the tossed papers fly over to me.

“AH, SORRY, HIJIRI, YOU’RE CUTE TOO~. ARE YOU SHY? YOUR FACE’S ALL RED, YOU KNOW? ARE YOU FEELING EMBARRASSED?”

“...What are you doing?”

I muttered, but an unexpectedly loud voice echoed through the clubroom.

“EH...?”

There was a moment of silence. Chris, lying face up on the sofa, stopped, and turned her face to my side.

The blond hair scattered on the sofa under the effect of gravity.

“...”

“...”

“.....”

“.....”

Chris then inhaled greatly.

“Ahhh! Wh-what’re you looking at, you pervert! Lecher! Idiot! Sex maniac! Stalker Voyeur!”

Chris’ upper body rose up, and held her body with her arms.

“You’re the pervert here, Chris! What are you using my sister for!? You’re one to talk here!”

“Wh-what? You siscon! It’s your fault! Your sister’s fault for being so cute!”

“Ahh, I do agree with that. Hijiri is cute, super cute, the cutest girl in the galaxy. However, that’s still not a good enough reason for you to do such a thing!”

“Shut up! Can you please stop yapping about such little things!? I like it when girls are shy, especially when they’re unable to hold it in. I really love the sight of that!”

Chris concluded without hesitation.

“You pervert! Huh...don’t tell me, the reason why you created this club...”

I gulp,

Chris gets off the sofa and stands up leisurely, her hands on her hips, looking very triumphant.

The clear blue eyes stare at me.

“Hoo, I guess it’s just as you expected.”

The way she proudly says these words cause me to feel a chill.

“Ho-How can such a person possibly exist...?”

“Whatever. It doesn’t hurt even if you know.”

“I’ll tell Hijiri, Karin and Kaede!”

“Humph. That’s a mook’s line! Can’t you say something like ‘I’ll settle this using my own power’?”

“...Damn you. Don’t you feel any shame from doing such a thing!?”

Chris closed her eyes and said gracefully.

“Of course not. I’m someone who marvels at the sight of something being flustered, and I created this club to see a girl being embarrassed.”

I feel a scorching sensation deep within my abdomen.

I never expected my little sister to become a tool of comfort for this pervert.

“In other words, you don’t have any incontinence issues...?”

“Of course. Who do you think I am? I’m Chris Ryusenji!”

“What’s with that self-confidence!?”

“Why don’t you try telling Hijiri and Karin?”

“Yo-You’ll regret that!”

“...That’s the what a loser would say.”

“Shut up! I’ll make you regret this!”

“Ah, hurry up and go if you have nothing else. I’m busy here.”

I was forcefully chased out of the clubroom.

And suddenly, once I look out of the window, I find Karin at the parking lot.

I hurry over, and found Karin squatting there, locking her bicycle.

“Fuu. The Protection Spell is complete.”

“Yo, Karin.”

I call out from behind, and the black-haired girl jumped.

“Ahh, if it isn’t Shii? You aren’t going home even though there’s no club activity today? Ah, do you want to ride on my Schwarz Javelin? No can do though. The ancient dragon won’t approach others without my permission. Bu-But, if you really want to ride it no matter what...”

“Your Eighth-Grader Syndrome is still at work...”

“Ahh! You’re calling it an Eighth Grader Syndrome!! Please take it back!”

This conversation has developed in the worst possible situation.

Karin looks over at me, and curls her lips into a smirk.

And then, she starts swaying her body in a pretentious manner, her hand placed on her fringe.

“Uu, **I see darkness in front of me...**”

And then, she glances over at me.

...What’s she playing at now, seriously?

“...Are you alright? This really sounds like some Eighth-Grader line.”

At this moment, Karin suddenly puffed her chest out proudly.

“Ku, kuku, kukuku, haha, ha, ha, ha, ha!”

“Wh-What the? What’s with this laughter? Did your brain short-circuit from overheating or something?”

“That’s what I want to say, Shii, you know? It looks like you still don’t know. Ohoho. How laughable it is. Ah, really. We are really pitiful to have such a person as our senior in school and life.”

“What are you trying to say...?”

“You’re saying that it’s an Eighth-Grader Syndrome, but don’t you feel embarrassed if you’re wrong? Ohoho.”

Karin gave me a condescending laugh, seemingly making fun of me.

“Ah! Seriously. Just get straight to the point!”

"Then, Shii, please take out your phone."

I don't really understand what she means, but I fish out my cellphone as per her request.

"Please search using the search engine. If you don't know what the URL is, I can send it to you."

"...What do you want me to search?"

"Darkness in front of my eyes. I want you to search that."

Tap tap tap. So I begin to search.

"...What...!? There's actually...!?"

"Of course! Darkness in front of the eyes refers to dizziness or migraines after standing for a long time! It is a saying that truly exists! Aha! Now your ignorance is revealed!"

"Ugh. How can that be? It's vexing."

"Haha, idiot."

"..."

"Idiot. You're really a fool, Shii!"

"Ugh..."

"Oh. Don't cry don't cry. You're really cute. Do you want this big sister to talk to you?"

Karin tiptoes, trying to pat my head.

"Nn, Nn. Hey, squat down a little."

I ignore her, and she moves her bicycle over to me, sits on it, and starts patting my head.

"Hoho. I love it when you're being obedient, Shii. But you're always being so snobbish."

Then, she says "Please wait for a moment" and puts her bicycle back.

"What do you want from me?"

"Ahh, there's something about the club I want to talk to you about."

"I see. I so happened to have left something in the classroom, so let's talk on our way there. You'll come with me, right?"

"Sure."

"...That's how it is. You and Hijiri are both fooled by Chris, Karin."

"Hm...I really can't believe it for a while there. If I have to say so, isn't it your misunderstanding, Shii?"

"But I just saw it. Chris was holding your photos and saying some things I can't say here."

"Hm...are you mistaken? Ah, I do believe you, Shii, but I do believe in Prez too."

"Bu-But she did some things to your photos, Karin, you know?"

"...Hm, isn't that for the sake of treatment? I don't think Prez Chris will do such a weird thing."

"Even if you say so..."

"Oh, my classroom's here."

Looks like she doesn't believe me.

"Okay. I got my printouts. Let's go home together then."

And so, Karin and I headed home together till the end.

Once I reach home, I headed towards Hijiri's room. It had been a while since I last entered.

"Hijiri, can I bother you for a while?"

I ask from behind the door. "Please wait for a moment." And after this short reply, the door opens.

"...Brother, is there something the matter?"

She tilts her cute head.

"I went to the clubroom today."

"Eh? Aren't we on break today?"

"...I had something. Anyway, I found Chris there too."

"Ah, brother. You were alone with the President? ...Have your relationship gotten better?"

That voice of hers sounded gentle; it seemed she was really happy that my relationship with Chris has improved.

Chris is really an unrepentant pervert. Suddenly, it had become impossible for me to say so.

"Erm...what do you think of that club?"

"...What's wrong?"

"It's nothing. I just want to hear a serious answer from you. Sorry for asking such a weird thing so suddenly."

Hijiri was silent for a little while, and opens her mouth slightly, her speech more fluent than usual.

"I am, very happy. Yes, there is something, I want to say, Shou."

"Yeah?"

"I was, always alone. I always thought those with incontinence issues like me are the worst. I felt lonely when I saw that your bed-wetting was cured, brother. I was scared."

"...I see."

Speaking of which, Hijiri and I were distant for quite a while soon after my issues were resolved.

"I thought...I couldn't open my heart to those different from me."

"I-I see."

"So right now, I'm very happy. There is the President, Kaede, Karin, and you. Everyone is there to get well along with me. I'm really, really happy."

Hijiri seemed to be happy about the present. Even if Chris is a pervert, I think Hijiri can continue to live happily if I can hide this fact.

What will happen if it is known that Chris does not have incontinence issues?

No matter what I do, I will ruin Hijiri's happiness.

In that case, is it not better to not do anything?

No matter what Chris uses Hijiri's photos for, is it not alright as long as Hijiri does not know?

I was still agitated that Chris has stained Hijiri's photos, but it was my personal problem.

If I really want Hijiri to be happy, is it not better to remain silent?

"I see...ahh, yeah. I'll be happy as long as you are, Hijiri."

"Yes...thank you."

"Is there anything you want to eat?"

"...Pudding."

"I'll go buy some then."

And so, I left the room—soon after, I hear Hijiri's mutter.

"My brother seems a little strange..."

Another three days had passed since that incident, but I remained hesitant.

I continued to put my head in my hands in the clubroom. Do I tell the truth and rob my sister of her happiness, or do I ignore Chris' deception to protect it?

The three beautiful girls are chatting away around me.

"Hijiri, Karin, show me how you look when you're holding it in next time. It's part of treatment."

"No."

"Even if it's coming from you, it's embarrassing."

"Oh ho? You mean you want to even though you say you don't want to?"

"...Prez, what kind of evil governor are you?"

"President Chris always likes to joke about."

I remained seated on the chair as I listened in.

"Hey, Shii, aren't you going to stop us? You normally stop President Chris whenever she pulls such dirty jokes."

"Are you not feeling well, Shou?"

"Let's just ignore him. He may be trying to hold his bladder right now."

I continue to brood alone, choosing not to answer them.

There is still time to continue thinking, I thought.

I arrived at the clubroom the next day, and only Chris was present.

Once she saw me, she frowned unhappily.

"Have you not told Hijiri yet, Shii? Do you understand that nobody believes you?"

"...No, I don't think the others won't believe. It's just that she seems to feel at home over here. That's why I don't want to destroy it."

Chris let out a sigh.

"Shii, you do hate me, do you not? But I guess you are restraining yourself because of your little sister, no? ...How stupid."

"...Shut up."

I hissed back, and exhaled hard.

I was seething, needles ostensibly pricking at my gut.

But I still lowered my head towards her.

"I hate you, Chris, but there's something I want to ask of you."

"...What? I am hoping you do not ask me to go out with you."

"Don't be mistaken here. It's about Hijiri. I hope you don't reveal that you don't have any incontinence issues."

"...In other words, you want me to fool her completely. I have no issues with that."

"Yeah. Please don't betray her trust."

"...Certainly. That is what I intend to do."

"Please."

“For me, my *raison d’etre* is to marvel at the embarrassed looks of pretty girls like Hijiri and Karin, especially when they are wetting themselves! I can do anything for that, but in fact, I do not think anyone is willing to do so, right?”

Chris was beaming away as she said such unabashed words.

However,

Both she and I were a little too careless.

We actually had such a conversation in this place.

We were too careless.

There was a thud at the door.

An ominous premonition struck me.

I really did not want to turn my head around.

I hoped it was some other student.

But I understood very well that no normal student would come to this clubroom.

I slowly turned around...

...And found Hijiri standing there, emotionless.

She showed neither an expression of disbelief, sadness, bitterness, anguish, confusion, tearfulness nor laughter. It was completely blank; her usual expression was somewhat similar, but there is a decisive difference here. I understood this well, very well.

“Hi-Hi there Hijiri. Did you just listen in on our conversation? We didn’t really say anything important there.”

Chris tried her best to act calm as she said that.

If even I could tell she was panicking, Hijiri definitely could.

“Prez...I, see. You lied.”

“...So you heard everything, Hijiri.”

“I didn’t. I don’t want to know.”

“Hijiri, listen to me. That was a joke, a joke.”

“You’re lying.”

“I am not.”

And then, Hijiri looked away from Chris as she turned to me.

“Please, Hijiri, listen to me. That just now was for your sake...”

“You too, Shou? You know that Prez doesn’t wet herself, and hid it from me.”

“Hijiri...”

“Despicable.”

Hijiri hissed, picked up the bag she dropped, and ran out.

“Wait, Hijiri!”

I immediately gave chase.

Hijiri’s small shoulders were right within range.

I reach my arm out and grabbed her.

“Hijiri!”

“Let go. You’re an idiot, Shou. I don’t understand what you’re thinking.”

“That’s not it, Hijiri. It’s a place precious to you. I don’t, want to destroy it...”

“I don’t care, about that.”

“Hijiri...”

“...Let go.”

Hijiri repeated, and pulled my hand aside.

There was nothing I could do to explain, and I could only watch her leave.

I returned to the clubroom, and found Chris slumped on the sofa, her hands on her face.

“...Chris.”

“Ahh, that was a failure. We actually talked about that thing in the clubroom. But I guess this is to be expected since I do not get any chances to talk with you outside.”

“Of course not.”

“I guessed so. Is this not something you will be delighted over? You saved Hijiri from this strange club after all.”

“It’s true if I just want her to escape. What makes me most happy is that Hijiri can be happy. It’s a complete failure.”

“You really are an unrepentant siskon...I think I would not have ended up like this if someone were to care for me.”

I heard Chris mumble behind me. Maybe she did not want me to hear her, but I did.

“Huh?”

“It’s nothing. I said too much. Please forget about that.”

“Hm, I’ve no interest either.”

“You are right. Hijiri will not come back again. I am feeling a little regretful, but it is too late for that.”

Chris' words seemed to indicate that she had no particular interest in this, and I did not like the sound of that.

"You made use of Hijiri for your own satisfaction, and discarded her once she's of no use. What do you view her as!?"

"...What are you being angry about? Is that not the case? What else can we do right now? What else can I do other than to leave them alone? Is there anything else I can choose? If there is no point in working hard, why do so? Once you give up, look for another path; that is how I always lived my life."

Chris said this, showing the loneliest expression I had ever seen on her face.

"I really can't understand what caused you to have such twisted thinking."

"No matter how I ask, papa and mama will never return. I only celebrated my birthday with my attendants, I was always alone, whether it was during school visits, sports festivals, or even my meals. That was how I spent my childhood. How about it? Are you satisfied now? Is it enough for that stupid curiosity of yours?"

Chris glared at me. It seemed she was rather agitated about this, as she had said unnecessary things in her impulse.

"Hijiri will never come back. Are you going to leave the club?"

"..."

I remained silent, "Hello!" and Karin arrived.

"Shii, do you want to play that battle game we haven't played in a while? I thought of new skills

already, super cool ones! Eh, why's the atmosphere so weird?"

"Nothing strange about it." "Nothing strange going on."

Both of us echo in unison, and Chris glared at me.

Karin did not notice our attitudes as she continued,

"Eh, Hijiri isn't here today? That's rare. It's rarer to see Shii here. Will it rain tomorrow? I better prepare an umbrella."

Karin was the only one yapping away in the clubroom on that day.

Once I reached home, I found that Hijiri had locked herself in her room.

I knocked on the door; there was no reaction. I tried opening it, and

Hijiri finally reacted

"Don't come in, Shou."

So I did not enter the room. I stood in front of the door and said,
“Sorry about what happened today, Hijiri. Are you alright?”
“Did you intend to lie to me, Shou?”
“I didn’t want to...”
“Then what did you want to do?”
“I was worried about you—”
“I can’t believe you, brother.”
“But I—”
“That’s enough. Please don’t say any more.”
“Open the door! Hijiri! I never thought of doing anything that’ll hurt you! Be it now or in the future!
“...Then why did you hide it from me?”
“Th-That’s because...I thought it’ll be better for you.”
“Brother, you already knew that Prez is different from us, and you hid this from me...you’re too much.”
“Bu-But.”
“Brother, you know that it’s an important place to me, right?”
“Of, course...”
“But that is just my wish. It is merely an illusion when reflected.”
“...”
“And recently, you have been caring only about Karin and Kaede, brother. You ignored me.”
“Wait, you’re always the number 1 in my heart—!”
“That’s enough. I am in pain. My chest hurts. I had enough of this feeling.”
“Listen to me!”
“I don’t want to listen to you again. Don’t talk to me.”
“Hijiri!”
“I feel hurt because I trusted you. I won’t trust you again, brother.”
“Hijiri!”
“I won’t cause any more trouble for you, Shou. Don’t worry about me. I won’t worry about you.”
“Hey, what’re you talking about?”
“Leave me alone.”
After saying this, Hijiri did not respond again. My words would no longer reach Hijiri.

What can I do exactly? No matter how I brooded over this, I could not think of a solution.

She's just a discarded item. Think, what good is it for Hijiri?

What is Hijiri being angry about exactly?

One reason, of course, was that she was fooled by me.

Another reason, probably the most important of it all, was the fact that the president, whom she trusted, did not have incontinence issues.

This reason alone caused a major wound in Hijiri's heart.

The more she trusted others, the deeper the wound was. The more it hurt, the bigger it got.

I recalled the matter between Karin and her friend Sayama. The latter was hurt greatly because she liked Karin, and even after Karin had said the truth, the matter was not settled at first. It was only because of me as a witness, and Karin working hard that this matter was solved.

However, Hijiri was truly betrayed.

There was no other way.

But...wait.

Maybe it's fine after all. I suddenly had an idea.

It had a low chance of succeeding, and one must abandon his sense of shame.

What I am ready to do might be foolish, completely hopeless.

But as long as there is a chance for my sister to be happy, as long as the chances of it is not 0, no matter how impossible it may be, I guess I can try it out.

Did I not pull off a second-grader syndrome stunt for my club entrance test?

This is nothing!

The important factor here is Chris. If she is willing to do that...!

That is the one thing I need to do. If I do it, everything will change!

I pull out my cellphone, and gave Chris a call.

"It's me, Shimizu."

"...Shii, so it is you."

"There is something I want to ask of you. It's for Hijiri's sake."

At this moment, I paused.

"Hm. I shall consider once I hear what you have to say."

Would she really be fine with what I have to say?

No, if I were to think through this, there was no way she would be fine with this.

But even so, I—!

“Please, wet yourself in front of Hijiri!”

“...Huh!?”

“In other words, if you wet yourself in front of Hijiri, she will think it was a misunderstanding, you know?”

There was a short pause, followed by a gasp.

“ABSOLUTELY—NOT! Are you a fool? You seem to be a little numb in the head. I have absolutely no idea what you are thinking. Why must I do such a thing?”

Chris was completely outraged, and I pleaded through the phone.

“Please! There’s no other way now!”

“Do you not know that it is useless to do that!? Can you not act more like an adult?”

“I don’t think you have the right to say that about me when you created that sort of club for your own interests.”

“Ah, I see. You do not wish for me to help at all, do you?”

“So you intend to do it?”

“No. It is better for you to be more humble when requesting someone else.”

“So you will do so if I act humble? I’m willing to do anything then! Chris, no, My Lady. Please help me! It’s impossible to do this without your help!”

“Oh ho? Is that so? I see that I am so important.”

“That’s right. Without your help, My lady, I won’t be able to do anything.”

“But no.”

“You!”

“Do your best then.”

“Hey, Chris.”

The phone was cut off. I tried to redial, but got a reply ‘you are annoying’ from her before she hung up on me. I tried calling her many times, but she switched the phone off in the end.

The following week began, and so did my battle with Chris.

Whilst on my way to school in the morning, I head off to the black sedan Chris got off from. There was a crowd squealing away at her presence, but I passed by them.

“Chris!”

“Did that man just call Lady Chris directly?” “How insolent!”

I ignored the voices around me and lowered my head at Chris.

“Please, Chris. You’re the only one I can ask.”

“No. Go look for someone else.”

Chris said this, and went off to the school campus. I watched her leave with my head still lowered.

During noon break, at Chris’ classroom.

“Please Chris, I beg of you.”

The people surrounding Chris were laughing at me as I lowered my head.

“Ah, how pitiful.” “You don’t understand your status as a commoner.” *Aren’t you a commoner too!?* To prevent myself from retorting such words, I gritted my teeth.

“You are being obstructive. Please return, Shii.”

Upon hearing this, everyone present looked surprised.

“Eh, what? Did you just call a commoner affectionately!?” “What kind of relationship do they have? It’s frustrating!”

“...I’ll come back to ask again.”

And so, I arrived in the clubroom after school. It seemed Chris had yet to arrive.

“Chris!”

I shouted as I entered the room. Chris was looking down as she sat on the chair, sounding annoyed as she yelled back.

“Ah, seriously. You’ll kill me if you’re not careful, and that’ll be troublesome. Be careful, you prick.”

“My bad, but...”

“Seriously, what is it? You’re really annoying. Why are you putting in so much effort into this? Just stop already...seriously, just stop.”

That soft voice however seemed to ring through the club room, and one could feel strong feelings, no, hatred in the voice itself.

“...Chris?”

Chris’ expression had changed.

There was none of the graceful expression she was showing up till now. A gloomy voice came out.

“Shii. Why are you continuing to defy me...that goes for Hijiri too. Why wouldn't she come back...she's not in my hands now, or rather, she's broken now, huh.”

“Eh?”

“Do you know, Shii? I have all of Hijiri's embarrassing photos. Wouldn't it be interesting if I upload them all on the internet?”

...Eh?

What is this bitch saying?

“This way, that kid won't ever recover, you know? So she'll definitely be filled with regret after leaving me.”

Chris continued to murmur as she curled her lips into a smile.

“...Aren't you the club president to Hijiri and the rest? Why are you thinking like this? Is it because you don't like them...?”

“No, rather, because I like them, it's OK for me to want to have them, no?”

“But why are you being so angry up till a while back...?”

“Shut up. I changed my mind. It's your fault, you know?”

“...I see. You're being superior now, huh? I'll slaughter you if you dare do that.”

“That...that annoys me too.”

“What?”

“...I'm so envious that my gut's wrenching!”

“Huh? What're you envious of when you have everything?”

“Shut up! Shut up! I *do* have everything! I have money, wits. B-But!...I don't have what's actually important!”

Chris said these words, paused briefly, and continued.

“I just want someone to acknowledge me.”

“Aren't there a lot? There're a lot of guys praising you not only in school, but everywhere.”

“They're just praising me based on appearance, which isn't what I want. I don't have to be in the middle of that kind of attention, where anyone would do as long as that person is pretty, rich, has power and brains. Anyone would gain recognition and praise in the same way...I don't need that.”

“Aren’t you being contradictory with your words? I don’t understand what you’re saying at all.”

“That’s why I always hoped to be acknowledged by anyone, even if that person is a homeless, the ugliest, or the dumbest person in this world! Someone who’s worse in everything compared to everyone else! I just want that person to acknowledge me. However, I don’t think such a person exists. Impossible! I could never have met such a person! But you appeared! I’m so envious of Hijiri. So envious!”

“I have no idea what you’re assuming.”

“Now then, what’ll you do? If, for example, Hijiri is worse than every single person in every single aspect, what will you do...you’ll continue to love her, right?”

“That’s impossible.”

Upon hearing my answer, Chris heaved a sigh of relief, seemingly relaxed.

“...I see. You’re being so overprotective of Hijiri because she’s so cute...I feel a lot better now. Thank goodness that someone like that doesn’t exist...”

“What’re you saying, Chris? Are you an idiot? How can Hijiri be worse than anyone else? Her existence alone is worth more than everything else in the world?”

“!?”

“It’s fine as long as she’s herself.”

“...!”

“It’s enough for me as long as Hijiri remains as herself.”

“What exactly, are...you...”

“She’s my important little sister no matter what.”

“I always hoped someone would see me as I am and acknowledge me! Someone like you who does the same to Hijiri...”

What is she saying now?

“I-It’s unforgivable after all! Fine! It’s too late for me to regret it!”

Chris pointed the cellphone she had been holding behind her at me.

“Once I press this button, all of Hijiri’s images will be spread all over the net!”

She’s been wondering how to put her hand behind her!

“! I won’t let you!”

The moment she had said this, I had already leapt from the floor. Several chairs were sent flying, and a loud echo rang.

“Kya! It-hurts...!”

I pushed Chris onto the floor, and grabbed her cellphone tightly.

“You dare to upload those Hijiri photos!? I won’t let you!”

“Don’t get in my way!”

Chris and I rolled about on the floor as we wrestled over the phone.

“Why’re you doing such things!?”

I snatched Chris’ phone.

“Don’t you feel unhappy when you can’t get what is right in front of you...!? I want such a thing if it exists...! It’s too dazzling! In that case, I would rather...!”

“Stop joking around! You just mentioned everything you wish for, did you!? Then what did you do to get what you want?”

“What do you want me to do...?”

“What did you do to get what you want? You just messed around stupidly without the intent to get it at all! If you want something, reach your hand out!”

“How laughable. You say that I can get anything I want as long as I work hard? I won’t do that. That alone can’t get me anything.”

“Ah, it’s true that you might not be able to get anything, but you won’t gain anything if you don’t work hard. You won’t know whether you’ll succeed or fail until you try. Only those who tried have the right to shake the scales of success!”

“...That’s because you can’t succeed until you try, right? No matter how insignificant it is. In my case, I can do anything without trying.”

“But there are some things you can’t get even then, right? Why don’t you try? Hijiri hates on me all the same, but I am still not giving up.”

“...Are you...serious...? If you know what Hijiri’s...”

“So that’s why, please. If you find that Hijiri’s still important to you in some way...! Please. you can do whatever you want to me instead. So...!”

I lowered my head as I pressed her body down.

She laid on the floor, whispering.

Tears appeared in her eyes.

“...But it’s unfair. You only care about Hijiri.”

Chris spoke with a childish voice.

And then, she merely bit her lips quietly.

Only the sound of the clock's second hand was echoing in the room.

Suddenly, I whispered,

"Speaking of which, what is it with all that bullshit just now?"

"Eh?"

"Aren't you yourself Chris Ryusenji?"

"..."

"It's still plausible if there's someone else inside you, but since that's not the case...didn't Karin like you because you liked her?"

I just said something I thought of.

Chris then turned her head aside, saying,

"If it's just to ask Hijiri, I can do that..."

The next day, the sky was shrouded with ominous clouds. It looked as if it was about to rain anytime soon.

Hijiri still would not listen to my words. Once I tried to talk to her, she would look away as if I did not exist.

My heart was about to collapse. Chris too looked anguished.

And so, we asked Karin to call Hijiri to the back of the school after school.

Chris and I went towards the back of the school at the appointed time.

It was an empty place, and Hijiri had her back facing us as she stood lonely.

I walked towards her, and said,

"Hijiri..."

Hijiri turned around, still looking stoic as ever. However, she seemed to be a little irritated.

"...You're so annoying, Shou."

"Please. Listen to what Chris and I have to say."

"...Prez too?"

Chris, who had never attempted to explain herself seriously up till this point, deliberately came forward. This probably is something of value to Hijiri.

She did not turn away as she looked straight at us.

"...I understand. This is the last time."

Please. Chris...!

“Hijiri. This was just your misunderstanding. I’m the same as you, you know?”

“...That’s what I thought at first. Not anymore.”

“Why do you think of that?”

“Because, you never had any instance of ‘that’ up till now.”

“That’s just a coincidence.”

“But Karin and I had so many cases of it?”

“That’s just a coincidence.”

“Hijiri. Just believe in her, Hijiri...!”

But Hijiri shook her head.

“And I don’t know what your trigger is...”

“...! It’s true that I never said it before.”

“Then, what’s your trigger?”

Chris was troubled. Of course, if she were to say anything now, she has to react when it happens. This is a situation where she can’t answer.

“...I can’t say that.”

“I guessed so.”

“But please believe me. I really like you, Hijiri. Karin too, and even Kaede. That’s why—”

Chris grabbed Hijiri’s shoulders forcefully.

But Hijiri swung them away with all her strength.

“No! Don’t! I don’t want to hear anything anymore. I don’t know why you lied to me, Prez, but I can’t stand anymore of this pain in my heart.”

Hijiri covered her ears forcefully.

“Hijiri!”

“Don’t say it, don’t say it, don’t say it. I don’t want to hear anything. Everything’s a lie. Lying. Everything’s fake. I’m alone. I don’t want to trust Karin for calling me here, my lying brother, and Prez for lying to me. Don’t say anything more.”

Hijiri continued to murmur these words over and over again, covering her ears tightly.

Argh, this is really bad.

We, no, I already pushed Hijiri to this extent. If we were to leave her alone, she might not be suffering so much.

But I can’t possibly leave her alone.

It's because of this that I did something that would cause Hijiri's wounds to never heal.

Even if the liar that I am were to be hated by Hijiri.

However, I definitely mustn't allow Hijiri to end up being unable to trust anyone, to be unable to make any friends.

I definitely won't allow that!

"Chris!"

"Wh-What, out of a sudden...?"

"Please! Please!"

I knelt on the ground and put my head on it.

"A-Are you...! Shii, you want me to do tha...!?"

"Please! I can't do it anymore. What you say can't work either. Only through your actions we'll be able to fix our reality!"

"I reject that reality!"

"I don't care whether you hate me or not! I'll do whatever you want me to do, so please! I beg of you...! Just this once!"

"No-No way! I can't do it! Absolutely not!"

"Only you can help me!"

"Even that's...!"

"What do you mean by that? You're really a helpless pervert, but but! You still hold them dear to you, right? The club activities?"

"!"

"You may have evil intentions about it, but I can really tell! You really treasure Hijiri and Karin!"

"Th-That sort of thing has nothing to do with you, right?"

"You don't like to work hard, yet you tried inviting Kaede many times, right? Isn't that working hard?"

"...Th-That's because! There was still a chance..."

"Now is a chance too! It's small, but there is one!"

"B-But..."

'You were shameless at the family restaurant, but didn't you feel happy in the end? Didn't you say that it's your first time being at such a popular restaurant?"

"Ugh..."

"And when Hijiri learnt about your secret, you didn't try to find any excuse because you knew that you would hurt Hijiri even more, right?"

Though you lost your temper afterwards, it's because you see Hijiri as an important person right? You were sad because you felt betrayed by her, right? Please, Chris. Just the final bit, a little more...! Just try a little more!"

I knelt on the floor, and again pressed his head on the floor.

The wind caressed my skin.

"Argh-! Goodness! I get it! You're shameless! You're really shameless!"

"...Chris..."

Chris forcefully dragged Hijiri's hand from her ear, and shouted,

"Listen to me, Hijiri! I'm the same as you! So, just watch me! Watch!"



Icy water droplets pelted from above. It was raining. It was starting to rain.

“Pr...rez...?”

“Shii, you’re not allowed to see it! Please look away!”

Chris yelled in the midst of the rain, and I hurriedly lowered my head.

“Ugh. Ugh...uu, ugh...ahh...”

All I could hear was her sweet voice.

And then, I heard panting, as if she was enduring the shame.

“...If I had worked hard back then, just for my birthday...no, what am I saying now?”

I seemed to hear Chris mutter this amidst the rain.

The concrete ground was slightly wet.

Puddles continued to spread as Chris released something she seem to be storing.

Is that Chris’-? No, that’s definitely the rain.

The icy rain of the early Summer fell onto us.

It continues to pour, seemingly washing away the rain Chris released.

We continued to remain drenched for who knew how long.

Amidst the rain, Chris’ voice rang.

“You can lift your head now, Shii.”

Chris and Hijiri were thoroughly soaked, facing each other.

Their uniforms have become transparent, and their underwear can be seen.

Looking depressed, Hijiri said,

“...Looks like this sudden act isn’t working.”

Hijiri continued to clench her fists as she showed that unmoved puppet-like expression.

“...We’re different afterall.”

Damn. This won’t do?

Chris then said forlornly,

“I guess...”

But Hijiri opened her arms wide and embraced Chris.

“But you worked so hard for me to this extent, prez. For me...I,I...you did that in front of me, prez. I’m really, happy...”

After some hesitation, Hijiri continued,

“...Thanks.”

Chris looked embarrassed, abashed.

“No. I should be the one saying that Hijiri. Thanks, and sorry.”

Hijiri nodded at these words, and turned to me.

“...Thank you, Shou, for doing all this for me.”

Those were Hijiri’s honest, grateful emotions.

I felt that this vindicated me for all my actions .

After the rain washed away our disagreement, it suddenly stopped.

And a warm sunlight shone in through the clouds.

Epilogue

However, the next tragedy awaited us.

Or rather, instead of us, I might say that the tragedy descended upon Chris.

“WHA, WHAT SHOULD I DO HERE!?”

Chris was the one shouting at me. What on earth is going on—

“Af, after that! After that, it became a habit for me—”

“What’s the matter, Chris? Calling me to this empty classroom out of a sudden; what is that about?”

“We, well, I tried my best for the first time, I really did, but after, after that—the more I wanted to hang in there, the more I want to pee...”

“Ah, ahh—...”

“How are you going to pay me back!? How are you going to bear responsibility for this!?”

“No, isn’t this good? We just turned something fake into something real.”

“I don’t want it to become real! I don’t need this truth!”

“Besides, it’s your fault for lying in the first place, right Chris? Try your best.”

“That’s—why—I—said that I can’t hang in there! Don’t you understand, you idiot!?”

My neck got grabbed as I was shaken forcefully.

As we were doing this, the voices of the other members rang.

“Eh, Prez Chris, Up Shii, what are you doing here!?”

“Oi you, black-hearted princess? What are you doing to Shimizu?”

“Big brother, is, is this, a rendezvous...?”

“Wha, what!? Prez Chris, Shii!? This, this is unforgivable! This is absolutely unforgivable! Thinking about that, awaaah. Un, ku, I think it’s about to leak out...”

“Guu! The initiative was taken!? How annoying! How annoying, ahhh! I can’t stand this anymore!”

“No, that’s not it! I was just grumbling to this guy, it’s not like that—”
Chris too started to fidget around. No way, don’t tell me she’s trying to find an excuse to go to the toilet.

“Nn, why, auu, I just went to the toilet...”

Hijiri said as she saw this,

“Everyone, let’s work hard to cure her wetting.”

“I said that I can’t hang on anymore!”

“I, I, I can’t do it too!”

“Me too! I really can’t stand this anymore!”

That’s great, Hijiri. You have buddies who can work hard together with you.

I saw the trio trembling slightly and Hijiri showing a slight smile, and I had a happy feeling.

...It was good.

But, if I calm down to think, I could not understand whether it was good or bad for some reason.

...That’s great. I guess.

●▲

But that kind of happy ending did not last for long.

One day, when I went to school alone, a ghost of the past appeared in human form.

A very familiar girl.

A girl who kept looking straight.

A girl who I spent time most with other than my sister.

This cute girl’s face had not changed from the past, and she, who was all grown up, was standing beside the door.

The hair that curled up on its own like dog ears in a habit-like manner was the same as before.

That person shot a sharp stare at me.

And suddenly, she smiled.

A smile I rarely saw in the past, a profound one that was hard to determine.

“...It’s been a while, Shou. Finally, finally, we finally met.”

I held my breath, my heart was beating like crazy, and my body suddenly trembled.

That was a girl I did not save in the past.

“...Inui, Aki...”

Afterwords

Hello there. This is Masamune Masaki, the current winner of the MF Bunko J Outstanding award. And who just had his book published. This rare book is a story about an unavoidable job of saving girls from a certain XXXX. Eh, really? Of course it is.

More or less, probably, maybe...I hope so...

First off, the thankgivings.

I will like to thank the supervisor, Mr. Takigura, and the editor-in-charge, Mr. Misaka, for giving me all sorts of suggestions. I suppose it is because of your blessings that I am able to finish this outstanding work. Also, I will like to thank the illustrator, Miss Sayori. Thank you for the cute illustrations you provided.

When the character illustrations were completed, I was grinning from ear to ear.

And next, to all my friends, all the friends who sent me recent author photographs with seals on them. I am grateful to see your congratulations, celebrating my award as if it is yours.

But allow me to say something.

I suppose all of you really hate me, right?

I did receive congratulatory messages from all of you, all sorts of things like ‘do your best’ and ‘go at die’.

But why did you write them on diapers?

What am I supposed to do with them?

You wrote them on something at least, but I will not be able to understand if anything sudden happens!

I want to throw them away, and yet I am reluctant to. For now, I shall seal them in the belly of my desk.

And to my friend, Mr T; thanks to my random conversation with you about a certain bank's slogan, I was able to come up with this story. It is thus impossible for me to come up with the draft without you and that certain bank.

There was only one week from the idea till the submission deadline, and the idea was about this. I therefore had never expected it to win a prize. There were several times where I thought 'This will be awarded' whenever I submitted my works, but it is really intriguing to see something, which I initially thought 'maybe this one's hopeless. It's a little too risky', to actually win a prize.

And to all the readers who have this book in their hands.

...I really thank you.

I hope that you will continue to support me.

Masamune Masaki