

# **The Evil Organization's Recruitment Ad**

– Aku no Soshiki no Kyuujinkoukoku –

**- Volume 5 -  
Advancing into America  
– Slipknot/ Sonic Use –**

**-Author-  
Kiyuna Toto**

**-Artist-  
Kotatsu**

**[ daikyuntl ]**

# CHAPTER 41

## HE'S REALLY SCARED

It was the long awaited weekend. After the ordeal at the research facility, Neito went back to his apartment inside Metallica.

It may be an apartment, but it was just a rented single-room one.

Neito had the money to move out, but since it was too tedious to move, he left his room as it was.

His notice would come soon, but he had time to spare.

Of course, his training went on as usual, but lately he has been rather tired.

Neito didn't schedule anything this afternoon; instead he slept.

[.....I slept well.]

Neito awakened and looked at his watch. It was 10 AM, the second day of his weekend.

He didn't even leave his apartment yesterday. It had been a long time since he experienced such a laid back lifestyle.

That being said, he opened his refrigerator. There must be something in there...

Last night, he dreamt of deceased people visiting him. His trauma from the recent past having appeared.

He remembered his family, who lived in the lowest corner of society. His father died in poverty, and his mother, who after a few years of work, died leaving him with [a few years' worth] of money.

They appeared in his dreams, trying to convey something to him.

Since such dreams appeared after he received his operation, he frequently told Maki about this.

[It embodies one's spirit]... maybe he was seeing those dreams because it was a form of regret in his soul. His silhouette may have affected his memories, triggering those related to his parents.

At least, it seemed that way.

Neito didn't understand the meaning behind it, but he didn't bother finding out. In other words, the dreams were merely data points that were useful in determining his mental status.

[...I only have rice...]

He only had rice wrapped in plastic.

He thought to himself,

*I'm not that hungry yet, but going out is such a pain.*

Neito turned on the television. It broadcasted news about Okinawa.

< The scars inflicted by Metallica on this island half a year ago are still visible... >

The news caster was talking while past images were compared to the current images of destroyed buildings. They included images of children crying and people who were bleeding.

*If I remember right, that was once where a famous politician lived. Where was that again? Ah, it was in the village of Koza.*

< But recently, there have been no signs of turmoil in this area. According to analysts, the idea of <<Okinawa has already fallen to Metallica>> is widespread among them. Metallica may be involved in the creation of peace >

*That's right. There are no more annoying politicians on the island. Metallica doesn't tolerate anyone that would oppose them. The island belongs to Metallica.*

*In return for acknowledging Metallica, the island received something in return. Thanks to Metallica, they founded a factory famous for producing good beer in the area and a famous University acknowledged Metallica for their help.*

< Again, the argument of <<needing Guardians in Okinawa>> is constantly being argued upon, and some have begun to rally in the streets >

*Well, we did do a lot for them...*

< And to the special ward, they want human rights too... >

*Ah, the branch manager is doing as I instructed... I'm thankful for him...*

< Neither Santana or Ramone have been sighted >

*And they'll never appear in Okinawa again...*

< As the civil unrest calmed down, Okinawa seems peaceful right now... but there is darkness lurking in the corners. Behind every person's smile, there is always a doubt that something is moving in the shadows >

They were now showing images of people living normally. The BGM on the other hand portrayed a mysterious music. When people smiled, they put an edit of a shadow standing behind them.

Neito turned off the television.

*...Lost. I'm not lost at all. I am what I am.*

[Well then, I guess I'm off to the convenience store.]

He was really starving. Neito left his apartment.

To his right were the slums, and to his left was the regular city.

The convenience store was on his left towards the city.

As he was walking, 3 youngsters followed him. They were three-four years younger than him, and they were happily chatting. Since they were spread out, Neito leaned close to the corner of the street.

[-And that woman that was with me-]

[What's with that? Hyahahaha]

[By the way, isn't he unbelievable?]

Neito who was on the far corner of the street was hit in the face by the youngster's hand while he was trying to convey something. They most probably didn't notice him there.

[.....Ah]

It really hurt. Maybe he wasn't training his reflexes good enough.

The youngster was holding a can of juice while walking, but as it hit Neito, he dropped it.

[.....Hey, what's your deal getting in our way?!]

A single youngster called out to him. They were taller than Neito, and dyed their hair in bright colors.

[I'm sorry]

Neito replied.

[It's your fault I dropped my can of juice, and my shirt is all messed up.]

The youngster's shirt had juice stains all over it.

[...I'm sorry, please let me off this time.]

Neito lowered his head.

[How unbelievable! Who's going to cover the cleaning expenses huh?!]

The three of them surrounded Neito. He backed up.

*This is bad, I'm really in bad situation here.*

[Hey, this guy is scared shitless. Hahahaha!]

He was already familiar with this situation even before he entered Metallica. He didn't like it one bit. In fact, it was nostalgic.

For example, if he were to transform into his <Evil Silhouette> here and now, their existence would be instantly erased from earth, but that would just create more problems. Besides, he wasn't up to it right now.

*That's weird... I have fought with countless enemies, and yet I'm still bothered by these guys. I'm sure a hundred of them couldn't even amount to the dust below Ramone's feet.*

*Why am I this flustered? I'm not scared, but flustered.*

[I'm sorry...!]

He hesitated, but Neito slipped through the three of them and ran. He tumbled and mud splashed onto him, but he got up and ran again.

[How embarrassing! Is he really serious? He must be really desperate! Hahaha]

[It's because you scared him too much... How pitiful, being bullied so easily, Hyahaha!]

Whether it was funny because he fell down, or because he chose to run, he didn't know. All he could hear was the energetic laughter behind him.

[...They're not going to chase after me... are they?]

*Well, if it's not related to work I'm a little bit... It's no good. I wouldn't mind leaving them half dead, but there should be a smarter way to deal with this...*

*What would Ikeno do...? I'm sure he'd break one of their elbows and end it there...*

*What about Niina? He's the friendly type so no doubt he would befriend them...*

*Then what about Tsurugi...? There's no way someone would pick a fight with someone that scary-looking.*

Neito entered the convenience store and bought instant curry.

*I'll eat this after I get back home. Yeah, in preparation for this afternoon.*

Neito decided to organize his thoughts for the event to come.

[Okay! Time to go home and prepare myself!]

He blurted out to himself. He thought of bringing up his spirit for once.

He had plan schedule in the afternoon.

For the first time in his life, he had plans.

He came up with his plans on a whim, and it was unexpected. Furthermore, he didn't know how to handle it, so he was a bit worried.

But he was excited. He would be lying to himself if he said that he wasn't. He was so excited that he wasn't able to sleep the day before. It took him some time to roll around his futon before he fell asleep. He was uneasy if it wasn't related to work.

Maybe there were reasons for him to act like that, but honestly, he always had fun when he hanged out with her.

After all, looking outside the box, she was unmistakably a real beauty. Maybe he was mistaken, but he knew she had something for him. After all, they were just co-workers who happened to be on good terms with each other. Looking at her past records, you knew she was a good person.

He also received advice from Niina. Although his subordinate, he was always grinning while he gave some tips. Of course, Neito listened carefully and appreciated the gesture.

A lot happened lately, a lot.

And from now on, a lot more was still to come.

For now he only had one thing to be focused on. Of course he didn't forget about work afterwards.

Neito returned home and prepared himself for his date.

*I wonder what she's going to wear...*

Neito snapped himself from thinking too much about it.

## CHAPTER 42

# IT MAKES ME REALLY EXCITED

Their rendezvous was in front of the station. This was because Neito didn't have a car.

Neito arrived earlier than expected. He had fifteen minutes to spare. It wasn't like it was enough to wander around, so Neito sat at a bench near the station's water fountain. It was very sunny despite the season. The sun rays felt warm.

*If I were a smoker, I would be smoking at a time like this... Tsurugi does look cool whenever he smokes...*

Thoughts like that entered Neito's mind.

Now he had a date. It may be a whimsical one, but the fact they happened to converse with each other during lunch made this possible. He maybe was spacing out at that moment...

[Hey hey, *Nate* does really likes curry huh?]

[Yeah.]

[*Shouchu* is just sweet potato right?]

[.....yeah]

[...Hmm... Let's have a date when you're free okay?]

[...Yeah... Eh?]

[Yaay! That's a promise! Amusement park ♪ amusement park ♪]

Looking at her happily jumping around, he couldn't turn her down despite thinking of a way to take back what he said. He was in a bad situation, but he had frivolous feelings towards her. He also had something to tell her, so maybe it was a good opportunity.

Neito looked at his watch. He had ten minutes to go.

*Maybe I came in too early...*

[Wa-!]

[Ooo-!]

A huge voice sounded off behind him. He screamed in surprise and looked back. Behind him was a blonde girl.

Today's date? He was with Anice. Their reaction towards each other was funny so they laughed it off.

[Hey there *Nate*, you sure are early!]

[Don't scare me like that. My heart almost stopped thinking you were an assassin.]

Really, he was in a position where an assassin could aim for his life.

*Well, as long as Head-Field values his life, he should have taken precautions in keeping me alive.*

[You surprised me as well. *Nate* is really interesting.]

Anice circled around the bench and came in front of him. She was wearing a knitted white mini-skirt. For some reason, she looked more feminine than usual.

[.....]

[Hm? What's the matter? Hmmm. Don't I look cute?]

He thought of saying something about her atmosphere but he resisted.

[Oh, yeah. You look really cute.]

[Eh? Really? You really think so? Yay!]

[Well then... shall we?]

[Why are you embarrassed? Is it because you're a *Samurai*?]

Maybe it was because she was Anice, that her pace was faster than Neito's. Neito tried to force a smile, but stopped at that thought. Neito commenced his [**Date**] with Anice.

While walking, Neito noticed that people were naturally attracted to Anice. Of course, it was no surprise. It was the first time they walked together alone in a normal place.

Her appearance was that of a blonde doll, but her expression looked otherwise. Neito felt somehow embarrassed while walking with her.

[♪~ ♪~]

She was walking with rhythm while humming an English song. Neito was walking two steps behind her.

He noticed Anice looking at him and brightened up his face.

[Hey *Nate*, wanna hold hands?]

That won't happen.

[No, umm... that would be too... umm... I'll hold back... We Japanese have a certain rule when it comes to that...]

His palms were too sweaty and it was embarrassing. In any case, that was not going to happen. It took him five minutes to explain why they couldn't hold hands.

After they rode the train, they arrived at a theme park named after some well-known characters.

Neito never visited the place, but according to Niina, the location should pose no problem even though he was in-experienced.

[Let get on that first!]

Her eyes were shining when she insisted on a ride. To tell you the truth, Neito had never been on those type of rides. Even more, he never grasped the concept of going to an amusement park due to "family matters".

[Owaaaa! Let me off-!]

*It's scary. It's definitely a paradox. Why would people build rides that would be this scary?*

*(TLN: The ride is a rollercoaster.)*

Neito thought to himself and looked sideways.

[Ahahaha ! Kyaa!]

Anice was enjoying herself, screaming at a musically fine tune.

They finished the ride and exited. Neito was feeling sick.

[Ah~ that sure was fun wasn't it?!]

Anice was really satisfied. She was grinning. Her smile truly expressed that she liked it, and somehow, this made Neito feel good too. It didn't change the fact that the ride was scary.

[...it was scary...]

[Really? Even though you jumped from the roof of the research lab, you didn't like it? Why?]

Anice tilted her head and looked at him.

*This and that are different. The reason I did that in the research lab was because it needed to be done. It's not like I like high places.*

[Hm... Is that so... I'm sorry *Nate*, you even had to accompanied me...]

In a moment, she became depressed. She was honest to herself when it came to things like these.

[...No, it was really fun. It was my first time riding one, but let let's keep going.]

Neito enjoyed looking at Anice who was having fun. Since it was a good opportunity, he wanted to keep going.

[Really? Don't force yourself too much 'kay?]

[Yeah, I won't...]

[Yay! The next ride is...]

They spent the next few hours on the thrill rides. Neito was sure that it was a form of spiritual training. If he used his “**Evil Silhouette**” next time, he was sure it would be much stronger.

*(TLN: forgot to mention this, but by default (according to philosophy) “spiritual” is the same as “willpower”. I’m translating literally, so please be informed of the actual meaning)*

[Ah, it’s about time we went to the theater.]

It was already late in the afternoon.

They watched a pirate themed wacky film and had dinner afterwards. Anice ordered something like a fairy tale dinner. Neito tried refusing when offered a bite, but it really tasted good once he took a bite.

He noticed Anice looking at a stall selling weird accessories, so he bought one for her. She was startled, at the same time pleased.

She laughed satisfied.

[Time sure does fly by fast.]

Anice looked disappointed that the day would end. She was enjoying herself the whole day. Despite having a small body, she was energetically moving around all day.

It was the first time Neito got to experience a day such as this.

[.....]

Neito was silent, lost in his thoughts.

Anice, who was walking beside him, looked worried.

[Are you okay *Nate*? Are you tired...?]

[Not at all... I may look frail, but I started out in the General Affairs Department. Plus I also have my training, so you don't have to worry about me.]

[Is that so... So did you not have fun?]

*Ahh, that's why. No wonder I'm not popular.*

Neito reflected and answered;

[No, it was really fun. I'm all better now. Thanks.]

*Anice was most likely being considerate towards me. She tried cheering me up using the date as an excuse.*

*A lot of things happened lately, and I may have changed in various ways. I don't regret my decisions, and I plan to move on forward. Though I sometimes feel tired.*

[Really? Thank god. I also had fun! Let's come again 'kay?!]

Anice was smiling all day. While riding on the amusement park's rides, she was dazzling in every way. You wouldn't think that she was from an evil organization.

[Yeah, if we can.]

Neito felt embarrassed.

They exited the amusement park and Neito offered to escort her home.

In accordance to Niina-sensei's plan.

*Oh yeah, I needed to tell her something.*

Neito called out to her while they were walking towards Anice's house.

[Hey, I think I will be sent to New York as part of our inter-company employee exchange with Crimson.]

[Eh? Really? As expected of Neito! If you said so earlier, we could've gone celebrating~]

That was the easy part, the following might be hard to swallow for her.

[And then...]

[Ah! That means Neito will be working with Papa! Wa~ That's amazing! I never thought that it would come to that!]

Exactly. That would eventually happen. Crimson is also an evil organization. He would be fighting with American heroes, whether they are stronger than Japanese ones or not.

[...Yeah. When I first met you at the sales department, I already anticipated that I would be working with your dad someday, but I didn't anticipate it to come so soon...]

That's right. Neito barely finished his first year inside Metallica. He never aspired to himself that he would aim for Crimson's top position. Back then, it would look like a cruel joke.

Since then, Neito actualized that joke. Even if it was a farfetched dream, Neito decided to thread that path.

*I only thought of it on a whim, but it's true that I considered that possibility. Now, I'm in a position to actually aim for it to happen.*

[You know, I really love my Papa.]

She happily expressed it as she looked up towards the sky.

That was most likely the case. Looking at Anice, you would see that she was raised with love and care. They may be villains, but to her, her father is the strongest and kindest figure in her life. She may even have a father-complex.

[But when I'm looking at you, I suddenly feel very excited.]

Anice stopped walking and stared Neito in the eye. Neito got nervous staring into her deep blue eyes.

[At first, when I heard about Dylan, I only took little interest in you. But when I first saw you, I knew you had something in you that others don't possess. I know, because I've seen a lot of bad guys since I was young.]

[Is that... so...?]

Neito wasn't being humble. He really had low fighting capabilities, and he really wasn't that witty. As to how his "Evil" nature came, he remembered Manaka-san who guided him in the right path.

[Yup, I've never seen a guy that's so upstanding... You're always kind, although you are sometimes clumsy and easily frightened... Fufufu]

Neito recalled how he acted while riding the roller coaster. Anice happily laughed at him.

[That *Nate* I met is moving forward. It makes me really excited. My heart always pounds hard when I'm with you...]

[...Well...]

Neito stopped in the midst of his sentence. He knew Anice was affectionate towards him, but he already distanced himself from her. There were two reasons for doing so.

First, her father is the one standing on top of Crimson. If Neito unnecessarily provoked Crimson's boss, his head would be done for. That's why there was no reason to get closer to her than necessary.

But this reason was currently invalid. Even if her father is the Crimson's boss, there was no reason for him to turn his fangs on Neito. It wasn't like in the past where Neito was powerless.

This in turn, created another reason.

It was related to what Neito was about to do. As Neito fought on, Anice became a prominent figure in Neito's life.

[You don't need to worry... You don't have to tell me how you feel yet...]

Anice's words were soft and gentle.

[...Really?]

[It's 'cuz *Nate* is always looking forward... But I hope one day, you'll look sideways and...]

[I'll be sure to remember that.]

Anice looked embarrassed and laughed it off with a "Hehe'.

After that, they stopped talking and kept walking. As the day ended, he couldn't tell Anice what he was supposed to say.

*It wasn't necessarily to be said today. After all Anice helped me feel better. It can't be considered as a gift of thanks, but I want her to sleep happily tonight...*

*One day, I'll definitely tell her.*

[I'm fine from here on... Good night Nate!]

[Eh? Aah, Good night too. Thanks again.]

With that Anice walked away. Her face was red when she left.

*I guess girls who are Californians and energetic are easily embarrassed...*

Neito walked towards the train station and started thinking;

*Today was really fun and Anice was really cute. I was about to forget it but I can't stray from my path. It is as she said, I should keep looking and moving forward.*

*I'm going to depart for Crimson. That is in order for me to settle and have power inside...*

*In order to conquer the world, I need more power. It is given that I would stand on top of Metallica, but there is no need for another evil organization. I'll obtain that power to do so.*

*Crimson is a huge organization. I'll have them make me their general.*

*Anice's father stands on top of Crimson. There will be a time where we will oppose each other. Of course, I don't plan on losing. My fighting style will always be the same.*

*No mercy, no hesitation.*

*Whether you're the American Rock's organization, or Crimson's king, I'll have you fall.  
Does Anice understand that much? There's no reason for her to know.*

*I'll still do it, if I change how I fight just because she's my companion, I can't show my  
face to those heroes and sacrifices that made me reach this point.*

*Even if it results to her shedding a tear, I'll still do it.*

Neito walked alone, the wind was getting chilly.

## CHAPTER 43

# OUR SONIC YOUTH, OUR SLIPKNOT

Half a year had passed after the competition ended. Neito, who was on his fourth year inside Metallica, entered the main office with his subordinate Niina. He had to settle his paperwork before departing.

As part of the Inter-employee exchange, He was to be sent to Crimson's American division. Today was the day he would depart.

It was a first for Metallica, having an employee at merely twenty years of age, climb the corporate ladder, and arrive at this position in a mere four years.

He already received his new salary two weeks ago. The inter-employee exchange caused some commotion inside the company.

While they were on their way up after filing their documents in the General Affairs Department, they received a lot of glares and compliments from people.

*(TLN: Remember, Metallica's main office is situated underground)*

[Are you ready Senpai?]

Niina who was with Neito called out to him. It was decided that Niina alone, as a subordinate, would accompany Neito to America.

[Yeah, let's get going.]

[Got ya-]

Anice already departed ahead of them as she had things to settle at home.

Tsurugi wouldn't be accompanying him this time. With regards to that matter, they already spoke with each other last week.

[[I'm going to Crimson with Niina as my escort.]]

[[Only Niina? Would you care to elaborate?]]

[[There's something I want you to do in Japan while I'm away.]]

Neito explained to Tsurugi. They needed to establish their base of operations. In order for him to conquer the world, there were some things left in the country which prevented him from doing so. Tsurugi was the only one who could handle it.

[[I see...]]

Tsurugi nodded on hearing Neito's explanation.

[[Aah, I'm a little worried, but it's decided. I'll no longer ask "Will you do it?" I'm counting on you Tsurugi.]]

Tsurugi grinned and answered him.

[Fuu, you finally understand... As you wish Boss.]

Even for Neito, not having his trusted right hand man with him would leave him vulnerable. Tsurugi was calm, collected, loyal and experienced in battle. But Neito had no choice. He would have to deal with his problems on his own.

*I'll show him that I'm fit to be called his Boss.*

The two shook hands and went their separate ways. Tsurugi was already working on his plan. He wasn't even there to see Neito off today.

[What's the matter Senpai? Let's go~]

[Sorry, I'll be there.]

It turns out he was left behind while thinking too much. He walked a bit faster to catch up to Niina.

[Somehow, you managed to move up the corporate ladder so fast Senpai... did you do something bad again?]

Niina was strolling along with both hands braced behind his head.

[It's obvious.]

Since it was obvious he did it, he answered honestly. There was a time when he had enemies within the company, but that period was already over. With Professor H's influence, there were close to none or at least so far none were going after him.

He conquered the Harrison offensive, defeated Beetle, overwhelmed Santana and became a newly bred modified human, defeating many of the Rock's Organization's members.

To those who didn't know Neito personally, they exaggerated and created rumors of their own, glorifying him. They even gave him nicknames like "The Dark Genius", "The Villain Miracle Maker" and "The Dirty" which were really discongruous when they actually saw him.

It wasn't like he was incapable, but he barely considered his victories a victory. Of course, it all wouldn't be possible without the help from his subordinates. Neito knew that full well and didn't claim that he did it all by himself.

Even though people might glorify or tarnish his image, his plans didn't change. One day, he'll be on top of Metallica.

Neito called out to Niina while they were inside the elevator. Niina was soon to be promoted to Level Three.

[Hey Niina, did you know that in terms of your promotion speed, you're ranked fourth inside Metallica's overall history? Well, there's a huge gap between the one ranked fifth and you.]

[Eh? Really? Hell yeah! As expected of me!]

[Hahaha, well it's true that you're amazing.]

The elevator doors opened, leading to the lobby. They were surprised by what they saw.

[Wa- Wow...]

Niina had his mouth wide open. There were a lot of employees lined up in the lobby. They were forming two parallel lines in the lobby bowing their heads as Neito arrived.

It was a farewell gesture to those representatives to be sent off to Crimson.

[.....]

Neito wanted to greet them individually, shaking their hands, apologizing and bowing back.

“What the hell is everybody doing?! I know you’re busy, so get back to work! There’s no need for you to do these things... I may be your representative, but there’s no need for you to go this far!”

But, atmosphere here is important... very important.

Neito called out to Niina who was shocked, and moved forward.

[Let’s go Niina.]

He noticed Izumi, the section chief from the sales department, stopped and took a second to bow back at him. He then proceeded to the exit and addressed them;

[Thank you for your time everybody, and now I’m off!]

For a second, some raised their heads in surprise.

[.....?]

[.....Ha-Have a safe trip!]

[Do you best in Crimson!]

[Komori! You get promoted too fast! Don’t forget us who were your drinking partners back in your sales department days!]

[Do your best! I expect great things from you!]

[Please do something for all of us in General Affairs!]

[Have a safe trip!]

Neito left the main office with words of compliments behind him.

[...Tha—that surprised me...]

Neito returned to his normal self.

[Me too. Oh yeah, Maki-san didn't see you off did she?]

Niina entered the company car. Neito already talked with Maki on the day before.

[Aah, she already sent me off yesterday.]

[Eh? You had no work yesterday right? Does that mean she came to your place?!]

[Hm? Isn't that a given? She really is a caring person~]

[Then? Then? Did she go into your house? Was it at night?]

[You're really curious huh? Of course she went in. I wouldn't leave her waiting outside.]

Neito went in the car and remembered what happened last night.

It was about 9 PM when he heard a knock on his door. He was filling his cup noodles with hot water when Maki knocked.

[[Maki-san? Is something the matter?]]

[Ah, well tomorrow is your departure date right? I can't send you off tomorrow so... If I'm bothering you then I'll...]

Nights in spring season were cold. While Maki was wearing a white sweater, she seemed cold. He asked her if she would like to come in, even though he thought she might feel disgusted.

[[Really? Then I'll take up on your offer... Pardon me for intruding...]]

They chatted for a while. And for Neito, she compiled all of the American Rock's data sheets as well as his "Evil Silhouette's" performance records.

[[Wow, you did this by yourself? You even had to go through this far for me...]]

[[Y-Yeah. I really thought of it, but maybe it's going to be just an additional luggage for you...]]

[[No such thing... This would really help me. Thanks!]]

[[No, not at all... I'm glad I was able to be a help to you!]]

She even gave him a protection charm. Neito really doubted if god would protect a villain such as him, but he was really happy to receive such thing. Other than that, she gave him instant curry which made him happier. It was Metallica's special "Red Root Curry" which when microwaved even in small amounts, would increase twofold. It was really a divine thing.

Neito danced around when he received the packet, Maki seeing this, laughed happily.

After chatting for a while, they were now in a serious conversation.

[[Please do return safely.]]

[[Yeah]]

[[That's a promise okay? I know that you're an amazing and capable person but...]]

She really was worried of him. Somehow, she had a bad feeling about his trip.

If ever they were going out she would console him the same way. Since they weren't, he just thanked her for worrying for him.

She really was a good person within. He was sure a lot of guys would have misunderstand how she felt if they heard that. *I'm sure a lot would be able to hold themselves back, but it would be really hard to do so, seeing a real beauty caring and worrying for you.* Neito held himself back from doing something stupid.

They were silent for a few minutes. She was fiddling uneasily. *Well she does that sometimes...*

As he was about to asked what happened, she got up and proceeded to leave. "Please take care of your-self."

[Then? Then?]

Niina was really interested in the story. They were already on their way towards the airport.

[Hm? Well, that ended with that. She went home.]

[Haa!! Wh-Senpai! Are you that dense!?!]

[I really don't want to be called that way by you. I served her tea before she left so...]

[That not really the problem here!!]

[Oh stop whining already... Here I'll share my curry with you. I'll give you two packets.]

[...Haa~...]

(TCom: Women. You'll never know what they want from you.)

Niina sighed. He was nowhere near Ikeno, but Niina was popular with the girls. He was totally a different species from Neito. Neito didn't bother asking Niina what he was troubled about.

They were silent as the car drove on.

[Oh yeah, hey Senpai, you can speak English right?]

[What's up suddenly?]

[No, you were more den-... no I was just really curious.]

*I know you were about to say that I'm dense...*

[Well, I'm no different from you. My third grade lessons were half English after all. I'm not good at it, but at least I can speak and understand it.]

Back in his childhood days, in other words, in the year 2090, English was widely taught in Japanese schools. Both social studies and science lectures were half taught in

English. He didn't particularly have good grades, but it was enough to pass.

[Ah, is that so...]

*If it wasn't me who was in charge of Niina, I'm sure he would get in trouble for his attitude towards his superiors. Not that he wasn't scolded, Tsurugi always gave him an earful when he was with them.*

*It's amazing how he can put up with that Tsurugi.*

Neito got along surprisingly well with Niina. Maybe it was him, or Niina was just really good with human interactions. Niina also opened up to him. Not that he greatly respected him the way Tsurugi did, but it was enough to gain his trust. After all Neito wasn't really 'leadership' material.

After they arrived at the airport, they got off and snagged their luggage. Taking the VIP expressway towards Metallica's private plane. *I'm sure we'll arrive by the time I wake up.*

[Oh yeah, Niina, you should read the file I received from Maki-san.]

Niina already seated himself and was about to reach for a can of beer.

[Got ya~ Hm, I'll read it now so please take it out.]

It took Neito four hours to go through the entire document but he was sure Niina would go through it in less than thirty minutes.

Neito took out the file and handed it to Niina.

[Well, I'm going to sleep.]

Neito closed his eyes and reviewed what he'd read in the files.



The United States of America, it was where Crimson's main office was. In comparison to Japan, the Rocks Organization had far more members and was stronger as well.

In Metallica, the danger posed by a Rocks member is ranked in five stages. For example, Ramone and Beetle were B-class. Maroon Five's individual members were ranked C, but as a whole, they were A-class.

The highest rank attainable was an S-class. It was given to those exemplary individuals who are the strongest in the Rocks Organization. Dylan, for example, was A-class. There were only four individuals with A-class in Japan.

Then what about America?

Truth be told, thirty two percent of Rocks Organization's members in America were B-class. It was scary for evil organizations, at the same time it was reassuring for civilians.

But the evil organization in America aren't afraid of the thirty two percent B-class. They were afraid of the top two in the Rocks Organization. They both acted as representative of the American Rocks Organization. They were ranked A-class.

One individual was named Sonic Youth.

Everybody knew his real name; Mark Gordon.

He was a famous American Footballer, winning the MVP award last year. He was also once a military pilot, drafted into the space exploration program.

Before he entered the Rocks Organization, he was once a Hollywood star. He had a blonde, muscular body, and a bright smile. He was a perfect human being.

He received his powers due to the effects of warp travel.

It was called *Over-Sense*.

His senses and reaction time is ten times faster than a normal human being. It seemed like it was possible for him to dodge bullets that were shot at him.

He already tested his ability to its limits when he stood on top of the empire state building, differentiating and listening to each person walking down on the streets.

Even with his superpowers, he had developed weapons and tools, as well as armor to aid him in his battles.

His *Sonic Skate* was a type of shoe with roller blades on it, and on the surface looked like a regular pair of roller skates.

Its characteristics were different. It was able to accelerate the user to one hundred kilometers an hour by utilizing energy. It was rumored that it could reach five hundred kilometers per hour when stretched to its limits. It was possible to ride up walls, run on top of water as well as jump tens of metres.

It's obvious that only Mark Gordon could use such thing.

He built a course in front of his huge lawn to enjoy using the Sonic Skates but weather would sometimes disrupt his routine.

At that time, the evil organization "Rooster" created bio-hazard monsters and brought them into the city.

The monsters wreaked havoc in New York City. The Guardians from the Rocks Organization desperately tried to fight off the monster.

In that situation, Mark stood out. Wearing protective equipment and his Sonic Shoes, he headed for New York.

He passed various landscapes in a second, jumping from building to building and crossed the Hudson River.

Defeating monsters consecutively, he would defeat one and then quickly jumped onto the next.

He was able to jump through any obstacle, dodging every blow.

As a result, New York was saved. They celebrated the birth of a new Rocks Hero and thanked him.

Since then, his Sonic Skate was legal for use in New York. He jumps from one building

to another, saving citizens from the Evil Organization. He was famous before but now his fame has spread throughout America.

A cool, handsome, rich and tough individual. He was the ideal American Hero. His face was printed on Cereal boxes nationwide.

“The high speed hero. Our Sonic Youth”

That was the title given to Mark.

On the other hand, there was another hero aside from the Sonic Youth. “Him”;

He had doubts about being part of the Rocks Organization but he was registered as such.

He only deals with special types of enemy. His identity is unknown, but he is always there in the darkness.

There was nobody who had seen his face, in fact it was pointless to expose him. He always wore a black attire, covering his face. His weapon was a very unusual one.

Sometimes it was a sniper rifle, changing into a special blade, and sometime a stun gun and a special spray weapon. A regular Rocks Organization would have a signature weapon for use, but it doesn't apply to him.

He chooses his weapon according to what is most effective in that battle.

He doesn't fight with monsters as well as regular old villains.

He only targets Crimson members.

Maybe his interest of stopping Crimson aligned with the Rocks Organizations objective to stop all evil doers. Nobody knows if he was doing it for Justice.

He doesn't associate himself with the police or with his fellow Guardians. He doesn't even follow any of the Rocks Organizations directives. He doesn't speak nor contact anybody. His battle measures sometimes bring harm to the citizens.

There are many who don't approve of him as part of the Hero lineup in the Rocks Organization. At the same time, some glorified him as a real hero.

He always kills his prey.

Crimson was his top priority.

As a result, he saved many civilians in the process. *I'm sure many thought of him as a cool individual.*

He sometimes appeared in the newspapers but mostly it was them arguing about his worthiness. In other words, it was a one sided favor.

One of his unique features is “He doesn’t have any abilities”.

He didn’t possess any psychic power, superhuman reflexes nor a sturdy body like many of Rocks Organization’s heroes. You can confirm it with videos.

He only trained his ability to adapt and change according to his environment, as well as practicing the usage of many weapons to suit his needs. In other words, he is just a human being who has specialized in warfare.

Be it as he is, he was paired with the Sonic Youth and was considered an A-class hero throughout America.

He was able to respond to any situation, pick the most effective tactic and conquer his enemy without using any powers. It only meant one thing; He was strong.

Filling a Crimson member with lead, cutting off his head, or rigging him with explosives. They were all methods of assassination.

Every Crimson member killed had marks on their lifeless body.

*Crimson Hunter, The Executioner, and No Power Hero* were some nicknames given to him. The most famous one of them all was;

Slipknot.

The executioner who put a rope around his victim’s neck. It was clearly shown when he continuously murdered individuals from Crimson. The name originated from a punk themed website stating:

“The Fearful Hero, Our Slipknot”

Sonic Youth and Slipknot.

The Fast and the Fearful.

Light and Darkness.

America has two heroes with contradicting characteristics.

# CHAPTER 44

## SHOOCHUU? SOUNDS GOOD

Unlike Metallica, those considered as “weak” members of Crimson had their own office, handling various desk jobs and not field work. In short they had unity throughout their ranks.

They identified each of them as members of one family, helping and encouraging one another. They have sworn their loyalty to those who stood on top. Stereotypically, they functioned much like the Italian mafia.

Anice’s father, Mr. Big, stood on top of the company. He usually gives orders and advice to his fellow office workers amidst a busy day. He considers each member of Crimson as part of his family, not just some regular employee. If necessary, he would fight alongside them, and considers it as “helping a family member”. He would never abandon his family.

In the beginning, Crimson operated a small scale business that focused on underground sales, gambling, and also served as a protection racket. When Mr. Big got inaugurated as their Boss, they escalated from small business to a large scale underground Evil Organization, developing and researching special weapons in secret. They ruled with an iron fist and dominated the underground market.

...At least, that was what Neito heard from various sources. He imagined how Mr. Big would look like if he faced him. Anice’s father stood on top of Crimson, thus he was a villain. Neito frequently asked himself what kind of person he is. Would he have a ruthless stare, thirsting for blood? Would he be a dangerous individual? Or would he have powers that would allow him to live even if his head were to be cut off?

[Hey there, I’ve been looking forward to meeting you *Nate*.]

The person who stood in front of Neito was the opposite of what he had given thought to.

Mr. Big’s office was on the top most floor of a certain skyscraper. After arriving at the airport, Neito met up with Anice and decided that he would give his greeting to the company he would be assigned to. Mr. Big was far more gentle and welcoming than

Neito expected.

[Nice to meet you Mr. Big.]

[I've heard a lot about you from my daughter. You've done well to come. Hm? Go ahead and take a seat.]

Neito sat on a luxurious looking sofa and proceeded;

[Cigar?]

[Ah, no. I'm fine.]

[Really? Then I'll be lighting one.]

Big lit the cigar's tip on fire and exhaled smoke at ease.

He may not be that good looking, but his proper posture, grey hair and nice suit gave him a feel of class.

*I see, he doesn't look like the head of a gang at all... If I were to comment, I would say he's like an average CEO I guess... His daughter doesn't look like him at all...*

[So Papa, It is as I said he would be right? He's a *Nice Guy* fufufu.]

Anice was happily laughing beside him. She frequently calls Mr. Big "Papa" or "Daddy".

Neito wanted her to stop, but he can't voice it out. No matter how much a man of character Mr. Big is, he still heads a worldwide Evil Organization. If Mr. Big misinterprets him going after his daughter's hand, there's a huge chance that Mr. Big might hate him for it.

But Big's expression was as bright as before. He seemed to take a liking to Neito.

[I see. As expected of the guy my daughter choose. You have kind eyes.]

[Am I right? – On top of that He's really evil!]

[Really? Hahaha]

[Ehehe – ♪]

Big patted his daughter's head. It was a fun *home drama* which the father and daughter acted out.

*Anice really values her father... Maybe it's because it had been a long time since they saw each other that Big is spoiling her...*

[...Haa...]

[Getting back on topic, it is amazing how you rose through Metallica in just a few years after you joined. You even arrived in front of me. You're really something.]

[Thank you very much]

[Oi Oi, there's no need to be that formal boy, you're part of the family now.]

*Eh?*

Neito panicked a little. He thought he was going to be engaged to Anice and would be his son-in-law.

*Maybe that's not what he meant... Maybe "as part" of the Crimson family...*

Neito never had to deal with this type of situation so he panicked a little.

[Well then boy, you are an exceptional villain and can be considered as the company director of Metallica in my opinion. You're going to be treated as a regular employee here in Crimson, to which you won't mind yes?]

Crimson was not centered on the traditional businessmen wearing suits like Metallica. In other words, their company structure was completely different from Metallica.

[Of course. As a representative, I'll also do my best here in Crimson.]

*That's my first move.* Neito answered as serious as he could.

[OK. You'll be assigned to the Manhattan area. Do you have any questions?]

Manhattan is considered to be the center-piece of New York City. Huge companies and

colleges, theaters and facilities, everything was found in the Manhattan area. Neito didn't expect Mr. Big to give him such an important area to a newbie like him. Neito was taken back by his statement.

[Me, handle it?]

There was no change in Big's expression. He puffed out another ball of smoke.

[Yeah, it's the area I've kept my eyes on to for a while now. I'm having trouble controlling that particular area.]

Each member of Crimson has a specific role. Be it assassination or sabotage, as long as there is work to be done, they had to report to the one in charge of the area they are operating on. What Big meant was, they wanted to control as well as unify the whole Manhattan area into one. Big wanted to focus more on unification this time.

[Manhattan is a very dangerous area to operate in.]

Big continued explaining. The term "Hard" can be views from many angles.

The "method" to be used to unify would be complicated. Manhattan was considered as one of the United States center pieces, therefore the strongest Guardians, Slipknot and Sonic Youth, had high possibility of appearing.

[...I see. It's a matter of life and death.]

[Yes, but its returns are great. You'll gain the respect of the entire family, earning the trust as well as access to our information networks.]

If that's the case, Neito would know if there is any bigshot residing in the area, some research document being published from a certain college or those underground deals in the area. All those event happening in the area would be at the mercy of Crimson. That would be a great asset to him in the future.

But Neito didn't easily bite. Why was he selected?

[Why... Why would you assign Manhattan to me?]

Neito asked this bluntly.

Anice already knew the reason, and she was giggling in the sidelines.

[I have two reasons. First, because you are competent. As I said before, the two top ranked heroes from the Rocks Organization are protecting Manhattan. They are a headache for my family. I've already heard of you Mr. "Hero Killer".]

*I see... no matter how much he looks like a man of character, he's still a villain.* Mr. Big was displaying an atrocious smile.

*He may be gentle on the outside, but totally different on the inside.*

[...Please tell me the other reason.]

As Neito said those words Mr. Big displayed the over-reaction usually done by westerners. The big "Oh No!" expression.

[I don't think you should ask further boy.]

Hearing that, Neito didn't inquire further.

He really didn't care. Either way, he was going to get swallowed by Crimson, and from there, ride his way to the top. He didn't care if he needed to fight the Rocks Organization, or commanding subordinates on the field. That's how he moved forward in the past. He's going to commit himself to rising to the top.

[I understand. Then I'll proceed alongside with my subordinate Nina. I'll accept your assignment.]

[Hahaha! You're so formal! I'm counting on you!]

Big held out his huge hand. Neito stumbled and they shook hands. He had a strong grip and a wide laugh, deserving of a villain.

[By the way, do you have time after today?]

[Eh? Aa-. Yes. A little.]

[Good to hear! How about it? Won't you come over to my house for dinner? My wife is no longer with me, but our chef is good. We can have wine and mutton for dinner.]

He was considerate of Neito, or maybe it was how Americans welcomed their guest... either way Neito was suddenly invited to dinner.

[...Haa...]

[*Naate*♪ come to our house and I'll cook for you! I'm good in cooking lasagna]

Anice was wrapped around his arm. Anice smelled nice as usual and she was soft. She was smiling at him. Meanwhile Big was urging him to say yes.

Neito held by a beautiful girl at the arm and was deeply encourage to say yes by a big shot evil boss. He couldn't refuse now. He had never heard of this lasagna thing, but he had no doubt that it would be really good.

[T-then I'll accept your offer.]

[Good! I'll arrange a car for you later. Anice, can you go home ahead and prepare for our guest?]

Big winked at her daughter with his deep brown eyes. Anice happily complied and went out Big's office.

It happened in an instant.

[I like to speak my intentions as clearly as possible *Nate*.]

Big's manner of speaking changed. He was as gentle and welcoming as before, but something changed.

[...Real intentions... I'm not really...]

"I'm not lying" is what he wanted to say, but Big continued. Neito felt that the air in the room was getting cold.

[You're aiming to take over Crimson aren't you?]

It was a direct attack. Big glared Neito like a hawk. His aura was amazing. It was like General Raz's and the old man who acted as his interviewer.

His insides were shaking.

[Not at all. I'm not planning on doing that.]

Neito wasn't his weak self anymore. He replied with a smile.

He understood it himself. Big knew what was going on in his heart. Big already saw through him the moment he entered the room. But in this situation his "refusal" was important.

[Hahaha. If you say so. Pardon me.]

Neito saw Big as a joyful and patient man in his old age.

[Not at all. It was good that we cleared that up, but why did you think so?]

Big closed his eyes after hearing Neito's question and thought to himself.

[Hmm... You have your records and the hidden intent to kill now... More importantly, you caught my daughter's attention. That's it. My daughter has the tendency to pick the odd ones out... it may be due to how I raised her. You are the first one to really entice her in.]

Those were complicated yet weird reasons. Her daughter was attracted to Neito. Big may be a villain heading an evil organization, but he still cared for the well-being of his daughter.

*What does this guy think of me then? A competitor aiming for his organization? A bug that's trying to get his daughter? Or just an arrogant brat?*

Neito couldn't tell from Big's expression.

*Neito thought, it is as you said. I'm after crimson as a whole. If needed, I'll defeat you. But do you understand? There's only you and me in this room. I'm a modified human.*

*If I felt like it, I could transform and kill you in an instant. I'll sink my claws on that defenseless back of yours.*

[.....]

Neito's stomach flipped on this thought.

Big turned around holding a glass in his hand, glaring at Neito.

[I see. I got a glimpse of you true nature. I've done a lot of terrible things to arrive at my current position. I'm well prepared. It's not as if I don't want to get killed by a villain, but I wanted to advise you to not kill me.]

[.....I'm not planning on killing you.]

[If you killed me here, or anywhere else, what do you think would happen? Unity among family members is a golden rule. You would no doubt, turn the entire Crimson Family against you. You would be easily cornered like a rat and that would be your demise. No matter how strong or evil you are, you won't live through it. Members of the Family aren't that forgiving.]

Big gulped down a glass of Brandy. There was no sign of precaution or guard. It was an ultimate display of his trust on the company he built.

[I see. Then if I find those bad guys who are after Crimson, I'll tell them exactly that.]

He replied for now,

It was as Big said, if an outsider thought he could take over the top by killing their boss, it would just kick the hornet's nest.

The battle this time wasn't about solely defeating the opponent with power. It took more than that to win.

Neito's stomach turned as he smiled at Big. Slowly, Big's gentleness steadily came back.

[Ah, then we'll leave that conversation as it is. We should get going. It's my first time having a meal with my daughter's *boyfriend*. I'm looking forward to it. Is there any food you can't eat?]

Big grabbed his coat and hat. He wasn't lying. He was happily welcoming into his home a competitor for his company and her daughter's friend.

He knew that the person was both a friend and a foe yet he had no problems with it.

[Ah, no. There aren't any particular food that I don't like to eat... But is it really okay?]

[Of course! Tell me more about you. I'm sure my daughter would also be delighted.]

Again, Neito didn't really care how it would go. He was thankful for Big's sincerity and he knew Big didn't hate him. He understood how the members of Crimson could swear loyalty to Big.

He was calm and composed. If there were any threats, he would trust his Family to protect him. He cares for his Family and extends his hand if they need help. He was prepared to give up his life for his Family.

He was the pinnacle of the company.

There was only one word which Neito could describe him.

"Big shot".

No wonder he was named "Mr. Big"

[Then I'll take up on your offer. Ah, have you ever drank Shochu? I've brought some from Japan... If you like...]

Neito asked him while he was putting on his jacket.

[*Shouchuu?* Sounds good! I'll be looking forward to it!]

Big gave him a big thumbs up.

Even with Anice, Neito thought he wouldn't be welcome when he first arrived. All of his worries were for naught.

Neito left Big's office in light spirits.

Mr. Big was completely different from what Neito imagined. He was glad in one way, at the same time sad about it.

Big was a big shot. An enemy he needed to overcome.

Neito needed to defeat America's pride; Sonic Youth, and the executioner in the shadows; Slipknot. In addition, he needed to find a way to overcome or better yet go around Big to have control of Crimson. Both were difficult tasks.

Thinking how hard his battle is going to be, Neito proceeded to the “fun dinner” with Big.

# CHAPTER 45

## I HOPE HE LETS US OFF

After their dinner with Mr. Big and Anice, Neito headed off to the office the following day.

He had a lot to manage today. Blackmailing, spying, smuggling, illegal trading, assassination, murder and many other underground activities. Crimson did a lot of underground business, but at the center of it was Manhattan.

Neito, who was in charge of the Manhattan area, needed to supervise the operations going on the area.

Crimson may not have modified humans, but they have [Over Technology] equipment available for use. With those equipment as their assets, they are able to carry out large scale crime unopposed.

[Niina, bring me the next one.]

[Gotcha.]

Neito, who was on his first week in the office, was reviewing incoming files sent to him.

Neito wasn't really fond of desk work, but the reports coming in are "Will we be able to get away if we did it like this?" the type of reports which he was extremely experienced with. Of course, Niina helped him get through it.

[Umm... up next is about smuggling. It's about sending gunpowder towards England...]

Niina looked over the document, summarized it and told Neito.

[Give them the forces from Upper East side. That area would be fine even without them for a day. Have it shipped in a passenger flight toward London. Just bribe off the staff and if necessary. Make those people who won't cooperate with us "disappear" for a while. Let them say they were in "vacation" as a cover up.]

[On it. I'll send out an order later. Next one is about those [Slash] members sited in Manhattan...]

Capture and interrogate any suspicious individual you lay your hands upon. Once you get their exact location, infiltrate and exterminate them all.]

[Understood.]

Neito wanted the casualties low, but he's not cutting any edges because of that reason. Strike as fast as lightning and strike them down. That's an unchanging tactic taught and used countless times in history.

Neito realized something as he was working in the office.

The difference between Metallica and Crimson is the way they exercise [Control]. Crimson doesn't aim for world domination.

For example, in Okinawa, when Metallica gained control over the island, its influence could be found lingering around. There was nobody who would oppose Metallica on the island. On the other hand, Crimson didn't leave their permanent presence in the area they control. Of course, they are well known and have influence over the shadows, but in the end they are just some underground organization. There were many other underground companies and individuals who opposed the government.

But, it does not mean that Crimson is inferior to Metallica. It is no more than a difference in policy. Having a great influence, Crimson was able to expand their company to great lengths. They may not aim for world domination, but they want to have the entire US under them. It was difficult since the current Rocks Organization, especially their top two Guardians were keeping watch over them.

[On to the next... The judge we tried to bribe last month was too passionate over his sense of justice. We may lose the case if we have... Senpai, I'm getting hungry. Let's go have lunch.]

Looking at his watch, it was already 1 PM. Neito got too absorbed into his work.

[Aah, sorry about that. Let's go.]

They stopped working and headed off to the cafeteria.

[You know what senpai? You sure have adjusted to the new environment really quickly...]

[...Well, that's not true...]

He wasn't lying. He may have been greeted by his fellow co-workers warmly, but he had other concerns to tend to.

He already had a plan to win over Mr. Big and attain the company, but there was a prerequisite for that. He needed to be recognized by the company internally.

Neito was doing well and succeeded in his field, but Sonic Youth was in his way.

Neito was handling the case for the [Acceptance of the Alloy to be used by Crimson in creating their Armor]

The shipment would come from Asia, and would be received in the port area. The problem began when Sonic Youth strode over the sea intercepting the boat used for smuggling. Sonic Youth managed to bypass the ship's defenses and got on board. Of course, the crew was already prepared for such events so they jammed the alloy on a gyro plane and launched it off. Sonic Youth on the other hand, gave chase to the plane. He used the skyscrapers to scale up and reach the height of the plane. Using a "half pipe jump" maneuver used in extreme sports, he manage to disable the plane. The plane crashed, but there were no casualties.

Neito heard the report, but it must have taken some superhuman skill to do such thing.

Crimson wasn't frustrated by this case too much. It was because Crimson was already used to losing to the top two Guardians.

[.....]

Neito thought to himself. *I can't slack off here. I've come this far to achieve the ideal world I want. In order for that to come true...*

[Niina, about what you said earlier...]

[Hm? Is it about time for lunch?]

[No, that case with the judge... I'll head out for it.]

Up until now, Neito never had to face the Rocks' American division. He also hadn't gone as a field operative. He thought that he should change that. Of course, he'll be still be calling the strategy and tactics, but there are some things you just won't know unless you head out to the actual site.

[Eh? Really? What are you planning to do?]

[First, I need to get close and blackmail him... Gather up some men for me. You might wanna borrow some weapons too...]

[You're just gonna head out and blackmail him directly? That's scary...]\*



That night, Neito, along with Niina and others from Crimson, was standing on the rooftop of a five storey building.

The strong cold winds gushed them, but it was the beautiful night scenery that awed them.

[It's so beautiful. It is indeed a great view from here.]

They overlooked the bridge which was in the middle of the metropolis. It was as if the jewels were shining before them. Saying such things Neito looked back.

[Don't you agree? Mr. Judge.]

[...Nnn-!! N—nn!!]

The man who was strapped onto a chair was surrounded by men armed with Railguns and Razor Swords. It was indeed a great scene fitting for a person who was about to meet his end.

[Hm? Aah, I see. Ungag him.]

Neito immediately gave out the order. His subordinates removed the mouth gag from the judge.

[...F-Ha!! You bastard! Who are you! Do you think you'll get away with this?]

The judge was still stubborn despite his situation.

His mistake was in being too confident. *In this city, if you're going to be a judge, at least assign some bodyguards to protect yourself. Everybody knows your face since you appear on television frequently, if you're going shopping on Park Avenue, anybody there would recognize you... In other words, you're no more than an idiot.*

[Me? I'm a bad guy. I know I'll get away with this quite easily.]

Neito answered diligently and laughed it off. Based on experience, Neito knew this would have more psychological effect on his target. Furthermore, he elaborately chose the top of a high rise building for the blackmailing. Having nowhere to run, his victim must be experiencing real fear from within.

[Well then, you have two choices. Cooperate with me, or meet your end.]

For a moment, the judge was taken back, but he then regained his composure.

[I'm a judge! I'll never yield to outside forces! That's what real justice is about!]

*Hmm... Neito was touched for a bit... just a little bit.*

*It was an instant, but you were afraid right? Yet you still held on to your ideals... You're not my enemy.*

It may look like Neito had the upper hand, but in reality, he was at a disadvantage. The judge had his value with Crimson, so Neito couldn't carelessly kill him off. It would create problems if people knew Crimson was behind the death of a judge.

[Really? Are you sure about this? I'll really let you experience a painful fate... You should think this over. I. will. do. It. Make sure you won't regret you decision.]

Neito grabbed the judge's hair and carelessly pat it. He released his killing intent from his body.

Of course, Neito was serious. It would be best for the judge if just cooperated. If not, not only would he suffer physically and mentally, but also his family and friend might also get involved.

Neito didn't want to do it, since it would create a negative an image of him. But if

necessary, Neito would do it. There was no point threatening a person if you're not serious about it.

If Neito were to get serious, there was a huge possibility that the judge might end up dead or gravely injured.

[.....!!]

The judge reacted to him.

[Well then, this is your last chance. Have you made your decision?]

Neito slyly smiled at the judge.

[W-Wait a second...]

Neito won. At least that's what Neito thought. Surrounded by his subordinates, tied up to a chair, and surrounded by Neito's subordinates, Neito thought he had won.

That's when it happened.

[!!]

Neito's subordinates, who were surrounding the judge, suddenly toppled over to the ground in an instant. There wasn't even time to react. It just happened.

[Wha-?!]

Few seconds after Neito confirmed that his subordinates were on the ground, he heard something.

It was a sound of a gun being fired.

It was a thunderous sound. A dry yet strikingly fast vibration. Similar to fireworks but more thunderous.

[W-What happened?!]

[B-Blood is coming out!]

Neito heard the voices of his subordinates on the ground.

*What is happening? The gunshot was heard after they got hit. Is it a sniper? That's impossible. Where did it come from? Wha-...*

[Senpai!]

Niina called out to him.

*That's right, analyzing can come in later.*

[Somebody is sniping at us! Get down!]

Neito crouched and immediately gave out the order to his subordinates.

Niina was the fastest to react among his subordinates. Most probably Niina already knew what was happening even before Neito gave out the warning.

Crouching, Niina pointed to a single point with a finger.

[The gunshot came directly from the direction I'm pointing at!]

Somehow, Niina was able to identify the origin of the sound when he heard it. It was better to rule out that the information was true than being sitting ducks. Neito on the other hand, didn't know where exactly the gunshot came from. All he knew that it came from his right side.

[Different from regular bullets, the bullet came in first before the sound. It must be a weapon that can shoot bullets at the speed of sound. From that analysis, he must be one kilometer away from us.]

Those were Niina's words. Listening to the theory, it made sense. There were times when Niina would excel better than Neito. If Neito called Niina about it, he would just remark "It's just common knowledge" or some sort.

[...You're really something huh?]

Neito decided to leave his compliment at that.

Both of them were conversing while taking cover.

[...Thanks, but this is one hell of a situation we're in...]

Niina was worried. It was as Niina had said. Neito didn't have much experience in dealing with situations such as this. They were ill equipped, making their enemy untouchable. They always made the enemy follow their pace, leading to an advantageous fight, but out on the rooftop, that wasn't the case here.

[...Maybe]

It was undoubtedly "him" that was sniping them.

That individual had the ability and resources to obtain information on Crimson's movements. He had the capacity to surprise and the skill to use any weapon fit for the job. In this case a long range rifle which resulted to his subordinates getting shot in their necks.

There was only one guy who can do it in the entire New York City.

Slipknot.

The dark hero that's after Crimson's head.

They kept their heads down, careful not to get within sight of his barrel. The atmosphere was full of killing intent.

[W-What are we going to do? I hope he lets us off...]

Niina was as carefree as ever, but there are times when he would coward out. In saying so, that should be a natural reaction.

Neito was the same. To be frank, he was scared. Slipknot was responsible for taking the lives of many villains. His next target maybe Neito himself. Thinking about it gave Neito the chills. He didn't know if the next bullet would find him or not. Since they were on an open rooftop, their escape was blocked.

But;

[...I'll crush you here and now... I'll have you regret ever picking a fight with me. Niina, you said it was over in that direction right?]

There was no way he could pull back. He was defeating Slipknot once and for all. *I know the reason why you are targeting Crimson, but I have my own reason why I can't back down either.*

*I'll reach the top and change the world. I see the vision I want for this world. Until I achieve that goal, I can't afford to lose here.*

*Slipknot, you're in my way. Move aside.*

*My body is shaking in excitement.*

Neito strengthened himself and turned on the “evil switch” inside him.

[I'll leave this place to you.]

[Eeh?! You're really going for it? Well, if it's you senpai, then there's a chance that you won't die...]

Listening to Niina's words, Neito stood up. He can't fight unless he stood up.

[...Transform.]

Taking a deep breath, he focused on himself. *Transform.* Surrounding himself to bring about the darkness within him. His body gradually transformed.

A ruthless body and dark wings stretched out wide.

In the midst of a cold and dark night, a demon had appeared.

[Uuoo!!]

Running on the rooftop, Neito jumped from the building. Neito noticed that the building had collapsed a bit.

The night scenery of the metropolis was beaming below him. Cold winds brushing past the evil entity jumping from building to building.

He didn't need to fully stretch and flap his wings. Gliding would cover the distance

between buildings easily.

Neito would glide from one building to another, kicking and launching himself from their walls and rooftops.

*No doubt people who saw me are terrified* was his opinion, but there was no need to worry. People on Broadway or people who are in Times Square wouldn't dare look into the dark skies.

Gliding above avenues and streets, Neito was on his way to fight a Hero.

Slipknot no doubt already noticed him approaching.

But Neito didn't care.

He steeled himself for the battle ahead.

## CHAPTER 46

# GO TO HELL BABY!

Neito was on the rooftops above New York City.

From time to time, he could hear gunshots passing him. The direction was as Niina had told him.

*He knows. He's already shifting his focus on me.*

Since Neito already transformed, it was possible for him to block the bullets. It would be dangerous if it came to a certain distance, but at their current distance, he had no trouble defending himself.

Neito advanced while trying to block the bullets.

[There you are!]

Neito, who was hanging from a wall, saw him.

He had a muscular body, covered in black leather tights as his costume, he had a gauntlet that looked like a guillotine.

[Slipknot!]

Slipknot was on the roof of a building. The weapon he had previously fired from was a sniper rifle, but the one in his hands now didn't look like anything like it.

[A rocket launcher?!]

On top of that, it was the latest model. The model that could destroy armored targets with ease.

It wasn't something you would use in a cityscape, but Slipknot was shooting without discretion.

He dodged a bullet while flying, barely missing his face. The bullet launched went past

Neito and exploded as it contacted the building behind him.

Looking behind him, Neito saw that the firepower had been significantly decreased. That didn't exempt a certain portion of the building from being destroyed. The rubble from the building also started falling down to the streets.

No matter how you looked at it, there would be casualties.

[He's definitely crazy...]

He couldn't say for others, but Neito certainly thought so. He looked at Slipknot once more.

On the other hand, Slipknot also saw Neito. It was as if a demon was closing in on him.

Slipknot looked at Neito and raised his middle finger. Afterwards, he made a thumbs down gesture.

*"Come at me you bastard. I'll send you back to hell"*

*The gesture must've meant something like that.*

[All full and confident huh?]

Neito maintained his composure and stretched his wings. He calmly navigated towards Slipknot.

When Neito almost landed on the building Slipknot was in, Slipknot started moving.

Running across the building, he pulled out something like a wire and used it to slide downwards the building. Slipknot broke the windows and entered the building.

Neito followed after him and entered the building.

[...Where did he run off to...?]

The floor they were in resembled an office with numerous desks inside. It wasn't crowded, but very spacious.

There were no lights turned on in the room, but the city lights illuminated it dimly.

Neito couldn't see now, but given the time, his eyes would adjust automatically.

Looking around the darkness, there was no sign of Slipknot. He knew Slipknot was hiding nearby.

[Hey you! What are you hiding for? You aren't suited for girl hunting are you?]

It was sudden, but he heard a voice behind him. It was as if Slipknot was mocking him. It was rather unexpected.

Neito tried to turn around, but a barrel was already pointed at his back.

Bang Bang bang bang!

A rapid fire of bullets came from behind. On top of it he was aiming his machine gun at one specific spot. Neito could tell he was almost at a point blank range. No matter how much Neito transformed, Slipknot's attack was effective.

*This guy...! Where did he come from...! Damn it... if this goes on... I can't hold on forever...*

[Kugh...! Haaaa!!]

*I'm done for if I fall here.* Neito gathered himself and turned around. He used his arm to stop the hail of bullets.

[Take this!!]

The room was dark, but it was only a matter of pinpointing where the muzzle flash came from. Neito continued blocking the bullets while swinging his claws at the light source.

[!?!]

Slipknot's texture was weird. Neito didn't feel any kind of flesh being clawed apart. Instead he felt something wooden.

Nonetheless Neito didn't doubt where the muzzle flash came from.

[You're this old and you're still playing with dolls? I'm getting jealous that you're having so much fun]

Neito again heard a voice behind him. He then noticed that the figure he attacked was a mannequin. The mannequin was locked in place with a machine gun strapped to it. Slipknot somehow managed to strap a mannequin with machine gun and position it behind him in a short period of time.

[I love playing dolls with heroes, but I'll do that after I beat you up!]

It was certainly a weird way to fight. Slipknot must be already used to seeing in the dark. Since Neito was huge in size while transformed, he was clearly at a disadvantage.

Neito picked up the desks and computers around him and started throwing them.

It was effective in blocking bullets as well as extending his attack distance. With "Evil Silhouette's" power, anybody would be seriously injured if they were hit by the projectiles.

But there was no form of resistance coming from Slipknot. He was using some kind of body techniques to dodge Neito's attacks.

[Hey there, hold on... Why are you so mad? You're causing trouble to the employees of this office by doing that.]

Neito periodically saw a shadow that evaded his attacks.

[If you stand still, we could finish this in no time.]

If it was a battle in terms of physical power, there was no way Slipknot would be able to stand up against his Evil Silhouette. Neito's eyes were slowly adjusting to the dark. If he somehow managed to get a glimpse of Slipknot, then it would be all over.

As long as he kept attacking Slipknot, he would be too busy dodging his attacks. Neito didn't have to worry about a counter-attack.

*Just a bit... a little bit more...*

After a few seconds passed, he saw him. There was no need to keep throwing projectiles at him. He just needed to step in and use his claws.

[We're done playing tag.]

Neito could now clearly see Slipknot. Slipknot was standing on top of a desk.

[Ok Ok, then what should we play next? Hmm... Let's play catch.]

Slipknot held something spherical and threw it to Neito. Slipknot made a "here" gesture as he threw the object lightly at Neito.

[You should catch it properly.]

Slipknot was as carefree as he was. He touched his belt, which had various equipment inside it and pulled out an object.

[Cool right?]

Slipknot then put on the object he took out. Neito identified it as something like a goggle.

It was only at this moment that Neito understood what the spherical object was.

It was a flash grenade.

The room was enveloped by a bright light and a loud noise. Slipknot may have not shown killing intent, but the attack he did proved to be a critical one. *The goggle he took out must be something like an anti-stun grenade equipment.*

[...Tsk...!!]

Neito noticed too late. The grenade went off while he tried closing his eyes.

Neito couldn't see anything. He was blinded for a definite period of time. What's worse was, he couldn't hear anything.

He needed to strengthen his defenses until he could regain his posture.

[Shit!!]

But no attack came. *That's weird, Evil Silhouette's defense may be strong, but Slipknot could have easily defeated me in this current state.*

Neito noticed something weird again. His body was wet. *It must be raining. But we're*

*inside an office so that shouldn't be impossible... This must be the sprinklers. I see, the grenade must've triggered the sprinkler systems.*

[Water...? Uaaaaaaa!??]

A sudden shock suddenly enveloped Neito's defensive stance. It needed no effort to rule out what caused it. It was definitely an electric current.

*If Slipknot activated it, he must be in a place where the water can't reach him. He most probably used a stun gun of some sort to electrify the water.*

Neito's body was twitching from shock. It was an unpleasant attack coming from his enemy. A normal person would've died from that shock, but Neito held out. He could recover himself after one minute. Thanks to him being a modified human, he was able to hold out and recover faster.

But Slipknot was already moving forward with his plans.

[Heyaa!!]

Neito was stunned. In that period, Slipknot lightly pushed Neito's body. Neito fell, but he didn't hit the floor.

He didn't know where he got it, but Slipknot pushed Neito onto a push car which every modern office had. Neito was carried around like some package while Slipknot was above him taking something out from his chest. He showed Neito a photograph.

[Hey, do you know any of these three in the picture? If you give me any information on them, I'll stop this little Grand Prix of ours. Oh, you can't speak right? Close your eyes if it's Yes, or keep them open if it's No.]

*Grand Prix.* Neito didn't know what Slipknot was talking about, but Neito knew the people in the photograph. One was Mr. Big, and the other two were members of Crimson he recently met.

He didn't understand the situation, but Slipknot wanted information on Crimson's top brass. He was now more serious than before.

*Well now, what should I do...?* Neito thought to himself.

*I'll use any means possible and win.* That was how Neito always fought. Then it is viable for him to betray his allies.

If Neito were to give Slipknot the information, and somehow he would be still alive, his reputation inside Crimson would plummet. His scenario of taking over Crimson would then be over.

Neito didn't close his eyes.

[Is that so...? Then there's no choice Baby~, we're going on a Grand Prix!]

With Neito's response, Slipknot sighed deeply and went back to his carefree character.

[Erm, the forty eighth Manhattan Office Building Grand Prix is about to start! Who's going to be the winner this year!? The racer are all lining up now! Start!]

Slipknot along with a beast was cruising around in a push car inside an office. Slipknot pushed the car while he was commentating. They were going fast. Neito still couldn't move after the effects of the electric shock.

[Woah! Cool guy and Monster racers just passed through a hairpin curve!]

Neito saw where they were going. They were headed towards the window. Slipknot didn't show any signs of stopping.

Slipknot planned on dropping him out from the window.

With his unmovable state, if he would crash down the building from this height, even with Evil Silhouette, he couldn't survive.

Neito understood at this point that Slipknot was different.

Slipknot was a heterogeneous person.

He was different from the other heroes he fought before.

The varied equipment he pulled out before were prepared beforehand. This was Slipknot's execution grounds. It was as if they were in a comedy movie with serious stunts already planned beforehand.

*And this guy's behavior...* There is definitely a crowded street below them. Despite that, Slipknot was willing to drop Neito when there could be civilian casualties.

Throughout preparation, guerilla tactics and his intent to kill without mercy, that was Slipknot's strong point.

[Go Go Go! It's a straight line towards the goal!]

Slipknot didn't stop. Pushing the cart while running inside the office, he was chanting energetically. It was as if he was a child having fun. That made him scary.

[Hyiiuu~]

Slipknot was still accelerating, and Neito, with his immovable body, crashed outside the window. Neito felt his weight as he impacted the glass.

Slipknot, who was also falling, looked down on Neito and gave a thumbs down.

He remarked;

[Go to hell, Baby~]

His character changed again. His deep tone was now full of hatred and killing intent.

Neito felt it himself. That was the true nature of Slipknot.

He wasn't as strong as the previous heroes Neito fought, but he was different.

*Can he not be defeated by evil? He doesn't even have any openings. Even If I inflict my methods on him, will they be effective against him?*

The demon fell into darkness

## CHAPTER 47

# THAT'S NO LAUGHING MATTER

Neito continued falling down. If he were to hit the ground at this speed, he would definitely die.

He'd never liked high places. He was about to faint when he fell from the building, but he managed to stay awake. Maybe Anice's date on a roller-coaster helped him pull through.

*I can't go down like this... I still have plans to take over Crimson, stand on top of Metallica, change the world and find the answer for Manaka-san's question in his last moments.*

*Move! Move! C'mon body, Move!*

[Open it!]

His body still hadn't recovered from the shock, but he forced himself to open his wings.

But,

[...It's no use...]

Neito couldn't fully lift his wings. Even if he did, his wings were battered from the machine gun fire. He still couldn't glide properly because of the amount of holes in his wings. In other words, it was only dead weight.

*Did he anticipate my moves and weaknesses this far? He's one hell of a guy.*

He tried to reach for the building walls, but he couldn't reach for it. *Is this part of his calculations too? All for me to go to hell...*

He recognized Slipknot's capability.

*I'm not done yet... don't you underestimate me Slipknot. If there is a thing called hell, I'll end up there, but not today.*

*I've always gambled my life when fighting, that's how it's always been. A situation like this...*

[Haaaaa!]

If his wings served no purpose, he didn't need them. He deliberately grabbed his wings and tore them off.

[Almost there...!]

Neito ripped out his bloodstained wings and stretched it out towards the walls of the building. Though bloodstained and battered, it was [Evil Silhouette's] wings, it wouldn't easily break when rubbed against concrete.

With the sounds of joints breaking, the wings reached the building walls. A sharp feeling of pain came upon Neito's shoulder.

The wings collided with the concrete, slowing, and stopping his fall.

[Haa... Haa... That was a close call...]

He fell half of the building's height. It took him approximately twenty five floors to break his fall.

Neito sacrificed much to stop his fall. He lost too much blood after ripping his wing off. His right arm was dislocated and fractured. With his last bit of strength, he grabbed on to his wings with his left arm.

It drained him just holding himself up with his left hand. His transformation wouldn't last long, but he managed to survive.

[.....!]

But he wasn't out of the woods yet. On the top of the building, Slipknot was looking at him from a broken window. He closely observed him since he started his fall. Slipknot was determined to see him splatter like a red tomato.

Once he saw Neito hold on, he immediately withdrew from the window.

Slipknot was coming. He was coming to finish him off.

Even at this moment Slipknot must be humming while coming down the stairs or singing along with the elevator music.

[Well this is getting handy...]

Neito's transformation came off. He was now with his normal body. His right arm was still broken and blood gushed out from his back. All in all, he only had his left arm to do with.

For the first time, Neito was afraid of the "justice" coming at him.



(TLN: Niina's POV)

[You're kidding me... right? That Senpai got...]

Few minutes after Neito transformed and went after Slipknot, Niina issued orders to use Crimson's "Flying Board". It was a small tool that allowed its rider to fly. Niina used this and went after Neito.

It was the first time Niina rode it, but he imagined that it would be like riding a snow board or surf board. Both of which, Niina was very familiar with.

It didn't have too much speed, and it can only fly for a maximum of ten minutes. Moving forward, Niina could see Neito through the LED monitor with had a magnification function.

Once Neito started fighting with Slipknot, Niina landed in a nearby building and continued to observe him through the LED monitor.

*Slipknot was a mysterious enemy, but I'm sure he will handle it well... or at least, that was what Niina thought.*

A tricky battle commenced, and Neito was thrown off the building. It was truly a desperate situation.

[Are you serious...? That easily...]

His legs started shaking. Niina was an employee of Metallica. He experienced many

battles before, but he never stood on the front-lines himself. And again, Niina had never been tasked with the big decisions. That was because it was Neito or Tsurugi making the calls. He thought he could live by his speed and footwork in the battlefield alone.

That was why it was his first time experiencing this kind of situation.

*What should I do?*

*Go and help Neito? You've got to be kidding me. What can I do in that situation? There's no way I can match up with a Guardian coming from the Rocks Organization. Slipknot is busy with Neito now. If I run, no doubt I could easily get away.*

*On the other hand, if Neito is defeated by Slipknot, the blame wouldn't heavily fall on me. Slipknot is a known vigilante that had put an end to many villains. It may not be much, but I'll manage to live by. But if I try and rescue Neito, there's a huge possibility that I would die.*

[...That's right...]

Niina turned his back on Neito who was desperate.

[There's no choice...]

*I should just run now.*

[Senpai... Se-senp...]

He threw away his pride to preserve his live... But at that moment, Niina's feet stopped moving. He realized what he was saying was very relevant.

*Senpai? That's right, he's my [Senpai].*

*I've called a lot of people "senpai" during college and during clubs, but that's just formalities. Just meaningless formalities.*

Niina was a naïve boy. In his studies and in sports, he manage to get the best results without spending too much effort. In other words, he didn't even bother making an effort. That was because he believed he didn't need it.

*Why is everybody trying so hard?* Niina just randomly does things well. He didn't possess any special ability, but nonetheless, he wasn't lacking any skill. He just barely manages and arrives where he wants to arrive. He never once was passionate in doing something.

He was able to get along with anybody, talking nonsense and getting close.

For Niina, the term "senpai" was just a word used to get close to a person.

That also applied to Neito. Niina heard that he was a real villain, and so he thought he should call him "senpai".

He didn't notice when he had started calling Neito "senpai" when he wasn't around.

He thought "who is this guy?" when he was first assigned to him in Okinawa. To him, Neito looked weak and cowardly at that time, and didn't fit the title of "villain". Despite that, he made the most bizarre decision and rose to the top.

He had the will to do it when it came to do it, but most of the time, Neito had a weak heart. That was also the same when it came to women. Sometimes, Neito would be too shy towards people.

When Niina did some "regular" work, Neito complimented him on his performance. Neito looked embarrassed in saying it, so Niina decided to put a more effort into it.

Neito managed to achieve incredible feats. That was the result of him risking his life. *He must be doing it with all his best.* No matter what method, no matter who it is, Niina saw Neito get over it and move forward.

He was no longer doubting that it was due to pure luck that Neito was able to accomplish those achievements. At one moment, Niina thought of copying Tsurugi's "Understood" as a form of acknowledgement, but he desisted. Getting passionate over something didn't suit him after-all.

Maybe that's what made him acknowledge Neito as his "Senpai".

*He may be different than me, but he is impressive in his own way.* Thinking about it, Niina never considered somebody to be "impressive" since he was able to do everything effortlessly.

*That person is different. To be frank, Neito is just a normal human. He didn't have the body nor the wit. He may have trained his body since he entered Metallica, but it didn't amount to much. In terms of capability, Neito couldn't be compared to Niina. But wow...*

*I've never seen a person like that. To me he's the one true "senpai" for me.*

[.....]

Niina stepped on the Flying Board. He could run right now,

[...But...]

*Run? Am I going to run? There's no other choice. There's no way a normal human being can match up to a member of the Rocks Organization. More precisely because it's "him".*

[No... There is somebody...]

*Even without powers, that man never backed down in fighting. It was just his determination as a villain that made him keep going forward.*

[I-I... I!]

*I admired that person. That's why I wanted to see how far he could go. It may not be much, but I'll follow him. And I may have noticed this now, but I know that's what I wanted all along.*

*Me? Run away? That's no laughing matter.*

*I'm afraid. I don't want to go, but don't want to run away either.*

Niina only now noticed that he had a frail heart and spirit. *In order for me to proceed down the path of villainy...*

*I, I will...*

[I'm the [kouhai] of the man who's going to change the world...!]

*It may be too late, but it I'm going to get serious!*

Niina got embarrassed over getting passionate. But it was not that all bad. He laughed

at himself.

He started up his Flying Board. Neito was struggling below him. No doubt Slipknot was already coming down to finish off Neito.

*I won't let him do it. But what should I do? Think. Think! It's impossible for me to defeat Slipknot. Then what? Senpai not dead yet. That person never gives up. I'm sure he's thinking of a way to survive right now! But what? How can I help him?*

Niina revved up, and rapidly accelerated forward. He never thought this hard before. After ten seconds, he made his decision.

Using his radio, he gave orders to the remaining Crimson members. Of course, he didn't order them to come and help him. There was no way they could traverse the distance in a short span of time. That's why he ordered them differently.

<Huh...? But that's... >

His subordinates were worried.

[Shut up and do it! Get it done in less than three minutes! Understood?!]

Niina cut the line. He uploaded the data shown on the monitor onto his tablet. On the other hand, he accelerated his Flying Board.

His head was boiling with excitement. There wasn't a time when he was this serious.



(TLN: Back to Neito's POV)

[I've lost touch with my shoulder...]

Neito was at his limit. He couldn't last for a few minutes.

Before his body would give up, there was a far more scary being coming after him.

In his fall, he broke the glass windows up and down the floors he was in. From there, Slipknot took a peak at him.

[Hey you, you're really a tough one huh? From this day on, I give you the [Fell from the top floor but got killed by a bullet through the head] award!]

Slipknot pulled out a handgun from his belt. Neito didn't have a hand to defend himself.

But he didn't give up. He didn't want to die.

[Senpai!]

He heard a familiar voice. He looked up and saw Niina riding on a Flying Board. Neito had trouble riding it, but it was no problem for Niina.

Niina didn't shoot at Slipknot. He thought Slipknot would be able to easily avoid it. Slipknot, who had been fighting people with villains who had special powers, probably regarded Niina as a mere fly. Yet, Slipknot was determined to kill Niina for interrupting him.

[...You...?]

[Hm? Who are ya? You part of Crimson? Then I'll kill ya too.]

Slipknot whistled and pointed his gun at Niina.

Neito thought *Niina would never come here to die without a plan... If he has a plan then I need to get into it...*

*I don't have much time left*

[I've been recording senpai's fight using this glass monitor... that include the floor plan of this building!]

Niina's hints were vague. It was the first time Niina himself went to the front-lines. Slipknot raised his gun and shot at Niina. Niina dodged the bullet. Niina may have high reaction time, but one mistake could've end his life. On that moment, Neito knew Niina was willing to risk his life for him.

That few seconds of contact. It was only or a few seconds, but he understood.

It was a plan Neito would think of, given the circumstances. *That's right... I've always*

*fought like a real villain. No matter how underhanded it is. I'll do it.*

[That's impressive Niina! You understand me well!]

[Well, I'm a genius after all... And I know you are vile when it comes to it senpai!]

With that, Niina ascended upwards.

[...? What are you guys doing? Is there something fun planned out? It's unfortunate, but you won't be able to attend the party you're planning.]

Slipknot once again pointed his gun at Neito.

*I'm saved... I now have a chance of surviving.*

*I won't win, but neither will I lose. In the worst case scenario, we'll be both taken out. Even if don't kill Slipknot, I still could erase his existence from this world. If I manage to survive here, I'll have another day to fight him again. I'll just have to find a more [evil] method to deal with him.*

*Niina should be done with the preparations by now. I'll just have to rely on him now. When push comes to shove, I'll be the one to pull the trigger.*

[Hey Slipknot]

Neito managed to pull himself up with his weak left arm. *If I were to pass out from my injuries, I would surely die.* Slipknot was looking down on him and pointing his gun. Neito didn't stop. He stared onto the [Dark Hero].

[What? Don't stare at me like that..."If I die I'll haunt you"? You're going to become a "Japanese Ghost"? Woaah soo~ scary ~...]

Neito interrupted.

[You are certainly strong. You don't fight like a hero, but you are not [Evil].]

Slipknot still didn't pull the trigger. He was pondering over what Neito said.

*I thought we think the same... but I was mistaken. No matter what the sacrifice is, I'll keep moving forward. Will you still be able to stand in front of my [Evil]?*

[...Did you think of something to get out of this mess? How unfortunate... you don't have much time left.]

[Well, I'd advise you to hear me out for the sake of both of us.]

[.....]

Slipknot still hasn't fire. Slipknot's intuition from fighting countless villains must've kicked in. He knew something was about to happen.

*Then I'll tell you my plan... go and tremble on hearing it.*

*I'll teach what real villainy is and how scary it is. I never coward out on something... but will you?*

*Your real enemy isn't me.*

*But my enemies are the ones who stand in my way.*

*Will you still be able to stand in my way, Slipknot?*

Neito tightened his grip.

Under the dark and starry skies. The eye of the beast once again glowed red.

# CHAPTER 48

## HOSTAGE? THEY'RE SACRIFICES

Holding on with his left hand, Neito saw his executioner. He was in a dire situation, but he didn't show any sign of fear.

[You know what... you fired a Rocket Launcher at me a while ago right?]

[Hm? Oh you mean when you were heading here? Yeah, it was unfortunate how I didn't get you then...]

Those shots were dangerous. If I were hit by any one of those, I wouldn't come out in one piece... But it's Slipknot's mistake of not hitting me.

[But you hit the building behind me]

[Yeah, and I feel sorry for the owner of that building]

Slipknot was as always, speaking lightly. In fact he may never even care of the building he damaged.

[It's a new model for dealing with tanks on the battlefield... If fired consecutively, you could've destroyed that entire building... but you didn't...]

[It's a given. I'm a nice guy after all. I'm nice to people other than Crimson.]

The fire power of that launcher had indeed been significantly reduced. He wanted the damage to be minimal. A part of the building may be destroyed, but it wouldn't cause a collapse.

Why did Slipknot want to minimize the damage?

Neito continued.

[If the building came down, the casualties would've been huge. The entire New York City would be in panic... You wanted to avoid that right?]

[So what? What are you trying to say? Can I just kill you now?]

Slipknot once again raised his gun.

This was the perfect moment.

Neito turned towards Niina and signaled something. “Do it”. Niina understood and moved.

In the following seconds, a huge sound echoed.

[?!]

Neito knew that I came from the building few blocks from their location.

*(TLN: It's the building Slipknot just hit with his rocket launcher a few chapters ago)*

[Hahahaha...! You're so half baked! If you're gonna do it, do it properly!]

Slipknot was upset. Neito was laughing fanatically over the sounds of explosion and the building crashing.

[Did you do that? Does that even hold a significance? Or maybe you're just crazy...?]

[Significance? Hmm... You're surprisingly stupid. Hahaha, you really don't understand?!]

Neito laughed and ridiculed Slipknot. Slipknot on the other hand gave him a cold stare.

[We got a video of you shooting a rocket launcher earlier. And now, my competent subordinate is uploading it to the internet. The title would be “Slipknot vs. the Monster from Crimson” or something.]

[So what...?]

Slipknot's expression changed.

[The article will go like “This night, Slipknot, in order to defeat the monster, uses a rocket launcher.” People in Manhattan will view it that way. “And tonight, buildings in Manhattan mysteriously collapsed. It is presumed that the rocket launcher did this”]

Neito implied that they had only taken down one building, and they could take down more if necessary. He told Slipknot the plain and harsh truth.

[Now, when tomorrow comes, will the people still see you as part of the Rock's Organization?]

They had real footage of Slipknot firing a rocket launcher. If Slipknot decided to check, he would soon find it on the front pages of the internet.]

[You'll become the enemy of the state no doubt. You seem like you fight alone, but what about your supply for weapons? Intelligence? Are you confident that you can still operate the same way as usual? Do you think the Rock's Organization, or ever Sonic Youth would forgive you? Will you still be able to keep fighting after turning the whole world against you? Your objective is to take out Crimson and its top brass right? Will you be able to do it?]

These were facts. Slipknot was only able to do what he wanted because of the approval of the citizens. He may be extreme in his methods, but he knew where to draw the line. There are a lot of things he can do despite if it's illegal, just because he was called the "Dark Hero".

Slipknot is fully aware of it. He fights differently from the other Rock's members? That's not true. He is just smart. He doesn't create enemies and find a situation where he's always at an advantage.

He's like a villain that doesn't choose his methods as long as it gets the job done. Thinking about it, Slipknot and Neito's core essence were the same. The only difference was the scale. Slipknot belonged to the "other side". He tried to prevent casualties, he stopped himself from becoming a villain.

[.....]

Neito saw Slipknot gulping. He was thinking hard.

[Hey you... you're really crazy... If that's the case, you're in no better position either.]

It was also a fact. There were a lot of members of Crimson in Manhattan. If they manage to trace Neito, who was part of Crimson, as the mastermind of the bombing, he would no doubt be disposed immediately. There was no way Neito would be pardoned after causing so much damage.

[And what of it? I'm about to be killed by you. You didn't think that I know what's about to happen? I'll die and fall here... I'm really looking forward to tomorrow's papers... The mysterious bombing, a dead member of Crimson and a viral video of Crimson shooting a rocket launcher. In exchange for taking down a monster, you turned the entire Manhattan population against you. I congratulate you.]

[...Do you think it will go like that easily?]

Slipknot had a point. There was a chance that it won't go as planned, but there was also the possibility of it going as planned.

[I don't know. I don't care what's gonna happen afterwards.]

A loud sound echoed again as Neito finished his sentence. The second building was about to go down no doubt.

Slipknot was now in a serious mood. His lighthearted tone was now gone.

Neito thought;

You're no evil being Slipknot, If I decide to defeat you, then you'll be defeated. I don't care who you are... Dark Hero? That's some fancy words for you. You're just following the will of the people, and when you realize that yourself, you're no longer considered as my enemy.

That's the reason you decrease the firepower of that rocket launcher. You wanted to protect your position. You're no more than a hero of justice. You ultimately try to avoid casualties and avoid injuring people. If he didn't do that he wouldn't be called a member of the Rocks Organization. His essence is still justice.

If that's the case, I'll defeat you. I'll bring you down with the power of evil.

No matter how many building I have to bring down, and no matter how many people get hurt, I'll keep moving forward. Even if it results in the whole world hating me... I'll change the world.

He didn't want to end up doing it, but he didn't show it on his face. He looked up into Slipknot, and gave a hysterical smile.

[Even if I die, the explosions won't stop. It's unfortunate that I would die, but hey, I'll

see to it that you're erased from the face of the earth Slipknot. I'll be waiting for you in hell after the other members of the Rocks Organization kill you... See ya.]

Neito was still laughing hysterically when released his grip.

[!! Damn it!!]

He heard Slipknot's frustrated voice. Then he felt his left hand being grabbed. Neito didn't fall to his death.

[.....Hmm... What happened to that attitude of yours?]

[.....]

Slipknot extended his arm. He pulled Neito up and passed through the broken glass windows.

[I can't do anything if you held the entire Manhattan area hostage. Will you call off the bombing now?]

Slipknot had already lost the will to fight. He was just sitting back on the floor.

[Hostage? You misunderstood me, they're sacrifices in order to defeat you.]

Neito slowly stood up. Having his life spared, he declared himself as the winner.

[What? You still want to go at it? Leave it for today... I'm going home and have a nice cold beer.]

Neito approached Slipknot, who was still sitting back and looked down on him.

[Stay down and don't move. It's my win today.]

Neito kicked Slipknot in the face, sending him flying.

With sounds of bones breaking, Slipknot landed across the floor.

[(tsk) That hurt!]

[No matter how you looked like it, I'm more hurt than you, you should be happy that I

wasn't transformed... you would've died then.]

[Eh? Are you planning to "continue bombing Manhattan" if I resist? So you're gonna kill me while I'm defenseless? That's not a cool thing to do... And if you're going to do that, I have a better idea.]

Neito already thought of it. If he killed Slipknot mercilessly now, he didn't know what Slipknot would do when driven to a corner.

Slipknot may look relaxed now, but deep inside, Neito sensed a feeling of obsession. No doubt it was related to how he fights. Slipknot must've tried to hide it with his light and easy going attitude.

For example, when Slipknot interrogated him, he was willing to sacrifice everything to get towards Mr. Big and his underlings. He may even sacrificed Manhattan to get the information he needed.

Neito knew, Slipknot had an unyielding spirit. He was certain of it after defeating so many heroes.

There was no purpose if Neito killed Slipknot now. He came up with a more "diabolical" plan to bring him down.

[No, I don't plan on doing that... My whole body just hurts all over. That one kick felt like hitting you eight times.]

[Eight hits? You're kidding.]

[Be thankful that I spared your life. Now, let's talk. Of course, you're in no position to refuse.]

Neito made Slipknot stand and seated him on a chair.

[Right now? Why don't we go off at a bar... I'll treat you to a glass of beer or bourbon.]

[I've got no plans on drinking with an arrogant man in a tight suit.]

They conversed for a while. It went as Neito expected it to go. After the important details were discussed, Slipknot said "he wanted to go home because he was going to be late watching his scheduled T.V program]. Neito released him without a fuss.

# CHAPTER 49

## ...THIS IS REALLY BAD

Few minutes after the battle with Slipknot, Niina came to pick Neito up with his Flying Board.

In the end, they only brought down two buildings. Niina did well in the short amount of time to pick out the buildings that would yield a minimal amount of casualties while taking into account which of New York buildings had fire alarms installed in them.

But in the end, they couldn't completely avoid making casualties. Some people were injured by the blast and the rubble.

Neito was the instigator, but Crimson didn't blame him. He was the first one to survive an encounter with Slipknot, and thus, could provide them with more information. Instead of dropping, His ratings inside the company rose.

He wasn't in the mood to celebrate after hearing the casualty report in his hospital room. But it gave him an idea for his next enemy.

A combat footage of Sonic Youth fighting was running along the monitor in his room.

[...From what I heard, his speed is inhuman... what should we do...]

Sonic Youth was moving so fast that the camera had a hard time following him. Sonic Youth dodged a barrage of machine gun fire.

Slowing the tape into super slow motion, he could see that Sonic Youth didn't dodge them as a whole, but rather made small movements to dodge every single bullet. It was truly a remarkable display of inhuman reflexes.

A scene where Crimson's signature battle android appeared. A beam of straight light appeared, blowing away the android into pieces. From there Sonic Youth disappeared from the screen.

[Hmm... You're hospitalized so you should rest *Nate*. Here, have an apple.]

Anice was peeling apples beside his bed and handed a slice to him.

[No, I already recovered enough... and watching a video wouldn't hurt...]

Neito's recovery was fast due to his regenerative powers. The reason why Anice was with him now was probably because she was concerned for him. To be honest, he panicked when Anice started crying when she came for the first time.

[No, here, say 'Ahn']

*(TLN: The infamous, spoon-feeding couples do.)*

Anice was in a good mood, and her smile was bright as usual... but doing that was a bit too much...

[.....Thanks, I can do it by myself.]

[Ah... But-]

He grabbed the fork and ate the apple. Anice was dissatisfied.

A knock came on the door and an out-of-place individual came in.

[Hey there *Nate*, How are you feeling?]

[A! Papa!]

It was Mister Big. He was wearing his regular Double Suit as usual. Anice was delighted to see him.

[Ah, Hell. I'm already fine. Thank you for your concern.]

Neito thanked himself for not doing the "ahn" thing with Anice. Mr. Big could've walked in on them. The last time they'd seen each other was during the dinner they had at Anice's house. Even then, Mr. Big was hostile towards Neito but now, there was no presence of hostility.

[Do you have something to discuss with me Mr. Big?]

[Not at all, I just came over to convey my greetings.]

Mr. Big stood on top of Crimson. He would have a lot of enemies, and thus he would carefully hide his personal information to avoid being targeted. There was no way Mr. Big would just come casually visiting him for nothing. For him to visit with such big threats, he must need something of great importance from Neito. Maybe he was just genuinely concerned for his future son-in-law.

[Thank you for coming despite your busy schedule.]

Normally, you would doubt the motive of the visit, but Neito disregarded this thought and decided it was a visit out of goodwill.

[Not at all. You're family after all. Do Japanese people eat melons when they are sick?]

Mr. Big brought in a fruit basket. There huge amounts of fruits inside that made Neito glad. Neito thanked him again.

[But I was really surprised. You fought with Slipknot and manage to live through it...]

[Fufu~n♪ Isn't *Nate* amazing?]

[...Not at all...]

Anice was praising him, but what he didn't wasn't something worth praising for. Neito understood something after fighting Slipknot.

First, Slipknot would've immediately killed the person hanging on that ledge if it were the final target. Even if it meant that he would sacrifice all of New York City, he would just brush it off as nothing because he had already achieved his goal. That was the only reason he spared Neito. Slipknot knew he needed to survive by all means until he completed his goal.

Despite surviving, Neito suffered heavy losses. It was his first time getting beaten up this much.

In the final moments, He declared that he "won" against him, but it was no more than surviving to fight another day.

On the other hand, among Crimson, surviving Slipknot's attack was regarded as no more than a miracle.

[Not at all... I did let him get away...]

He kept secret that he deliberately let Slipknot escape. People finding out would cause him too much trouble.

Slipknot was a formidable enemy. He managed to survive the fight against him, but Neito doubted he could defeat him if they were to go at it again.

He was only equipped with his evil spirit and his wits... if he were to use his tactics on Slipknot, he doubted it would work against him.

[...In honesty, the fight against the Rocks Organization over here is really fierce.]

In addition to Slipknot, “he” also exists. Neito looked into the monitor.

[You’re really modest... Oh, a footage of Sonic Youth eh?]

Mr. Big took a seat beside his bed and shifted his attention to the TV monitor.

[Yes, he is quite formidable. His speed can match up, no, exceed Dylan’s]

[I see. If you say so, then it must be true... How about it? What’s the probability of you winning against him?]

Mr. Big was trying to break it down lightly.

[.....I don’t know. I’ll have to try him out myself...]

Neito voiced out his honest opinion. He thought about it a lot, but defeating Sonic Youth was really difficult.

The first idea he thought of was assassination. But then realized that this was futile.

If they were to shoot a bullet from a distance, Sonic Youth’s “Over sense” could easily detect the change of airflow of the bullet, easily moving and avoiding it.

Even so, it was impossible to catch him off guard even if it is a casual day for him.

Even if they were blow up a bomb when he is in the middle of an interview, they would likely fail because he could smell and detect the components of the bomb easily.

If he started wearing his “Sonic Roller Blades” there was no way to catch up to him.

[Is that so... Well, you don't need to force yourself. First you'll need to fully recover. Well, I'm going now. Ah please enjoy the melon.]

Neito called out to Mr. Big as he stood up.

[Ah, excuse me Mr. Big... Can I ask a question?]

[Do you have any idea who this Slipknot is?]

When Slipknot held him at gunpoint, he showed a picture of Crimson's top brass which could eventually lead to Mr. Big. There must be a link to why he wanted to kill Mr. Big.

[Well, I don't know. I know what you are implying. He's been digging information about me after all. But, there are countless people who bear a grudge on me because of the things my company did.]

He determined that Mr. Big wasn't lying.

*He did say “I've done horrible things to people... if anybody were to come after my head, I wouldn't complain if I got killed” he must be sincere.*

[Is that so... Pardon me for asking that question. Thank you for the melon, I'll happily have it.]

Neito let Anice go home with her dad. Thanking Mr. Big, he ate the melon and thought to himself. *I'm the same as Mr. Big... I don't know how many people bear a grudge on me, but I'm sure one of these days, someone will come after my life... If that someone is on par with Slipknot, I don't know if I could live through...*



While Neito was recovering, Niina covered for him in the office. He was receiving lots of cases which he had to process.

[Ahh, I'm so tired...]

He took a deep breath and thought to himself.

*It's the first time Senpai has been beaten that badly... And we still have to deal with Sonic Youth... This might be tricky...*

[Well, Senpai will find a way...]

They managed to get through in the battle with Slipknot. Sonic youth might be strong, but there is always a way to defeat him. Niina might not look like it, but he was an optimist. He didn't mind too much about the minor negative details.

Beetle and Ramone were B class. Neito barely managed to defeat them. Slipknot and the Maroon Five were 'A' class, and he somehow managed to defeat them. Niina knew that Neito just survived to fight another day.

*That means Senpai's rank is equivalent to 'A' class in the Rocks Organization... Slipknot and Sonic Youth are also rank 'A's... I think they can they stand equal with each other.*

[Aahh, it'll work out somehow.]

He then received a call. It was labeled as "Urgent". He picked up the phone and answered.

[This is deputy in charge of the Manhattan area, Niina speaking. Is something the matter?]

The topic was a peculiar one.

[...Eh? Really? Are you serious? Eh? It's on national news? Uwah, then I understand... Please submit a report to me then]

Niina hurriedly turned on the television. If the information was correct, it was a bad thing for them.

The television was playing a soap drama. Niina changed the channel and checked the news.

< This is the current situation on ground >

The news just came on and were showing the headlines.

-Slipknot fights together with Sonic Youth -

< Just around noon, the criminal group, “Rooster” robbed a bank bringing with them a genetically created monster. The incident was solved in less than three minutes. The one who responded first were Sonic Youth, and for the first time, Slipknot who thought to only operate at night and target only Crimson members, appeared and brought a resolution to the situation. >

On the screen, it showed Sonic Youth circling around the monster in high speeds, while Slipknot was providing cover fire with his large rifle. Their fight was fast, precise and deadly in the hands of a master marksman and a speed demon. When confronted with two ‘A’ ranked Rocks Guardians, the monster went down in a flash.

Niina knew that Rooster was a huge criminal organization that were nitpicking on minor crimes. The monster they brought with them was equal to the modified humans Metallica had.

They brought down such monster in a few minutes. Their strength was terrifying.

The video only showed Sonic Youth’s after image and a glimpse of Slipknot firing at the back.

[What does this mean...?]

Niina was crushed. There were many times when Rock’s Guardians would help out each other, and Sonic Youth was no exemption. People already know who he was, but Slipknot was different. Nobody knew who he is and he just operated behind the shadow. Then why?

< We have no definite captured image of Slipknot, but it can’t be denied that the top two Guardians’ strength is overwhelming. >

That was definitely true. Maroon Five was composed of C class heroes combined into one, but the one they showed were two individuals with the rank of ‘A’ class. Their individual powers were just too much.

The current Evil Silhouette was no powerful modified being. The only reason it seemed strong was because Neito knew how to utilize its powers. The Evil Silhouette can no more than be a modified version of the monster shown in the television. There was a huge chance Neito could be brought down that easily.

[...This is really bad.]

Niina hurriedly picked up his phone and contacted Neito.

[Senpai! Did you see the news just now?]

[Yeah... This is one huge setback for us.]

[This is really bad... we were already having trouble dealing with them each... now that they've paired up...]

[Calm down. This may just be a fluke, they may have been simply close to the location when the incident happened.]

Neito was being hopeful. There must be a reason why Slipknot did this.

Niina again, thought to himself. *Did Slipknot stop acting independently? Could it be that realized he couldn't defeat Senpai, so he's now pairing up with other Guardians? Will that be common now?*

This was a probable question.

[Slipknot is still suspected on the destruction of the building, he may just want to create a good image of himself. On the other hand, he may have a different objective. He may look like a blockhead, but he's doing it for a purpose. Well, Crimson didn't receive any casualties, and we don't know what he'll do next... All we can do is wait and observe.]

Neito was answering in a worried voice. But it was true that they could only wait for more information.

[...derstood Senpai...]

He ended the call.

A few days passed.

Neito hopes were not answered. On the following days, Slipknot started working with Sonic Youth in every incident.

In regards to this change, the citizens were both shocked and divided.

He was no more than a no powered hero, yet he stood equal to Sonic Youth. They already know that he doesn't hesitate as long he gets what he wants, no matter what the method is, and for that they criticized him. Could they have been both affiliated with one another? Some were saying it was a good thing since they were now working together.

There were times when they would enter the battle simultaneously. And there were rumors about Slipknot sharing his information network with Sonic Youth, and they would both deal with the crime.

In the end, the crime rate in New York City went down, and the number of cases solved by the police skyrocketed.

The Manhattan area now was the very threat to Crimson. They instances of crime lowered, and the top brass, as well as Mr. Big disappeared.

The company was being cornered by Slipknot, and Niina, as well as Neito couldn't do anything about it.

It could be said that Slipknot's change of tactic had bounded Crimson to its knees.

Niina, changed his lifestyle, and lived in fear of the day Slipknot would come for his head.

# CHAPTER 50

## IT'S GOING TO BE OKAY ANICE

The cooperation between the top two Guardians and the sudden disappearance of Mr. Big had a huge effect on the company. Since then there were no activities and operation popping out from within. Though some tried, they would just be ultimately stooped by Sonic Youth and Slipknot.

There was just simply too much difference in strength between the two guardians and the current members of Crimson. The way they deal with incidents was far faster and efficient than before.

Until now, Sonic Youth always responded to incidents after they happen. Now, with Slipknot's intelligence network, he was able to be at that location before any major incident that could happen.

The same goes for Slipknot. For some unknown reason, he was able to intercept and foil the plans of Crimson even before they started.

These incidents kept happening regularly that it was now a huge risk for Crimson to carry out plans.

With such situations occurring, Neito had to be discharged from the hospital earlier than scheduled. With Mr. Big's disappearance, the whole executive staff members decided to hold a meeting. Neito was no exemption from this. The topic would be how to deal with their current situation.

Other than Mr. Big, there were thirteen other executive staff members. They had no particular ranking in regards to their importance, but they were currently incomplete. Some of the members were taken out. Out of the thirteen, the remaining ten members were gathering on the top of the main office.

The meeting started with concerns and complains, but they soon settled down to discuss the main topic. They were now proposing one after the other on how to deal with the current situation, of which, one idea got shot down after the other. Without

Mr. Big they were merely a group that had ideas, but no action.

[Now, why did that bastard in black tights act that way?]

[Could Mr. Big already have fallen into their hands?]

Neito stared into the room with distant eyes.

An idea came forward:

[Why don't we pullout of New York temporarily?]

But it was rejected. Neito also couldn't agree. It was simply a notion that they'd surrender. If the general staff found out about it, there was a chance that an internal turmoil could break the company apart. It would be known that Crimson was afraid of the two guardians and they couldn't keep their territory under control.

Also New York was an area they needed to hold on the most.

Then a proposal came up:

[We should just find a way for them to stop cooperating. Looking at their past, is there any way to break them apart?]

This was the most sensible thing to do, but is it really possible? Most off the general public already had a bad image of Slipknot. Finding out more and releasing to the public would be futile and just a waste of time. Sonic Youth on the other hand was already well known in public. There were no particular resentments towards him, and they could say that the public had huge respect for him.

Furthermore, since both of them were exchanging information, they would have a hard time finding the information that would damage them both.

[Then we should prioritize finding Mr. Big. This is a time when we need a strong leader. And if ever Mr. Big was taken out, it's our duty as part of the family to avenge him!]

It was a probable cause, but it was very insignificant. Every subordinate was already looking for Mr. Big through their own means. Even Neito was asked to search for him in the area he was in charge with (Manhattan).

The same goes for revenge. While the family might want to do it, it lies on the factor of gain and loss. It might be different in Metallica, but there was no point in asking “What if we don’t find Mr. Big?”

Neito crossed his arms, and further observed the meeting.

*Everybody already knows what needs to be done... why isn't anybody bringing it up? Are they afraid of taking responsibility for the idea? Or do they think that they can't do it?*

Before his eyes were the top brass of Crimson engaging in a hot headed discussion. It felt funny to him that they took too much time to reach an agreement.

Although there was the option of waiting a few more hours for a conclusion, Neito did not intend on waiting.

Neito stood up.

All eyes in the room were now looking at him. The discussion stopped, and the room was filled in silence.

Having confirmed that he got everybody’s attention, he continued.

[We have to defeat them. We need to defeat the two of them by our own powers.]

Neito said it frankly. It was their best course of action. If they were to withdraw and show weakness here, Crimson would no doubt be exterminated. If the two guardians were involved in Mr. Big’s disappearance, then everything would be cleared up once they defeat them.

Neito received comments from the executive staff:

[That may be so, but do you know how?]

[It won’t be easy... After all, you may have come from Japan and defeated several guardians there, but you proved to be ineffective when you fought with Slipknot...]

[We understand... Why don’t we form a plan *Nate*?]

Every member had different opinions. Some urged that fighting them was not even an option.

It wasn't a case where they just need to hit them both with Crimson's full force. Theoretically, they could gather all the members of Crimson and fight them both, but there were other "missions" to be done other than dealing with the two guardians.

Considering their position, it would be disadvantageous for Crimson to be the one to attack first. They knew nothing of Slipknot, while Sonic Youth, more specifically Mark Gordon, was considered a national asset. There were always measures ensured to protect him.

[I have an idea... If we were to plan and create a huge incident, they surely would appear.]

Neito further explained his plan. The room was silent.

[That may be so, but how do you plan on dealing with them?]

[It's for the best that I take command for the situation on site. I'm a modified human, and I have the most experience fighting against the Rock's guardians.]

[Do you plan on dying? You're already part of the Family. We can't let a new member of the Family sacrifice himself for us.]

Everybody nodded at that notion.

*I see... so this is the secret weapon Mr. Big nurtured...* Neito sighed in relief.

The chances of him succeeding were very low, even if he failed, there were no consequence to the other executive members. On the other hand, if he managed to succeed, it could catapult his career forward. Even taking over the company would be possible for him then. In other words, it was a worthwhile gamble.

But the remaining members didn't agree with him plan. It was because he was part of **[The Family]**. Neito was thankful for the concern, but it was a time when they needed to act.

[I thank you from the bottom of my heart. But it's not all total defeat. Will you let me take responsibility for this mission? Mr. Big called me [Hero Killer]... Furthermore, I come from Metallica, this is my way of repaying the trust the Crimson family has given to me. It's my duty as part of the family.]

The room was silent. They very well couldn't oppose to the hot blooded speech Neito had.

The executive's expression changed. They now saw him as their hope, a person they could truly trust.

Once person spoke out:

[Even if you say that...]

He wanted to continue, but Neito stared at him directly in the eye.

[I will definitely win.]

Neito said those word in a firm voice. *This should come natural... Now that Mr. Big is out, it's time to show my initiative...*

Those words also came from the bottom of his heart. He wanted them to believe in him. Believe that he could win. It was to a point where an aura of reassurance surrounded him. Neito, with his experience, assured the entire room.

With Neito's notion, nobody further opposed him. With that the meeting ended.



From that day on, Neito was preparing himself for the fateful day. The day they would execute their plans was scheduled tomorrow.

Neito had been given a pent-house, few blocks away from the office. Neito was walking back alone when he looked up and noticed something.

[Snow... huh?]

He was wondering why it had been cold lately. The slow falling snow fell on the busy streets of Manhattan.

It was cold, but Neito was perfectly fine with it. He tightened his black coat and continued walking.

A person was standing at the entrance of his building. Wearing a cotton hat and a

bright red coat, it was a girl he knew for more than three years.

[...Anice?]

Noticing him, she came towards him.

[Hey there *Nate*... Welcome back]

[Were you waiting for me? It must've been cold.]

[Yeah... just a bit...]

Anice shyly laughed. Her nose and cheeks were bright red. She probably waited for more than “a bit”.

[You seem down.]

[Ahahaha... You're right. I'm sorry *Nate*.]

She was a completely different person today.

It had been a few days since Mr. Big disappeared, but she was still energetic and cheerful. But now, she was all depressed. She was that person that would naturally give off a good vibe to cheer you up anymore.

*She still tried to stay positive. No doubt she's crying at home, all alone.* Neito couldn't do anything to help her.

He thought he had no right to help her, but soon realized that it was because he was weak, he can't do anything.

[I heard about it... you're going to fight tomorrow...]

[Yeah...]

Neito answered honestly. He didn't want to hide it from her anymore. At least for now.

[You can't! I don't want you to go... Even *Nate* is leaving me...]

Anice's voice was trembling. It was like a knot tightening in his chest.

[...]

After thinking about it, he hugged Anice. They weren't in the right place to do it, but it was the only thing he could do to comfort her. His shoulders were all shaky since he wasn't used to doing such a thing.

*(TLN: Public display of affection is a big no-no in Japan, that's why he thought it was 'inappropriate')*

[It's going to be okay Anice.]

He didn't want to be taken out despite working for evil? That's bullshit. He treaded through countless obstacles. Anice was always by his side, brightly and energetically cheering him on. Maybe she was acting that way because of the terrifying situation... but He knew she was purely concerned for his well-being as a person of the opposite sex.

No matter how thoroughbred she was, no matter how educated she is, she had a part of her that liked a villain. She was still a girl, losing someone dear to her would definitely hurt.

While the Rocks Organization is making their move, Mr. Big was missing. She didn't know if her father was safe, this only added to her worries.

*That's why... at least I could answer her this...*

[I'll never disappear from you.]

*I've defeated various enemies thus far... All for the purpose of changing the world. Now, there's one more reason to win this fight.*

Neito hugged Anice tightly, warming up her cold skin.

Her voice was trembling while her tears fell.

[...T-... That's a promise? (Sniff)]

[Ah... your face is drenched...]

He thought of giving her the handkerchief in his pocket, but he remembered that it

had been in his coat pocket for three days now. Instead, he grabbed a packet of pocket tissue.

[Uu~. Thanks.]

She blew her nose on the tissue.

[...Ehehe... Sorry... I don't look good at all now...]

Looking up, her expression was a little bit brighter than before.

[Aah, no, I don't mind at all.]

[Do you remember what I said when we went to that amusement park back in Japan *Nate*?]

She had a mellow expression, reminiscing the past.

[...Yeah]

[I really get excited when I look at you. How far will you go? What kind of world will you make? Those are just some of the questions I ask myself when I'm with you... That's why, I want to stay by your side, no matter how evil you might become.]

In the spur of that moment, she held his hand. Neito was becoming nervous and agitated.

[I love my Papa... but I love you in a different way.]

Anice took a step forward, approaching Neito, and kissed him.

Under the falling white snow, Neito was unable to respond to this sudden turn of events.

[A-Anice...?]

Neito stumble on his words since he wasn't used to dealing with this kind of situation.

[Ehehehe♪ Yay♪ I did it with *Nate*]

[...Ah...]

[Hmmm♪ Hey look *Nate!* The snow is falling so thick, we could make snowmen out of it!]

Anice was dancing around while the snow was falling. She was very embarrassed, so she tried to covering it with words and constant movement.

Neito couldn't move or speak. He was reminiscing the soft after taste on his lips.

Seeing him in that state Anice held out a finger and spoke in her usual heavenly-soft voice.

[I'm feeling much better now! Thanks *Nate!* I'm going home, so you better go in too... I forbid you from catching a cold! 'Kay? Good luck tomorrow!]

[Ah... I'll walk you home...]

[I'm fine. You should go home and rest!]

Without having the chance to spew out another word, Anice turned and ran away from him.

[.....Hm?]

Neito, who was now alone, started thinking to himself again.

*What I'm about to do may be considered the most evil thing I may do... And I don't like it myself. Even if that's the case, I still need to do it.*

*I can no longer turn back.*

Neito spent a sleepless night only thinking about what he was going to do. For him, it was the first time he experienced such a thing.



(Author's Notes)

I forgot to mention this, but I decided to write a short spin-off chapter with each hero that came out as the main protagonist. They won't be present here in the web novel, but it's cool to showcase each hero's powers in overcoming various obstacles and enemies.

**{The Silver Knight: Dylan}**

**{The Automated Super-Human: Harrison · Beetle}**

**{The Spirit Manipulator: Ramone}**

**{The Psychic Group: Maroon Five}**

I really like books involving heroes.

After the main story is finish I may submit an entry in regards to what I mentioned above. I hope you readers also look forward to it.

## CHAPTER 51

# I'M GOING TO ERASE BOTH OF YOU FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH

< I have something to tell you after today's mission is over >

Finishing up his message, he sent it to Anice via mobile. He reached for the small built-in fridge inside the limo and took out a water bottle. He took a sip and calmed himself down. He was about to commit a crime.

He decided that the plan to draw out the top two members of the Rocks Organization would be a bank robbery.

Normally, Crimson would never commit a petty act of robbery in their own territory. Not only would their business get affected, but the money they stole would have a depreciated value on the international market, making the robbery not worthwhile.

But today, his objective wasn't to steal the money. It's for him to create a situation where he could face off against the two heroes. The only way to draw them both out at the same time was to commit a large scale crime where they were absolutely needed to stop the perpetrators.

The members of his team were Niina, Him and a few other of his subordinates from Crimson in charge of the Manhattan area. The other members under him were tasked off to sealing the island of Manhattan to prevent any further interruption from response teams.

This still worried him. What if he were to be gravely injured in the fight and can't go on? What would happen to Niina and his subordinates? This kept him thinking.

Having a lot of experience in fighting, He knew that things rarely go according to plan.

[Senpai... do you think we'll be okay today...?]

They were now moving towards their designated position when Niina asked him. Of course, He already explained his plan to Niina multiple times.

[...Hm? Are you worried about the robbery? Well, since it's Crimson we're talking about, they should have no problem considering their strength. ]

The plan was simple: Survey the area, send in the robbery team, steal the money and then get out. If the cops come, silence them. Considering Crimson has [Over Technology] and Neito at their side, silencing the police should be fairly easy.

[Ah, no, the robbery part is a piece of cake. I'm asking you if you're going to be okay when you fight against those two.]

He barely defeated Slipknot the last time, and now, he also had to face Sonic Youth at the same time. Niina was also worried himself.

[I really don't know... and are you going to be okay with it? Risking your life and all?]

Niina was his subordinate. He didn't include him in his in his plan. He knew both heroes would be dangerous enough to go against.

[Risking my life... huh? Aren't we always doing that? Well, if things go bad, I'll immediately run anyway.]

[That's so like you... then I'll be counting on you to do that]

They both laughed at each other.

*This guy grown so much...*

[We're about to arrive at our destination. Shall we?]

[Derstood senpai]

A few minutes after the plan started, Neito and his subordinates gained total control over the bank on the southern district of Manhattan. They carried the cash and the gold bars into an armored truck accompanied by a huge trailer truck and a couple of motor bikes and exited away.

He already accounted beforehand that the Guardians would block their way with

barricades, but because of his other subordinates, only a few Guardians stood in their way. They still posed a significant threat

But,

[Do it]

He didn't care. They didn't come anything close to what was about to come to them.

With a swift order from him, they blew away the barricade with a bazooka and crashed through it at full speed. The barricade and the Guardian's transport vehicles were all blown away.

In the middle of the Crimson convoy was the Limousine Neito was on. He didn't budge from his seat ever since the operation started. Amidst the explosions and destruction, He focused on his task and continued relaying orders to his subordinates.

"Destroy everything in our way. If you don't want to get hurt, get out of our way."

Their vehicles never slowed down. They always maintained top speed, crashing everything in their way. They left a wake of destruction and flames in their path to those who dared stop them.

[...Uwhaa-. Wow. This like that old Hollywood movie I once saw. If I remember right, car chases were still very popular back in the 2050s. This is crazy.]

Niina wasn't even bothered with the amount of destruction they brought down to the city. He still focused his eyes on the monitor, checking enemy positions and relaying it to Neito.

[Hmm, crazy? We need to do something like this or we won't draw them both out you know?]

They exited the Manhattan area and headed for the Washington Bridge. The bridge wasn't left unguarded either. They had established a blockade to stop them.

They still didn't posed a threat to them.

That's right, only a hero could stop them.

Suddenly,

The lead trailer truck topple sideways. A loud noise followed a shockwave from the top of the bridge.

[?! W-what happened!?!]

His subordinates were panicking.

The trailer truck was toppled side-ways on the bridge, blocking the convoy's path. The armored car carrying the package stopped in its tracks.

Upon inspection, they found out that the front mirror of the trailer truck was shot by a large caliber rifle, hitting the driver in the shoulder. Of course, the glass pane was bullet proof but the glass was shot in the same place multiple times, breaking and piercing through it.

*(TLN: Bullet proof glass can stop bullets as long as they don't hit the same place with the same angle more the once.)*

Furthermore, something came out of the Hudson River, surfing on top of the water surface, and jumped unto the bridge. It took the driver and threw him out into the river.

Of course, they had the option to blow up the lead trailer truck, but they didn't. The whole purpose of the ploy was to be used as bait to lure the two heroes.

There was nobody else capable of having the accuracy to pierce through the bullet proof glass with such precision and knock the driver out of the fight so easily.

[.....They're here huh? Here we go Niina.]

[Aye Sir.]

Neito stood up and exited the limo. It would be suicide to remain within the limo and try to fight both of them off.

He gathered his subordinates and gave them orders.

[Each of you will take up arms and position yourselves on a barricade to slow down

the enemy. Don't forget to stay alert.]

Each member of under him left their vehicles and assumed defensive positions.

Neito looked at the toppled truck. A figure was visible standing on top of it. There was only one man capable of jumping that height from the Hudson River to the Bridge.

America's strongest figure and the fastest man alive.

[He looks formidable no matter how you look at it. I see, he's the figurehead of the Rock's Organization huh? No wonder he looks so cool.]

The man looked like he had an aura with him as the sun set behind him.

On the other hand, the other hero was nowhere to be found. No doubt he has taken up position somewhere in the vicinity.

[Well, I can't blame him. It's his specialty after all. Well, I guess I'll deal with this sonic bastard first]

Neito started walking toward the hero his subordinates were aiming at.

No doubt he noticed him approaching.

He was wearing goggles along with his Speed Skaters. Their eyes met, the hero looking down unto the villain.

[Yo, we just stole a huge amount of cash from the bank... Would you be so kind to move out of our way?].Neito displayed a sense of calmness and a sense humor as he talked to the hero.

The hero now replied to him. [The people of this city have their dreams and freedom. I won't allow you to trample over it. If you won't cooperate with me, I'll have to take you in myself]. It was a clear and strong voice. A voice of a man full of confidence and the justice he represented.

His eye protector was fitted for Motor-Cross bikers and Extreme-sports players. It had a bright blue color. Beneath his helmet was his blonde hair. He had a muscular body and on his feet were Mechanical Roller Shoes.

Everybody in America knew this hero.

The fastest known man named Sonic Youth stood before him.

[Hmph, then I'll be defeating you then "Sonic Youth"!]

The wind was strong. Neito's suit and tie fluttered over the wind.

He took his tie off and folded him into his pocket as he stared down at Sonic Youth.

[...Transform]

His body transformed in an instant. A black substance enveloped his whole body.

Neito sprang forth from his spot and charged at Sonic Youth. At the same time, under Niina's command, Crimson members started shooting at Sonic Youth.

[Here I come!!!]

But,

[!? What!?!]

He felt a strong gust of wind and he disappeared. Sonic Youth vanished from the world.

*That's not possible. He was there a second ago...*

A second later, Neito felt a blow hit his shoulder.

[Catch me if you can]

A roller blade was struck on his shoulder. He didn't see it coming. A moment ago, he was on top the trailer truck and now, it looked like he teleported above his shoulder.

[Impossible!]

He was fast. Faster than expected. Neito felt the cold steel on his shoulder. In a panic, he tried to hit him with his claws but to no avail.

Sonic Youth kicked off from Neito's shoulder and rushed towards Niina.

[Wha-!? Why you...!]

[Sonic Youth!!]

[This is bad! This is really bad!]

His subordinated were panicking. *I can't blame them*

[Calm down! Everybody, shift to the right and start surrounding him!]

Niina gave a precise order. Now they surrounded Sonic Youth with him in the center of the circle. There was a chance of friendly fire occurring if they shot now, but it didn't matter to Sonic Youth.

[It's futile...!]

Using his speed, Sonic Youth could have easily dodged every bullet shot at him.

[Bullets are ineffective against me.]

His Roller blades revved up. For him it was but an easy task to dodge bullets.

[Put down your weapons or you'll taste the coldness of the Hudson River.]

[...Damn...]

His subordinates were just staring Sonic Youth down. The next moment, things took for the worst turn.

[Wha-! W-Where is he shooting from!?!]

One after the other, his subordinates got taken down. They were getting sniped. It was the other A-class hero, Slipknot's fault.

It was easy for Neito who had transformed to locate him using the muzzle flash.

[You bastard... Since when have you been there!?!]

Looking up, Slipknot was on top of the Washington Bridge with his tight black suit sniping them.

[Hm? I was here since Sonic-kun coolly appeared. Is there a problem?]

Neito wanted to yell at him for making fun of the situation. As they were talking, Slipknot pulled out multiple grenade like objects from his bag.

[This is Slipknot's special throw- here!]

There was quite a distance between him and the convoy, but he made an accurate throw that landed the grenades near the vehicles. The vehicles exploded and some of his subordinates and vehicles got thrown over into the Hudson River.

[Yes! Strike-Out!!]

The dark hero made the situation even worse. He took out their mobility in one go. Many of his subordinates were injured, and some were thrown off into the river.

[...Bring it on... I'll kill you first then.]

Neito spread his wings and made a flight towards the top of the bridge, rapidly approaching Slipknot.

He was a few meters before hitting Slipknot when he raised his claws. No doubt his subordinates thought he was going to hit him but,

[I won't let you do that!]

[!?!]

*This voice... How did he get here? Weren't you down below a few moments ago?*

Sonic Youth suddenly appeared by his right side.

Sonic Youth's blue knuckle guard suddenly appeared and hit him head on. Multiplied by the kinetic energy gained from his speed, Neito got blown away.

Sonic Youth appeared meters in the air and attacked Neito. It was as if he teleported to him.

Neito rapidly shot through the bridge. A loud shockwave followed him as he hit the concrete.

Neito ran out of air as he hit the ground.

[...Gahaa-!!]

[Fuu- That was really scary. It's a godsend that you're here Sonic. Thanks Buddy! Uwa, bad people are really scary! He tried to kill me you know? That would be really bad if it happened hahaha]

[Don't let your guard down Slipknot. And stop attacking senselessly. They may be villains by they are entitled to the same rights as people of this country. They have the right to be equally judged under a court of jurisdiction... wait, maybe that man may cooperate now.]

Sonic Youth surfed the guardrail of the bridge and came after Neito.

Neito sustained internal damage from the blow. He couldn't stand and needed time to recover. He took this moment to analyze their situation.

*The situation is at a critical moment. No doubt that's what his subordinates thought. There are two heroes that nobody could lay their hands upon, and the regarded evil modified genius is at this state.*

A trailer truck blocks the front, while the burning vehicles are blocking out our escape from behind. *We can't expect any help from Crimson at this stage.* The only one that stood a chance against them was him. The others may think that the reason they surrounded them was to trap them, but He knew otherwise.

It was something he planned all along. There was no way Crimson would bring out their full power into a plan so screwed up. If they manage to win, then it would be regarded as a miracle. *"The probability of winning is so slim... So let us do it".* That was the plan.

But they lost. It was all over.

*No doubt that's what they were thinking.*

[Are you okay senpai?]

Niina came and helped him up. As he was being pulled up, he answered back

[Yeah, no problem here.]

It was all according to plan. He surveyed the area around him.

The bridge was already engulfed in flame and smoke. It was a hellish scene. The sun was already setting. No doubt the situation was going to get worse. A helicopter was already circling above them. No doubt it was the mass media. Both ends of the bridge were already blocked by the Guardians as well as the mass media. The reason why the other Guardians didn't interfere with them was because they feared Crimson, as well as they put their faith into the two heroes sent to stop them.

*Manhattan, no, the whole United States must be watching us now. Everybody wants to see the super heroes beat the evil doers. From end to end, every television channel must be focused on us now.*

*Everything was done to create this situation. The bank robbery as well as the flashy car chase was all for this. The helicopter flew above them and circled in.*

*How about it? It is as Niina said... It's like we're shooting a movie in the Washington Bridge.*

*"Crimson lost. The top brass disappeared, and among the remaining members, they tried to do a desperate move only to be stopped by the Rock's Organization."*

*No doubt that's what the media is going to write against us.*

The heroes were standing up top on the bridge, staring down at the villains. *That scene caught on the camera must look cool to the viewers.*

*That's why everything is good.*

*This is the best setting I could get. This is the best time to unveil the [Evil] I've been plotting. This was way ahead of schedule but I'm almost done with the preparations. I just have to hang on for a little bit more.*

[Niina, proceed as planned. Escape alongside everybody that's left. I doubt you'll die if you jump into the river.]

*If they manage to get away from the bridge no doubt Crimson people would pick them up and give them medical attention since they're most likely to be disguised as medics.*

[U-Understood... will you be okay by yourself Senpai?]

[Yeah. I'll be okay on my own. From this point on, it's better if I'm alone.]

[If... you want me to hold civilians as hostages like last time, I doubt I will succeed this time...]

Niina is smart. Although that option is not totally out of the box, the possibility of success was just slim.

Unlike before, all the attention was drawn unto them. The Guardians were there and easily assured the civilians. And unlike before, there was nothing that could threaten Slipknot now.

And if they manage to succeed, it was a matter of them dealing with the one holding the civilian hostage.

*No, it can't end that simply. It can end with them just admitting defeat.*

[No, I'll attain everything in this fight. Defeating both heroes and taking over Crimson too.]

*And being labeled as the ultimate villain. In return, I have to sacrifice something of equal value.*

*No doubt I could see that bright face again...*

*But even that...*

[Hurry up and go, Niina.]

*I'm moving forward. In order to change the world. To change the scene I saw on [The right side] of my apartment.*

*I'll go as low as I can, to no man has ever been.*

*Even though there are few people that wished for this change, I don't care. It's because I choose to change the world that I'm doing this.*

Neito grit his teeth and stood up.

[...Understood... Then senpai... if you don't die, I'll treat you to a drink for once...!]

Niina then jumped over the bridge with his remaining subordinates, after dressing themselves as medics. Small water transports were already prepared beforehand so they should have no trouble getting away.

[Manaka-san... your last words... perhaps you wanted to something like this]

Neito used his shaking knee to get up while mumbling to himself.

["Show me the real meaning of the word [Evil]" huh? I'll find out myself soon.]

Neito looked up to the two heroes.

[What will you do? If you're going to surrender, then I'll take you in myself and guarantee your safety. Any more fighting is futile.]

Sonic Youth's words were hard and true. It felt like he was making a sincere offer. If it was the Neito ten years ago, he would've asked for a signature, but now it was different.

Neito stared at the figure of justice standing before him.

[Surrender? Don't kid yourself. I'm going to erase both of you from the face of the earth. Aah, unlike before, I'll erase you before I surrender. You better be prepared.]

# CHAPTER 52

## ITS 385,204 INCIDENTS

(TLN: Sonic Youth's POV... Almost all "he" mentioned refers to Sonic Youth)

Sonic Youth was a hero.

Everybody in America knew this. His real name, Mark Gordon took pride in this. His alter self, Sonic Youth was tasked to protect the dreams of the people with his strength. He knew it was his duty to do so.

America is the land of freedom. The spirit to achieve success is called "The American Dream". He took this words into a literal sense, making it into his personal pride.

When he was young, his family was never fortunate, but he didn't give up. He stood up amidst the situation and grabbed his dream. He rose higher and higher, dreaming of it and never giving up.

In following years he was the MVP of American Football, the Top Gun of the Air-Force and he became an Astronaut.

It wasn't for him to be praised, nor did he want to be better than everybody else. He simply liked football, liked to pilot a plane and he wanted to see space with his own eyes.

He showed the world that dreams can come true.

After that, was it by chance or fate, he attained the inhuman ability, Over Sense.

With all of his dreams achieved, and with new powers, He thought to himself "This must be fate".

He achieved his dreams in the land of freedom and thought highly of it. Now he has powers.

For what purpose?

For sure, it was to protect other people's dreams. Mark understood it that way. Everybody has the right to pursue their dreams. Nobody has the right to take it away. Whether it was criminals or underground organizations, he vowed to fight them off.

It was for Manhattan, no, New York or yet, for America's people.

He persuaded himself so. That's why he can't lose here.

[...Don't bother. I fight to protect people's dreams, I won't lose]

Mark, no, Sonic Youth was standing on top of the guard-railings amidst fire and smoke, looking down at his enemy.

He heard from his partner lately, that Crimson had someone from Metallica, a Japanese man who was a modified human, sent to assist them. *This must be that man.*

[Hey now Sonic, he insists this much... can we just kill him right here and now?]

Slipknot, who came down and was now beside him, mocked and took lightly of the situation.

He didn't like this part of him.

[Slipknot, you and I are different. I fight to protect the people.]

He fought with him on multiple occasions, and he (Slipknot) supplied information on Crimson activities, but he never figured out what drove him (Slipknot) to do such things.

Slipknot fought "to kill" people. Whether it's for revenge, or self-satisfaction, he was obsessed with taking down Crimson's top boss, Mr. Big and the top brass.

Because of his principles, nobody wanted to cooperate with him.

But soon he realized his mistakes. Sonic Youth's condition for them to pair up was to withdraw his rights to decide what should be done to the criminal.

Since he agreed to that condition, they both worked together. He even agreed to hand over the criminal captured to the Guardians.

Perhaps Slipknot's objective, Mr. Big, was the ultimate objective and each Crimson member killed brings him closer to his goal. That's why he thought Slipknot was competing against himself.

If they paired up, he knew their strength would be absolute, and that was the truth.

Criminals and even Crimson were steadily taken down by both of them.

He knew they would eventually find the missing Mr. Big and his top Brass. Slipknot kept believing that and abandoned his former principles.

[You won't kill him? I'm okay with that decision but... Sonic, it's him you know? The guy that held the whole city hostage, blowing up high-rise buildings and all. If I remember right, he was called *Nate*]

[What?!]

Sonic Youth again looked at the man from Crimson, *Nate*.

[...So, what of it Slipknot?] (By Neito)

*Nate's* face didn't express anything. He didn't feel anything. It looked like that to Sonic Youth.

*Nate* continued.

[Sonic Youth, you said you won't lose because you'll protect everybody's dreams? Ha, how noble of you. You can't defeat me. Not because "I won't lose" but because I will win. It's definite. I'll do anything to win. No matter who gets sacrificed or what gets destroyed, I'll attain what I want. That's how I've always been.]

He was showing off an impressive killing intent. Directly and indirectly, Sonic Youth's Over Sense sensed danger from the man before him. He knew he (Neito) wasn't faking it.

But he (Neito) wasn't afraid. On the other hand, it raised his fighting spirits. He knew it was going to be a tough fight.

He couldn't forgive this man. He tried to steal the people's dreams.

Evil. Enemy.

[You-!]

He jumped off from the guard rail and landed in front of *Nate*.

The wind was blowing and the smoke also got blown away.

[You... Do you know how many crimes you have committed?!]

Sonic Youth declared it in front of him. His heart was burning and yearned for justice. His aura was enough for average villains to contemplate their crimes and cower before him.

[It's 385,204 incidents.]

*Nate* didn't cower before him. His expression was still cold as ice.

[Wha-?]

[Didn't you hear me? You don't need to dig it up during trial. The total incidents I committed are 385,204. Both directly and indirectly.]

Sonic Youth didn't understand him. *Nate* answer was a huge amount. Did he count each crime he committed? Did he take those crimes to heart? Is there a villain that would do such a thing?

*This is no ordinary man. I can't lower my guard against him.*

Sonic Youth took up his battle stance once again.



(TLN: Back to Neito's POV)

*Maybe I spoke too much*

Speaking to Sonic Youth directly, a little bit of him melted off.

He counted them. He counted the amount of crimes he committed and remembered

them.

He wasn't asking to be forgiven. He counted them to remind himself to carry those sins he committed on his shoulders as he moved on. That's right, it was for self-assurance. Those who got hurt (killed), and things that got destroyed, they won't come back. But he'll never forget them.

Those feelings weren't supposed to be shown to the enemy. He reflected on his actions.

[But I never thought of it that M-uch!]

In the next moment, he used his claws and slashed upward. His claws were powerful enough to cut through steel.

[Too slow!!]

But it didn't hit Sonic Youth. Leaving his after image, he disappeared. Looking up, he was doing a summersault flip and landed behind him.

[Che- you're one fast bastard...!]

[Take this-!]

Neito turned around and assumed a defensive stance.

It was close, but he managed to block him off. He blocked his accelerated spin hook with both of his arms. Sonic Youth used the force from the kick to gain distance.

They both stared down each other.

[...I see... I can't do it half-heartedly huh...]

**Zing**

*Fast. What speed is this? I can't hit him at this speed!*

Sonic Youth was using his Over-Sense to focus on him. His posture, movements and focus were perfect. His dodge rate was almost at a hundred percent.

[He's close to being invincible]

No matter how he looked at it, it felt so.

Sniping and long range attacks would weaken the bullet's firepower and because of Over-Sense, he could detect it early on.

But then, close range attacks were also impossible. When Mark Gordon was assigned to a VIP, his security was perfect that nobody could get close to them.

And whenever he fought, he could read the expressions of his enemies and know what they were thinking even before they acted. In that case, he was invincible. His body may be like a normal person's and still vulnerable to mortal wounds, but with his speed, he was untouchable.

It was impossible to kill him from afar. It was impossible to get near him. And with his Over-Sense focused into a single point, he was unbeatable.

*He is close. Close to be being invincible.*

[...That's right only "Close to", but not Invincible!!]

Neito took a breath and charged at Sonic Youth.

[It's futile. You can never catch up to me!]

Sonic Youth activated his Roller Blades. With a quick jump and a spin, he dodged Neito's attack.

[Take this-!]

He still dodged. Even with consecutive attacks, he dodged every single strike. With perfect technique and his frightening speed, his attacks never touched him. It was like he was only hitting his after image.

But this after-image also struck back.

[Ha-!!]

While dodging Neito's attacks, Sonic Youth immediately did a spin-hook.

It was so sudden that Neito couldn't block it. He took the blow and got blown off.

With his speed as his focal point, Sonic Youth displayed a huge advantage over him.

He couldn't hit him, but Sonic Youth could easily get a blow over him. It was a one sided battle.

At the same time, Slipknot was sniping him from the guard-rails. With his superb accuracy and timing in-between blows, he landed every shot at Neito. Of course, Neito could do nothing but receive the shots.

[...Not... Yet...]

Neito tried to stand and fight, but the blows kept coming at him.

[You should stop. You're all beaten up.]

He was already knocked down multiple times, but he still stood back up. Sonic Youth pointed a finger at him to stay down.

[...I won't stop.]

Neito stood back up. He'll fight to death. His trap will be set off at the most critical moment. There was no other way to win but that.

[You're stubborn... Then I won't hold back!]

Sonic Youth's saw butt hit Neito's head. Paired with the speed and the kinetic energy stored, this brought Neito to his knees. No doubt everybody looking at them via television were cheering at this moment.

*(TLN: Saw-Butt – I think that's a part of a roller blade)*

But all was good for Neito. The reason he fights is for himself. He was fighting for the world he wanted to create.

That's why he wasn't bothered with other people's opinion of him.

[...Come! You can't stop me unless you kill me-!]

Neito stood back up again. His body was screaming all over, but he ignored it.

[A-ah, you look so pitiful now... Sonic, I'll get serious too.]

Looking down at Neito, Slipknot pulled out a different weapon than his rifle.

He pulled out a rocket launcher.

[Yahooo-!!]

Slipknot fired a rocket.

Neito grit his teeth and tried dodging it.

Explosion and thick smoke eloped the bridge. Slipknot probably reduced the fire power so the bridge won't get destroyed but it still was powerful.

[Hey Hey Hey-!]

Slipknot was now throwing grenades. This also caused explosions and thick smoke.

Paired with the burning vehicles, rocket launcher and grenades, the Washington Bridge was now covered in thick black smoke. No doubt people from afar can no longer see what was going on inside the smoke.

[...Is this it huh...?]

Neito managed to avoid the blasts but still sustained splash damage.

He couldn't stand back up. It was over for him. He can't fight any more.

Looking at the defeated figure, the two heroes approached him.

[It's your lost.]

[You did well, but how unfortunate. You were so close-!]

Both heroes were unhurt. They casually looked down on Neito.

[...Yeah, It's my loss.]

Neito's transformation wore off. Even in his human form, he was all beaten up.

[Sonic Youth, go ahead and capture me. I'll face trial as you suggested.]

Neito didn't have the strength to attack. He couldn't move. That's what Sonic Youth must have thought.

[...Good.]

Sonic Youth slowly walked towards Neito. He was still on his guard. Even if Neito did a surprise attack, he knew it would be useless. But he still was cautious.

[Being defeated by heroes... doesn't sound too bad after-all]

Neito didn't move. Sonic Youth gave his gear to Slipknot and approached Neito.

Amidst the fire and flames, the hero captures the villain.

This was the moment

***Bang!***

The sound echoed.

It was a gun shot.

[...Wha-? Slipknot, what are you-!]

***Thud***

The sound echoed again.



It was the sound of Sonic Youth falling.

Slipknot shot Sonic Youth from behind at a close range.

Aiming at the weak spot of his protector (or armor), it was a fatal wound.

Neito laughed at the hero who fell to the ground.

[It's unfortunate Sonic Youth...]

[...W-w... why...!?!]

Crawling on the ground, Sonic Youth still didn't grasp what had happen to him.

Even with Over-Sense, Sonic Youth was still human. Unlike Ramone or Dylan, he didn't do any enhancements to his body. A bullet alone was enough to gravely injure him.

[Didn't I tell you? I'll use any method just to win.]

Normally, you can't kill him at long distances. Nor get close to him either. And during battle, with his Over-Sense, he can dodge every attack thrown at him.

That's why this was the only way to defeat him.

A strike outside of battle where he isn't fully cautious of. Hiding the killing intent before the strike, and as fast as possible, pull the trigger accurately on the weak spot.

The only person capable of doing that was Slipknot himself.

Ever since they met at the high-rise building, Neito already decided to use Slipknot to defeat Sonic Youth. After the battle with him, he planned this whole thing with Slipknot.

[...My bad Sonic. I'm with this guy. No matter what it takes, I'll achieve my objective.]

Slipknot then continued firing bullet after bullet into Sonic Youth. The man known as Sonic Youth was now dead.

The man who made his dream come true, the man who vowed to protect everybody's dream, was now dead.

[See ya, Sonic Youth. You were really amazing, I hope heaven exists for you. No doubt you'll be sent there.]

Neito whispered to himself.

Sonic Youth was a strong man. He represented America's heroes and was very commendable.

His actions were worthy of an award but,

Neito thought, *not everybody can be as strong as you. Chasing after your dream is an amazing thing, but not everybody can do it. The world was built that way. That's why I... I'm going to destroy such world.*

[Now then Metallica bastard, spill it out. Where is Mr. Big's safe house? You better not say "Don't kill him" or some kind of joke will you?]

Slipknot pointed the gun at Neito.

[No, go ahead and kill him. This is his location. Well, if I died and you didn't follow as you were instructed, Mr. Big would've been released by now. If he escape, you won't find any other chance to kill Mr. Big will you?]

Neito pulled out a memory stick which had Mr. Big's location and threw it to Slipknot.

He defeated Sonic Youth. But the fight for control over Crimson was now starting. This would be his greatest betrayal yet.

[Uwa-... You're so merciless. Ok Ok. As long as I get to kill my target then I'm good.]

[Is that so? Then you should change and get it over with before the smoke clears.]

The rocket launcher shot at Neito wasn't a shot to kill him. Slipknot suppressed its power and substituted it with a substance that would cause smoke. The exploded vehicles were also pre-planned by Slipknot. In short, everything was staged and calculated by Slipknot.

With the burning vehicles and the thick smoke, you can't see anything of the bridge from outside.

What they needed to do what interchange Slipknot and Sonic Youth.

The man formerly known as Slipknot will wear the Protector (or armor) and Sonic Rollers.

The dead man formerly known as Sonic Youth will wear the Black Tights.

Desecrating a hero's dead body was no good business. That's why they also needed to do it with the cover of the smoke.

Slipknot was smiling as he wore Sonic Youth's costume.

[Hey you, can you still use the Sonic Rollers?]

[Hmm-. I can't use it freely like Sonic-kun, but it should be fairly possible to skate out and disappear in this.]

They finished interchanging. The smoke was already about to clear, exposing the current scene.

Neito transformed and grabbing Sonic Youth dressed as Slipknot by the face, he raised it up.

He then walked to the edge of the bridge.

*Look at me Manhattan! Look at me America! Crimson! Behold this sight!*

*I defeated Slipknot with my hands. Sonic Youth is about to escape!*

*Behold the sight of a man who abandoned his ally amidst danger!*

*Helping the man who tried to kill his woman's father!*

*I defeated all the heroes in America, taking away hope from everybody!*

*All in the name of Evil!*

*I will obtain Crimson and stand on top of Metallica!*

*I will rule everything and destroy the world!*

*No one can stop me!*



That day, every citizen fixed their eyes on the battle of Washington Bridge, where two heroes collided with the forces of Crimson. They saw the battle live and was shocked by the final scene.

A rough battle occurred amidst fire and smoke. As the smoke cleared, a demon was holding Slipknot's body up high, and the famed Sonic Youth ran for his life.

It was an utterly despairing sight. Any human that looked at that scene could say nothing more.

## CHAPTER 53

# WILL STILL GO DOWN THAT PATH?

Confirming that the TV cameras got a clear picture of Mark Gordon dressed as Slipknot, He threw the body into the Hudson River.

He undid his transformation and opened a communication line.

[Niina, are you in the submarine now? I've thrown Mark Gordon's body in the river. Recover it immediately. Don't forget to put the corpse on a preservation capsule.]

< 'Derstood Senpai. But, as expected of you Senpai. I was shocked when I saw that scene. No matter how you looked at it, you were the bona fide devil. >

Niina quickly responded to his orders. There was still a purpose to be served for Mark's dead body. They needed to freeze it before it starts decomposing. Niina easily solved this problem by reacting quickly and recovering the body.

[I see, so that's what you're planning.]

Slipknot, who was in Sonic Youth's armor talked lightly of their procedure.

[Yeah, that's how it is. If you're done, get moving. Don't you get captured by Crimson now]

[Are you kidding me? You already told me the weak-spots of Crimson's entrapment. There's no way they can catch me.]

Neito already tasked his men to surround the area near the bridge in case something happened. But with his information, Slipknot should be able to pass through easily.

[Well, off I go then. Bye-]

Activating the Sonic Rollers, he began his escape. He can't do fancy maneuvers like the real Sonic Youth, but running in a straight line should pose no problems.

After seeing that Slipknot left, Neito once again opened a line to communicate.

[Sonic Youth escaped... Sorry, but I can't go after him with the injuries I sustained from the battle with Slipknot. We already have him surrounded, capture him at all cost!]

With that order, every subordinate under him started moving.

He already knew what would happen. They can never catch "Sonic Youth". Slipknot was already aware of the route where security was its weakest. And it was Slipknot inside that "Sonic Youth", if anybody got in his way, they'll surely be killed.

[...It's my win...]

He jumped into the river, making a successful escape.

"The foreigner from Metallica, Komori Neito, had prevented Crimson from self-destruction. Waging his life in the battle between the top two heroes of the Rocks Organization, Slipknot and Sonic Youth, he managed to defeat the hero "Slipknot" with the latter escaping for his life. With confusion, the remaining Guardians that surrounded the bridge, let him escape with no effort."

No doubt that's what the media (or the people) would write about in the future.

With the help of Niina, he managed to escape safely into allied territory. After that, he was rushed to the hospital to receive treatment and went home. It was a critical moment for Crimson, but since he already did enough, he wasn't added in the plan to capture "Sonic Youth".

Returning to his penthouse, he waited for news on the entrapment operation. Soon, everything will be settled.

He sat down on his sofa, folded his arms and stared blankly into space.

The rain was pouring outside, beating against his windows.

An hour passed until he got a report.

There was no need to know the contents of the message. He already predicted "Sonic Youth got away" even beforehand.

*No problems occurred. This is good. At this moment, "Sonic Youth", no Slipknot should be heading towards Mr. Big's location.*

He couldn't bring himself to sleep. And he wasn't in the mood to celebrate just yet. He was just sitting on the sofa, staring blankly into space.

Time passed and he still couldn't sleep. His body was beaten all over, but he wasn't in the mood to go and sleep on his bed.

That moment,

He received a call. It wasn't just a regular call. It was connected to his direct line, a line only a single person had access to.

[...It's here huh?]

There was nobody else who had access to this line except Slipknot.

Neito picked up and answered the call.

[...Yes?]

No doubt he was there to report on the completion of his task. That's what he thought, but the caller wasn't him.

[Hey there *Nate!* It has been a long time!]

[...! Mr... Big!?!]

His caller was the founder of Crimson and Anice's father. The person he wanted killed. It was really a long time since they spoke. The last time they spoke to each other was when Mr. Big visited him after the battle with Slipknot.

Neito reminisced that past.



[I'm sorry Mr. Big, but you're going to have to come with me.]

Neito started his plans when Mr. Big visited him the second time.

He had already prepared beforehand. That night after the battle, He got in contact with Slipknot. Slipknot's objective was the top brass and Mr. Big of Crimson. If that was the case, there was an agreement to be made between them.

{Hey Slipknot, you're having a hard time killing Mr. Big by yourself. Am I right?}

Mr. Big always prepared himself and took precaution to avoid being sniped from a long distance. The reason why Slipknot kept killing Crimson personnel was to get information and set up ahead before Mr. Big sets up his own preventive measures.

{I'll help you assassinate him. I'll kidnap him and tell you his location after everything is done.}

Mr. Big didn't leave anything to chance. He might know that Neito wanted to take over the company but not enough to kill him with his own hands. He might be a modified human, but he risked too much if he killed him himself. In a few hours, Crimson would be chasing after him.

{These are my conditions for our trade. I will kidnap Mr. Big and let him be killed by you. You will start cooperating with Sonic Youth and find the right moment to kill him. Of course you'll act first, after I confirmed it with my own eyes, I'll start moving too.}

Putting it simply, anybody that kills Mr. Big is going to have the whole Crimson Organization after his head. If Neito did it, it would be as Mr. Big predicted. He'll die like a bug being squashed.

Then the solution was simple. Frame it someone other than yourself.

{You won't have any demerits from this, nor do I have any reason to lie to you. You know that yourself.}

Their objectives aligned so they decided to work together.

As He heard on the news that Slipknot started working together with Sonic Youth, He made his move on Mr. Big on his next visit.

He removed the bothersome personnel and "made them disappeared" (referring to the Top Brass always with Mr. Big). It was his own fault for visiting him without any escorts.

“You’re coming with me”, as he said those words, Mr. Big asked him a few questions.

[What if... I said “No”?]

[...Then I’ll be using force, if it comes to it.]

Both of them were talking silently on the hospital’s corridors. It was like they were plotting something mischievous.

{I see. Then you are saying that you have found a way to dispose of me without making an enemy of Crimson, and enable you to take over my company? Is that right?}

{Yes... this isn’t like you to be caught off guard Mr. Big.}

To Mr. Big, he thought Neito was in no condition to fight and bring him down. But with his exceptionally high decision making skill, he determined otherwise.

{Caught off guard? No, if you were such a capable person, there’s nothing I can do about it. That’s all there is.}

{... What do you mean? Does that mean you gave up on fighting back?}

Mr. Big moved his head left and right.

{No, I told you before, I’ve done some horrible things in my life. I was already prepared for something like this to happen. If there was somebody who would bring me down, it’s for the best that you are the one to do it.}

Neito didn’t understand him.

{Why? Then are you saying that you already anticipated that I would do something like this?}

{If you go down the current path you are on, you’ll understand soon enough. No, I hope that day never comes for you.}

And like that, Mr. Big was kidnapped by Neito.



That Mr. Big was now about to be executed by Slipknot in his safe house. That someone, had made a call to him.

Neito faltered at this unexpected call.

Mr. Big was talking light-heartedly as he usually does.

[Yes, I've made a requested to Slipknot. I'm currently asking a favor from him. Yes, I found out who he is... It turns out he was someone I knew from a long time ago... There's nothing I can do if he kills me. But he was willing to listen to my last request. Aah, he's here pointing a gun at me.]

Mr. Big was about to die. There was nothing that could prevent this. Neito was mystified because there was no trace of fear in his voice. His voice was philosophical in his last moments.

[*Nate*, I have to say my thanks to you. The safe house you prepared for me was perfect. The cigars and *sake* were all good. I'm thankful for your hospitality.]

Giving out his thanks in his current situation, no normal person could do such thing. Neito's hands that held the communication device started sweating.

[...Are you not afraid of dying?]

He unconsciously asked him. He regretted asking. He had no right to listen to his answer.

[Not at all. I am afraid of dying. Of course, I don't bear a grudge against you. But... let me see, I'm just tired of being evil, you see?]

Hearing Mr. Big's shaky voice, he didn't contemplate his decision to kill him. He was just sad for such a thing was needed to happen.

[I don't regret my actions that led me to this situation. I was already prepared beforehand.]

[...I'm also prepared.]

They were the same. Their resolve was absolute.

[Are you familiar with the words “Those who lost are always evil” *Nate*?]

He knew those words all too well. It was used to describe the nature of evil.

Neito replied,

[Yes... but also in the same way, “The winner is always right”]

If “the winner is always right”, then “the loser is always evil” would be an indirect implication...

[Hahaha- Don't kid yourself, you don't believe in those words no more than I do.]

Mr. Big laughed off Neito's notion but it was still as he said, the winner is always “right” and represented justice, while the losing side will be branded as “wrong” and deemed evil. That may have been the truth, but to Neito, justice and evil were two different things. Evil is evil, whether you win or lose. What's deemed as evil, will be branded as evil in its most basic form.

[I'm sorry, let's get back to topic. Evil always falls. I think that is the truth, looking at my situation, don't you agree?]

Mr. Big's words were undeniable. If you lose, you're branded evil, if you win, you are branded right and represent justice. In that higher form of thoughts, Mr. Big implied such things.

[...What do you mean?]

[It's simple, evil, will never be recognized by the world. That's why the path you're going down is treacherous and uncertain. Be it justice or another stronger force of evil, you'll be defeated just like me right now. Those who wish to redeem themselves and go after you will do it in the name of “justice”.]

Mr. Big's words were heavy. Neito related with the words so much that it hurt. “A treacherous and uncertain path”, he knew it all too well. He felt the weight of those words on his shoulders.

Mr. Big has been a villain for a far longer period of time than Neito, no doubt his words

rang true.

Conquerors from the past that are recorded on textbooks are different. On those times, the sense of value was different from the modern age. Their cause was justified because they did it for the people, for their country. They were never branded “Evil” for their hideous actions.

Among the conquerors of the past, even in the name of justice, nobody was able to conquer the whole world even if they branded themselves “right”. How much more if the individual was evil?

[...I understand.]

Neito stood up from the sofa and strengthen his resolve.

[Listen to me *Nate*, the path you are on, even famous personages from the past, never reached the end of it. No matter how much they tried, they still couldn't achieve what they wanted.]

Neito finally understood what Mr. Big was trying to tell him. After his many years being a villain, this was what he noticed and learned from his experiences.

He was trying to pass on the lesson he learned to the man who defeated him.

*Don't cry. I can't cry. I can't shed a tear for him.*

[Will you still go down that path?]

Mr. Big wasn't just implying on how Neito fought his battles. He was talking about his will to change the world and the world he was going to create.

All the things he said was for him to ask this question.

Neito tried to suppress the various feelings coming out from him. Time passed by silently, and Mr. Big was waiting for Neito's reply.

It was as Mr. Big said, he slowly realized what he going up against. The he was on was an impregnable path.

He always ran down this path. Ran since the beginning. Destroying many things and

injuring many people, he kept running down that path.

He already knew his answer. There was no way he would falter right now.

[Yes, I won't lose. I'll go down this path until the end.]

Neito answered strongly and as firm as possible.

Mr. Big gave out a small laugh. Somewhere in his voice, there was a sense of satisfaction from hearing his answer.

Without any hesitation, he asked,

[Fu- I see. If I get defeated (killed) here then there's nothing I can do about it. Aah, I have a final request of you...]

Suppressing his emotions, Neito replied,

[Anything that's within my power.]

[Will you keep it a secret from Anice that you defeated (killed) me?]

It was an unusual request.

[But that would...]

After committing such crime against her, there was no way he could accept her feelings from now on. He planned on telling Anice that he killed her father after the battle.

[I'll leave my daughter in your hands. You have your own goals, and maybe you already have someone you like, if that's the case then I'll bear a grudge on you, but I want to save my cute daughter from the pain of knowing her first love was the man that killed her father. That's all there is. You should bear her pain on your shoulders, am I right?]

Mr. Big was still mischievous on his words, but the content of his request was heavy.

He already knew this himself. The reason why he wanted to confess his crime to Anice was because he wanted to redeem and assure himself. Losing her father and having her heart broken by the man she loved, thinking about her feelings, Mr. Big's words were right. He needed to bear his sins on his shoulders rather than confessing and

getting over it.

[I understand... until the time comes when she is ready to hear the truth, I will keep it a secret.]

Hearing Neito's words, Mr. Big laughed again.

[Thank you *Nate*. Then this is it.]

This was their last conversation. Neito replied with a smile and a shaky voice.

[Yes. The melon... was really good. Thank you. Very much.]

Before the call ended, he heard the sound of Sonic Rollers revving up and the sound of a gunshot. After that, the call ended.

*It's over.*

*It was all over.*

*That man was dead.*

Putting down his communication device, Neito went out into the balcony. It was still raining, that's why he went out.

Out in the pouring rain, Neito stood there getting wet. His head, his face and his body were all wet.

If anybody saw him right now they won't notice.

That's why he was there, just standing amidst the rain.



The next day, Mr. Big, Crimson's Boss' body was found. There was a wound on his neck, and it was identified that the Sonic Rollers caused it.

There was nobody else they could blame it on.

Sonic Youth was missing ever since the fight on the Washington Bridge ended. It was

ruled out that Sonic Youth found Mr. Big and killed him. As a result it was a war between Crimson and Slipknot (dressed as Sonic Youth).



In the end, Crimson ruled out that it was the top two heroes from the Rocks Organization that confined Mr. Big.

After Mr. Big's funeral, his executives were in a state of distress. Of course, this was obvious since their charismatic boss passed away. With their failure of capturing Sonic Youth, each executive blamed each other for the situation they were in. The Organization was falling apart.

The underground society also didn't stay quiet. With the top underground organization weakened, each organization started moving to attack and take away Crimson's territory. The executive staff were at a loss as to what to do to save their crumbling organization. There was just nobody from the executives that could lead them.

Amidst that confusion, a man stood out. Bearing the scars of his battle yesterday alongside with his spectacular victory, he scolded the executive staff.

The man proclaimed unto Crimson.

"We must take revenge. That's the rule of the family.

Mr. Big left his will onto me and I will answer to it.

Are you okay with it? Are you going to be an Organization that keeps quiet after your Boss got killed? You'll lose your position in the underground society.

Stand and fight. Stand up and fight. There is no one else left to protect Mr. Big's legacy but me. We may change, but Mr. Big's legacy will live on. "

There were some skeptical about this foreigner but this man was willing to risk his life to extract revenge on Sonic Youth. If he failed, he promised to commit *seppuku*.

Taking command of Crimson's forces, and heading out himself, he gathered

information to locate the missing Sonic Youth. The following day, he brought with him the dead body of Mark Gordon.

As he had proclaimed, he extracted revenge for Mr. Big. There was no one who doubted him now.

At that moment, the first candidate to succeed Mr. Big was that man.

He managed to defeat the top two heroes of the Rocks Organization, gained favor from the former boss' daughter and had connections with the Evil Organization Metallica.

He was an irreplaceable figure inside Crimson after Mr. Big's death.

Of course, there were some who doubted the flow of this scenario. If this was already planned beforehand, then that makes the man on top scarier. He would have transcended man, having the power of a demon while having the sly mind of a devil.

There was nobody that could oppose him.

There was nobody else that could lead and rebuild the weakened Crimson.

In order for Mr. Big's legacy, Crimson, to grow stronger, they needed to forge stronger ties with Metallica, and were in a substantial form to merge with them. It was now necessary for the Boss of Crimson to someone from Metallica.

This is how the great worldwide Evil Organization, Crimson and Metallica, with the help of a man taking control, got stronger.

That man's name was Komori Neito.



PDF by: traitorAZEN