

恋したから、殺した。

もう戻れない



ジャンプホラー小説大賞  
銅賞受賞作品

# ヒュグマリオンは種を蒔く

後編

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# The Pygmalion is Planting Seeds - Volume 02

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# The Pygmalion is Planting Seeds - Volume 02

## Chapter 09



Without any further delay, I went back home and fed Misaki the flesh of the thousand yen grandma.

Upon smelling the scent of the flesh, Misaki opened her mouth, made a small bite, slowly chewed it and swallowed it down to make the second one.

The sight of Misaki eating the feed had a similar image of Erisa enjoying her dinner in the first time we met.

The voluptuous figure of a beautiful woman eating.

I once heard about appetite and sexual desire being connected in a certain part of the mind, I'm starting to realize that it is indeed true after all.

The small piece of meat I gave her in the palm of my hand disappears in the blink of time. It didn't take too long for the plastic container to become empty.

The slight redness left on her skin after finishing her meal made her look as if she was satisfied by savoring the taste of her first flesh.

After assuring that Misaki ate the whole thing, the lurking weariness I accumulated had finally taken its effect in one go. As a result, I slipped into the bed and had a sound sleep with not even a single dream.

The next morning when I woke up, Misaki's flower started blooming. Inside the petal of this velvet-like flower, small particles were swarming and making the shape of a sea anemone. A faint scent similar to that of a plum blossom was emitted from it.

What pulled my attention even more was the drastic growth Misaki had undergone. I was indeed aware that the Shishikuibana's development is very fast, however, despite knowing about it, I was still taken by surprise realizing that Misaki's body took a complete human form under only one night. It's all because of that meat. Forming the usual posture by holding her knees, she's not yet at her perfect size, but still big enough to carry her within my arms.

That ambiguously shaped body of hers matured to transform into a nude adult woman. It could be described as that the flesh played the trigger, allowing the Shishikuibana to transform like a butterfly emerging from its chrysalis. When touching her elastic skin, a slight feeling of warmth transmitted to my fingers. Her round bottom made from soft flesh was nailed inside the pot. Misaki's current appearance would make any healthy young man lust after her. I could totally agree with Ando's style of life after beholding this sight in front of

me.

I shut the closet door, picked my bag full of books and left the house.

Lately, I've been too busy searching for a corpse while leaving my studies without progress. It is true that my head was stuffed thinking of Misaki, however, the foolish act of neglecting my Ronin life is the same as a rich man dissipating his entire fortune without thinking any further.

I took out my phone inside the swinging train and brought up my contact list.

It's been almost one month since Misaki's disappearance now and Isezaki is still far from giving up. At this rate, it became quite clear that he's about to waste the first term in his university.

Our former classmates who were in daily contact with him for the first few days after he declared Misaki's vanishment, have considerably decreased by now and are rarely responding to his messages. It feels like they're implying that they're out of interest and spare time to keep on following him around.

For me who has a clear view on the situation, Isezaki seemed like an ant inside a sealed bottle seeking to crawl out from its unexisting exit.

I took out my phone again after entering the library's lobby and went to write a message.

At the instant I was going to press the send button, my finger froze.

I changed my mind and thought that it would be better if I called him directly.

Ten ring tones following the insertion of the number, I heard his voice answering.

[Hello, who's with me?]

Looks like my number is not registered in his contact list.

[It's Mamesaki. I called you because I wanted to talk about something]

[What do you need?]

Judging from Isezaki's voice, he's not even trying to hide his irritation. I took a deep breath and provided him with the stunning information.

[Misaki's whereabouts]

[What did you just say?!]

His loud voice pierced my eardrums. I can easily sense his increasing excitement. If I was meeting him personally right now, he would be definitely pressing me while grasping my collar.

[She's in my house. I'm kinda busy today so I won't be coming back until night. Can you pass by around ten o'clock?]

[Misaki is safe? I can't get in touch with her at all]

[It seems she dropped her phone somewhere. But don't worry, she's fine]

[Is that so? Thank god!!]

Hearing Isezaki's relieved voice, I felt a bit sorry for deceiving him.

However, I didn't say any lie. Misaki is indeed in my house and I do actually have business to do with him. Though, I hold no idea about her phone's location.

I vocally informed Isezaki about my address and cut the call.

I was expecting him to get a little suspicious of me, but surprisingly enough, he had a straightforward personality.

He didn't bother to give me a single word of gratitude for providing him with Misaki's news. However, either way, I wouldn't care whether he did or not. I mean, for someone who spent three years together with me and didn't exchange the least conversation besides of class related topics, it is only natural to think about him as an unrelated person in my life.

Rather Isezaki was less important than a nose wart for me.

The basis for giving him this position is obvious, because he's Misaki's boyfriend. Leaving aside the time of my confession, it was all because of him following Misaki around everywhere that I didn't have a chance to interact with her during all these three years.

I finished up my study session ahead of time, went to the home center for shopping, returned back home at the usual time and ate the dinner cooked by Rosari. After finishing the clean up, Rosari left a little before nine o'clock. And using the remaining hour, I silently advanced the preparation to welcome him.

Isezaki arrived at my place at the exact time. His face which I didn't encounter for three months looked like a ghost who has been wandering in hell. The abnormal thin cheeks and the black eye bags covered the cheerful expression he had in high school days.

[I'm here for Misaki!]

Without waiting for my permission, Isezaki stepped in and went straight to the second floor.

[Misaki!]

Calling out her name, he opened the doors one by one. I understand that he's flurried but that's pretty rude.

[Misaki!]

After taking a peek at the last room, mine, he turned toward me.

[Hey! she's not here! Where is she?]

[Calm down Isezaki, she's inside that room]

[I told you she's not here!]

I can't blame him for getting impatient. Misaki is nowhere to be found in the room. It's just a tasteless chamber with a bed, a desk, two bookshelves and impervious sheets set on the floor.

[She's inside dammit!]

Isezaki jumped to the closet I indicated to him and violently slid its door.

He then froze like a sculpture for a few seconds upon seeing the Misaki within the closet.

[Misaki!]

Isezaki firmly grabbed the shoulders of the sleeping Misaki who was holding her knees and started shouting out her name.

Hey, come on, give me a break here Isezaki. She may collapse if you strongly sway her like that you know.

[Misaki! What the heck happened?]

Misaki didn't respond to him who was at the point of shredding his throat from the force of shouting.

There's no way she would respond.

I wanted to let this emotional encounter last a bit longer, but if he keeps rustling like that it would become a nuisance for the neighbors. What time do you think it is now, Isezaki?

I swiftly moved behind Isezaki's back and used the blackjack again to hit him hard in the head.

I felt the cracking of his skull from the shock.

After adding one more blow to the collapsing Isezaki, I then dragged him to the center of the impervious sheets. The reason he didn't rise up again like the grandma was seemingly because of the critical blow I gave him this time, a blow hard enough to reap his conciseness in an instant. Maybe I hated Isezaki more than I thought I do.

I wrapped Isezaki's body in the sheets and left his neck exposed.

I'm aware of my surprise attack being a cowardly play.

However, Misaki needs fresh flesh.

He was slacking every lecture in the university looking for her. Shouldn't he be satisfied now that he could offer himself to her?

It's not me who you should begrudge, Isezaki.

If you were going to resent someone, that would yourself for hogging Misaki all these three years.

I slid the army knife blade through his carotid artery.

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Isezaki's torso was laid down on the stainless table.

Erisa deeply nodded after observing the pink color peeking from the cut section.

It appears that she acknowledged the meat's freshness.

[Who's this boy?]

[Former classmate in high school]

[You killed your friend? How cruel of you]

[He's not a friend. Just a classmate]

[Could it be he's Iruse Misaki's boyfriend?]

[How did you know?]

[The bruise in the back of his head, the angle of the wound in his neck and of course, you standing unharmed despite being spurted all over by blood. These signs are enough to reason that you attacked him by surprise from the back and finished him off without giving him a chance to resist. What I could tell is that you called him to your place by using Iruse Misaki as bait to attract his attention, snuck behind his back, bludgeoned him in the head and then slit his neck after collapsing]

[You said it as if you were watching me the whole time. Why not just leave that flower shop behind and go start a detective job instead?]

[I only came to a conclusion which anybody could realize after observing the body and thinking about it logically. Calling it as a detective's reasoning is an evidence of you reading nothing but cheap mysteries]

[You've got a pretty sharp tongue, don't you? Rather than a detective, you're better suited for a critic]

[Did something happen? You seem to have changed somehow]

[Nothing happened and I didn't change. What's the difference you noticed?]

[Something like the ambiance you're putting on has changed. It's kind of wrong to describe it as masking off, but your personality gives an impression as if it was replaced in a single day]

[You think so? I mean, I can't tell by myself]

[You did change. In a bad way]

[Is that because I murdered an acquaintance?]

[Well, that is part of the reason, since luring someone and killing him to

obtain the feed is not something a sane person would think about]

[Is that so? Personally, I think that I performed a reasonable move]

[In any case, with this, you just gave birth to the second corpse. There's no turning back now]

[I didn't have the intention of turning back from the start]

[I'm not sure about that. Weren't you frightened for the first time by knowing that flesh was necessary? At that point, the idea of murdering a former classmate and to top it off, Iruse Misaki's boyfriend didn't even rise in your mind]

[Sooner or later I was going to have him exit from my life. All that I did was hasten the process]

[You're not having the least sense of guilt, do you?]

[I do feel bad for him. However, what happened is the vanishing of a university student who's not a genius nor a great person. How could a small incident like this affect the world?]

[Hey, Kuuya]

[What?]

[As I thought, you are strange]

Wrong. I just became honest with my desires.

\*\*\*\*\*

I can now finally agree with what Erisa said last time about Ando acting tough. He most likely didn't kill anybody.

That arrogant character he's applying is possibly a mask, hiding his timidity and fear of becoming hated by others.

The classy clothes he wears, the rude attitude he takes and vulgar words he excessively uses are the necessary devices to make himself look bigger.

The stinking smell of dismantled corpses was overflowing in the apartment, but the one who dismantled the smuggled kids or the runaway girl was

probably someone he hired using money.

The reason he's building a private harem for himself is not because he doesn't trust women, but because he lacks the self-confidence, thinking that no woman would love him from the bottom of her heart no matter how much money he holds. Yet the Shishikuibana themselves don't love him, and the auto-lock on his door sharply explains that fact. Despite brainwashing them, he is still afraid of his flowers escaping away.

Though, I'm not planning on ridiculing him about it.

Rather, I'm grateful for him.

Because he bestowed me a new hope while I was lost in the dark.

And because he taught me a method to win Misaki all for myself.

If I didn't witness the moving Shishikuibana in his house, I wouldn't have killed the thousand yen grandma by now, leaving aside Isezaki. I desired to have the resuscitated Misaki all for myself. I longed to be the only person reflected in her eyes while I'm pouring all my love and affection in bringing her up.

I picked Isezaki's flesh which was packed in a wooden box and moved it to Misaki's mouth.

I vaguely wondered about which body part she was eating.

Her sight was still gazing at empty space, however for me, she seemed somehow pleased.

Erisa brought up the talk about cannibalism being a way to express respect for the dead.

Through this piece of meat, Misaki and Isezaki are adjoining currently.

Thinking about it in such a way made me awfully envious.

By offering her flesh and blood, we get to understand each others through our souls. None is allowed for this duty except for me. There's nowhere for Isezaki to force his way in.

I need to extinguish the remaining part of his ghost buried inside Misaki.

Feeding her Isezaki's flesh, I went to whisper in her beautiful shaped ears.

Exactly like how Ando did.

Misaki, you don't need to think about anything unnecessary.

I always watched gently over you.

Nobody will soil your purity here.

I won't let anybody get intimate with you.

The flesh you are eating now belongs to no one.

The person called Isezaki Akira didn't exist.

You loved me for as far as you remembered.

We will be together for eternity.

I didn't bring up anything about the high school days.

The more I spoke my feelings to her, the desires sealed within me kept on increasing.

I want to turn Misaki back into a human.

Not as a puppet, a full human restoration.

The aspiration I held since visiting Ando's place grew vividly while residing in my Heart.

## Chapter 10

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### Diary-Abuse- The will of God- [Because I love her]

The basement built from tiles felt chilly whenever I entered it. It was quite hard to believe the sultry night right above our heads.

Placed on the stainless table again was yet, another corpse of a boy seeming to be a grade schooler. It wasn't me who attacked him. I only noticed him lying near a riverbed, close to his death after getting run over. Though it was me who performed the finishing blow.

His tiny body that got sent flying was covered by the underbrush, which made it hard enough for me to discover him at the beginning of the dusk.

The yellow T-shirt he was wearing was dyed in blood and his mouth was continuously spluttering blood bubbles.

I surveyed my surroundings; no one was around. I put my left foot on the

boy's shoulder and stamped on his head with the right one. Making use of my weight I twisted his neck. A dull sensation transmitted to my shoe sole. I placed my hand under the nose of the boy who had his head completely bent and made sure he didn't breathe anymore. I then contacted Erisa and asked her to meet me near the riverbed.

[I think we can carry him without calling for the Mogura this time]

Putting on her ordinary cool expression before the boy's corpse, Erisa's voice sounded to be a bit excited. According to her, "the meat of this approximate age tastes the best". Maybe she's happy to acquire it without needing to share half of the body with the Mogura.

However, what distorted her cold expression were my few words brimming of determination.

[You want to set Iruse Misaki free? Are seriously saying this?]

Erisa who was reading a thick book during the free time of the dismantling process switched her view and raised her eyebrow.

[I already told you, the Shishikuibana doesn't—]

[It does! There is a way to turn it into a living human. You don't have to hide from me anymore, I know everything]

I peered through Erisa's watery, bewitching eyes.

Only the sounds of the detaching flesh and bones resounded in the basement room.

Looking as if she gave up, Erisa made a huge sigh and closed the book between her hands.

[Where did you hear about it?]

[I saw the real thing in Ando's home, the Shishikuibana walking and talking. I also heard about you showing him the means to do it]

[What a good-for-nothing man. Was he a snake in his past life?]

[Apparently, Ando's information was correct]

[Yeah, I wouldn't deny it. But I wouldn't recommend it either. The burden you

will have to carry is in another league from the one you know]

[I have the resolution for anything that could happen]

[The word resolution you're saying sounds very cheap. You don't understand the meaning of releasing a life]

[You too don't understand how much I long for Misaki to revive. After witnessing all that stuff in Ando's apartment, giving up became even more impossible for me]

We glared at each other like we were enemies, but Erisa was the first to eventually avert her eyes and leave her seat.

[Shall we have an old talk?]

Erisa opened the vault and took out an old looking book with a small hasp on its edge. Seems to be a diary. Its bindings were worn out from the frequent use.

[Once upon a time, a father and his daughter lived in a cheap lodging apartment. The father had a habit of turning violent due to drinking. The mother hated this bad habit of her husband, so she met a new man outside and ran away. The aim of the father's anger and barbarity were directed to his daughter as a result. Every night, he drank alcohol, hit the little defenseless girl and kicked her flying. There was not a single day when the little girl's body bruises completely disappeared]

Erisa inserted a small key into the lock. By rotating the key, a faint snapping sound reached my ears.

[But despite her situation, the girl kept growing without falling into despair. She possessed a beautiful appearance that could make any girl envy her and any boy attracted to her. She became a flower that drew harmful insects, which were no one but her father. Crossing the line of hitting and kicking, his violence was upgraded with sexual desires for his daughter. nevertheless, this upgrade started long before her body developed into one of an adult woman. And so, her graduation took place when she was still ten-years-old]

The sound of the book pages turning overlapped with Erisa's calm voice.

[On the birthday of her thirteenth, that horrible father of hers met a dog's

death. He was stabbed in the stomach while having a quarrel about something ridiculous at the bar. Because of the alcohol, blood didn't stop gushing out, making it too late for the arrival of the ambulance. The deceased father was buried and his daughter didn't accept his bones]

Erisa halted her words and faced me.

[Kuuya, could you guess what happened to the daughter after she was left alone?]

[Something like, she was finally set free and was able to walk on her own life path?]

[Wrong. The girl followed her father and took out her life]

[Why would she do that? She was finally released from her father's chains!]

I unconsciously raised my voice.

[In the girl's mind, despite her father's passing, she was still bound by him. Getting kicked and assaulted by her father was her daily life and her *raison d'être*. They were living in an indispensable co-dependence. Maybe her soul died at the moment her father was gone, and she became empty from that day until her suicide]

Erisa stopped flipping the pages.

[Following that incident, a dilettante person who knew about the story took in the girl's body illegally using his money. He wanted to employ her corpse for a certain experiment he was working on]

[Experiment? You mean...]

[The Shishikuibana, resuscitation of the dead]

The girl and the dilettante man's identity started to become clear.

But, I'm not the one who's supposed to reveal them.

[I don't want to speak about what happened next]

Instead of talking about it herself, Erisa handed me the open book.

In that book, the struggling days of a man cultivating the Shishikuibana were written down.

He went through deep suffering and despair, using countless human corpses to finally establish a legitimate method of cultivating the Shishikuibana. The gradual disordering of his handwriting was because he lost his fingers along the way. One day, the man was taking a walk in the neighborhood, when he encountered a little girl walking unsteadily before leaning on a fence exhausted. The little girl didn't seem to mind her dirty worn out clothes, with sight wandering and eyes blank. Her thin cheeks showed that she doesn't usually take in enough nutrition.

The man took the girl along with him home and nursed her. He offered her a bath, a meal and ordered the maid to repair her clothes.

Although he knew that she was still young, the man couldn't deny her breathtaking beauty. His impression of her looks was written as, "The living treasure of heaven sent by the almighty God".

From that day, the man started to frequently meet with the girl.

The little girl eventually opened up her heart and deliberately informed him about her personal situation.

Knowing that she was abused by her father, the man felt compassionate toward her.

-I want to rescue this little girl from her father's prison.

The main motive of his will wasn't because of the girl's beauty.

He had a young past where various matters led to him tearfully break up with his wife who secluded herself with his child. Soon after, he heard that the child committed suicide.

He saw in the little girl the figure of his daughter who passed away without receiving the least bit of warmth and affection from her parents.

But he was wavering. He could easily predict the little girl running away from him if he tried to separate her forcefully from her father.

Carrying on with his unclear worries, the man kept on meeting with the girl for half a year, when one day, a funeral was held in the neighborhood.

He took a peek at the inside of the house and saw the little girl wearing her

school uniform standing still.

A few days later, he was notified that she committed suicide.

Because of the remorse left in him, the man used his wealth and personal connections to obtain the girl's corpse.

—I regretted it. I had to rescue her as long as I was alive. Even if I was going to be known as a demon, even if I was going to fall to hell after my death and even if she was going to slaughter me after I resuscitate her. Her death is my fault. I'm nothing but a cowardly criminal. My hand is covered with blood and mud. If I can't escape the path of eternal punishment, then I shall pile up my sins even more. After all, there is no water that can purify my very first sin.

He planted the seed in her head while holding on to those sorrowful emotions, brought her up by offering her flesh and blood, whispered his words overflowing with love to her and cut the root.

He revived her not as a flower in a pot, but as his new human daughter.

Following the page mentioning him reviving the girl, the book became full of his delighted words until the end.

[Why did he stop writing here?]

[Because he wasn't able to write anymore. Several days later, he sacrificed his body for the girl. He entrusted everything to his faithful maid and fell into an eternal sleep with a satisfied expression. His grave was his daughter's stomach and the tomb is this old diary he left behind. The daughter didn't know that she was eating her step father's flesh until later]

Erisa gently pulled the diary from my possession and pressed it against her chest.

[It could be said that he raised the Shishikuibana as a form of atonement for his passing daughter. He wanted to make up for it by creating a new life from the Shishikuibana, despite knowing that his act defies God's will. Or at least, that's the idea you receive after reading this diary. The daughter inherited her father's track and continued to offer the Shishikuibana to those who needed it, as if she was chasing after him]

Erisa showed a gentle smile, just like the breeze that makes flower petals dance.

[You know, it was my stepfather who gave me the name of Erisa. I forgot about my former one]

It was the first time she showed it to me, her plaintive smile.

[So, you mean you were a Shishikuibana?]

[You're as dull as usual, Kuuya. Can't you at least realize something as obvious by relating the Shishikuibana's eating habit and the "cannibalism" I conduct?]

Erisa pushed her hand against her lightly puffed chest.

[The Shishikuibana revives to its former appearance. It doesn't rejuvenate nor does it age. As you can guess, my physical age stopped at thirteen years old]

Knowing about Erisa's background story, I somehow got the reason behind her lack of facial expressions. Her earlier severe life was more than enough to ruin her emotionally, and she is still affected by the same character. Even if that's not the case, she ate her stepfather's flesh. The flesh of the person who brought her back from the realm of the dead.

[There's a maid mentioned in the dairy dismantling your father's body, is she perhaps....]

[Yes, that's me. Master gave me a strict order to so]

Wiping her hands after being done from the boy's dismantling task, Kanade answered me with a bright smile.

[Kanade was both the maid and the assistant of my stepfather. She's the only one who takes care of chopping off the corpses for the sake of his research and separate the meat from the bones for the Shishikuibana. In the end, he entrusted her to look after me as his last order. It's quite possible that he taught her the process of dismantling because he was planning on sacrificing himself for me from the very start]

[That's right, every day, Master brought with him a new corpse. Thanks to him I was able to learn new things. The extraction of blood, The correct way to remove the joints and the appropriate method to cook every single part. Thanks

to master, I am now able to be useful for Miss]

[When he ordered you to dismantle the corpse for the first time, didn't you refuse or try to run away?]

[Why should I think about something like that?]

Kanade displayed a puzzled expression looking like a confused child.

[This girl's morals are not functioning. She doesn't recognize killing a person or disassembling a corpse as a wrong action. Something seemed to have happened in her past, but I don't know the detail and I didn't investigate about it. Her unique turn of mind was her qualifying asset for getting chosen by my father]

The mystery of Kanade's smooth skills was finally solved.

She was dealing with human flesh long before Erisa was revived as a Shishikuibana.

Thanks to her uncommon pattern of thinking, she was able to cheerfully achieve her job as if she was playing with flowers.

Her unwavering sincerity allowed her to be the perfect maid for Erisa.

[That was the truth behind me eating human flesh. The flesh is the factor connecting the Shishikuibana with life. Thus it represents the only food allowing me to maintain my existence. The Shishikuibana's constitution is constantly crumbling apart. Even at this moment that I'm talking to you, my body is steadily approaching death. Therefore, Consuming human flesh is the sole way to regenerate my dying cells]

[Is human flesh the only food you can eat? What's going to happen if you stopped eating it?]

[I do eat different things, but that's just in order to satisfy my tongue and appetite, it doesn't help in maintaining my body. If you cease providing the body with human flesh for a long while, your limbs will gradually start to rot from the tips then they will be accordingly torn off. The internal organs will dissolve like a decaying fruit. Next will be the end, no matter how much flesh you eat at that stage, it's going to be too late. I need to run with all my might if I

want to remain. As a life form, I'm bound to feed on human flesh for the rest of my life, until my life span comes to an end]

[The rest of your life...]

[If only the Shishikuibana had a sly nature and enough physical strength to slaughter humans under cover of night, then it would be much easier to guarantee our necessary food. Unfortunately, besides the fact that we consume flesh, our strength and intelligence are the same as an ordinary human, which I find to be unfair]

Kanade was standing in the kitchen preparing Erisa's dinner. She threw into the pot, cabbage, potato, onion, shallot, pieces of celery and human fingers. Today's menu was the nightmare tasting home-made pot-au-feu. The secret ingredient was the nail's dirt.

[Of course, Iruse Misaki is no exception]

Erisa continues.

[It would be extremely irresponsible of you to turn her into a human and then tell her "you're free now so go live your own life". Releasing her means that you have to keep supplying her with human flesh exactly as you were doing so far. Of course, it's up to you, whether you will force her to pay the cost of the food]

[I told you I can handle it. I'm staying together with Misaki for her entire life and I wouldn't let her soil her hands. Nothing will be changing, I will just have to murder people to keep her alive]

[You really have changed. Obtaining flesh leads to killing people. I wonder where did he go, that boy who had a pale face after witnessing Ando's delivered corpse]

Erisa, resting her cheeks on her hand, held an amazed expression.

[Anyway, I will approve of it. I've already stated to you before, those who made it this far wishing to revive the Shishikuibana weren't that many. However, that majority chose to abandon the Shishikuibana because they couldn't bear the constant sins of snatching away people's life. If not, the deed of casually and cautiously murdering others only increases the small responsibility you previously own and makes it even greater. Considering this

huge burden you will need to take, I wouldn't really recommend you to—]

[You are opposing Misaki's resuscitation, not because of those cliched ideas like burden or responsibility, but because of another reason]

[What could you mean by that?]

[Isn't it because it's dangerous?]

Erisa indifferently gazed at me.

I had this belief from a while ago.

Probably, Ando didn't succeed at completely brainwashing the Shishikuibana.

I recall the eyes of his Shishikuibana when I was leaving.

Those were not the eyes of seeing someone off, nor were they the eyes of fear.

They were the eyes of resenting and hating Ando.

[If I told you it's dangerous, will you give up reviving Iruse Misaki?]

[You're not denying it, are you? Come to think of it, you didn't deny knowing Misaki's whereabouts when I inquired you for the first time. Erisa, you are naturally someone who doesn't lie]

[Don't get the wrong idea. I didn't say it was dangerous. If you cut the root, the Shishikuibana will acquire an ego and begin moving independently, meaning that you gave birth to a new life. It's the same as recreating someone's life once again. Needless to talk about flesh, you will have to carry both her past and future as well. That's the resolution I'm implying]

[It's not a problem. Such a thing is not worthy to be called as resolution because I love Misaki]

Mentioning the word "love", Erisa's weakly blushing face held no fever.

She froze her sight on me for a moment then gave up saying "the word young love makes you blind was true after all".

[This is indeed a difficult path for a high school graduate to walk through, but if you're willing to choose it that badly, then I don't have the right to stop you from doing so. It wouldn't matter to me either way if you get swallowed up to

the depth of the swamp. But let me tell you one thing, Kuuya. No matter how cruel the end could be, don't avert your eyes from it and face it without regret]

[What you mean?]

[Reality is not as sweet as you think, that's what I mean]

Those obscure words she unveiled gave me an anxious feeling.

She's bad at lying, but on the other hand, she takes a long time before revealing the entire truth.

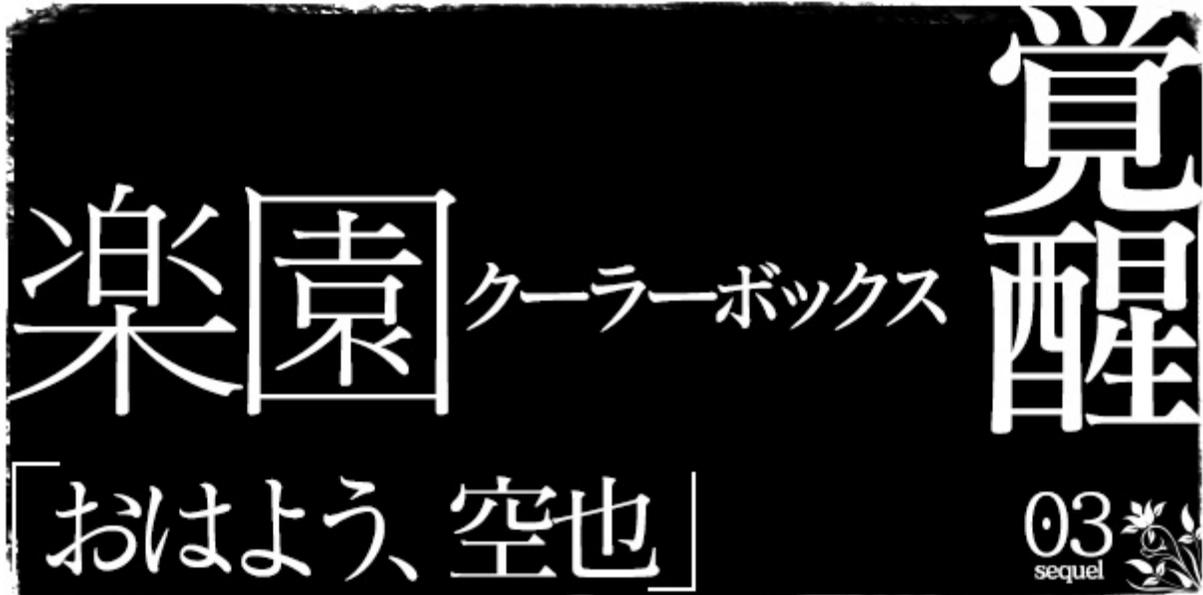
Perceiving my disturbance, Erisa brought back her usual cynical grin.

[A famous coach of a boxing champion said the same thing, "Don't desire for too much. Corruption starts from that point"]

Following it with a whispering voice.

[Although, this expression doesn't hold any significance for the current you]

# Chapter 11



## Eden-Cooler-box-Awakening- [Morning, Kuuya]

The early morning light flowed inside the room.

The night has ended with me not sleeping a wink, but my mood was as composed as this morning's stretching sky.

That is because I decided to turn Misaki into a human today.

I took out Misaki from the closet. Her flower had completely withered and fell next to her feet. After taking back her perfect former appearance, she became heavier than expected giving me a hard time dragging the pot without knocking it.

Misaki who was holding her knees and bathing in the dawn light possessed an elegant ambiance, as if she ran away from a renaissance painting. Her mysterious composition gave me the impression of the falling feathers of an

angel flying in the far away sky.

I picked up the knife from my desk and held it near Misaki's foot.

Ando turned his Shishikuibana into slaves using violence.

But I'm different.

I'm approaching Misaki with deep affection. I brought her up to love me. What's important for a man and a woman to be joined together is not a thorny whip, they're the arms that will gently hold your partner.

It's okay. There's no problem.

I took a deep breath, prepared myself emotionally and turned the knife edge toward the sole of her foot.

At the instant I pulled the knife, Erisa's warning sprang back to my mind, however I didn't stop and carefully kept on cutting off the root.

Murdering three people so far, not even a fragment of guilt have remained in me at this point.

I don't care about what's waiting for me after performing this deed.

I'm calling back Misaki in the way I think is right for me.

I shall overcome any hardship for that sake. If something is going to happen later, I will try to deal with it at that time.

The root was unexpectedly soft and a weak response transmitted to my hand as if I was cutting a spider thread. The root which was tying up Misaki with the pot quickly disappeared.

Her empty eyes started shining and she showed a faint smile.

Maybe Venus's awakening held the same mysterious feeling. That thought crossed my mind upon observing Misaki's elegant awakening.

[Morning, Kuuya]

This was the first time she called me by my first name.

Her figure in front of me suddenly grew blurred. My pupil was clouded by tears of gratitude.

[Why are you crying?]

[I'm happy. Being able to exchange words with Misaki like this makes unbelievably happy]

[Don't say weird things like that, Kuuya]

I averted my face trying to hide my tears, stood up and handed Misaki a loungewear. Her naked appearance is a poison for the eyes. I would be lying if I said I'm not turned on by her dazzling nude body, but the resolution of honestly following my lust is still a bit far from me at the present moment.

Without seeming to mind being naked, Misaki put on the loungewear. The sleeve and the cuff were a bit short though, the width was exact. I realize again that my body is too thin.

[Right, Misaki, are you perhaps hungry? I can make something for you]

[Eh, Kuuya's home cooking? Yes, yes I want to try it]

Recalling that I didn't feed her anything last night, I carried the box containing the flesh and ran down to the kitchen. I only gave her raw meat when she was a Shishikuibana, but now I want to prepare a decent dish for her. She's a human after all.

The menu is minced flesh along with finely chopped vegetables, a rare omelet. Unfortunately, I didn't find the mincer and ended up cutting the meat as well. I recall Haruhito's face when he tasted my cooking and felt a bit uneasy.

This time, I cooked in the same way that I observed Haruhito cooks. Careful to not use too much flavoring and not over burn it, I somehow finished the omelet making use of Haruhito's skills that I remembered.

I added ketchup to the omelet on the plate and delivered it to Misaki.

She carried it to her mouth, chewed it and swallowed it. What a nervous moment.

[Ah, delicious]

[Really?]

[Yes, the ingredients are both salty and sweet and the eggs are soft, it's really

delicious]

Leaving aside the doubt of whether she's just flattering me or it really being delicious, I was honestly happy to get praised for my cooking. Maybe I developed a good taste after feeding on Haruhito's cooking for four years and a half. Apparently, my culinary skills leveled up to a point where I shouldn't be ashamed of showing it to people anymore.

I thought she would be displeased by the use of meat in the morning, but she's happily eating it. I made a bite on my butter toast while watching over her satisfied face enjoying the flesh omelet.

[Hm, Kuuya, you're not eating an omelet?]

[No, there was only one egg left]

[Then let's split this one between us]

A strain like shaved ice ran through my back from getting cornered by Misaki.

[No I'm fine, you can have it all]

Misaki answered with "even though it's delicious" to my positive decline and let the topic pass.

It would be unbearable to eat Isezaki's flesh for breakfast.

[But that's pretty weird]

Misaki spoke those few words after clearing her plate.

[What was I doing in Kuuya's room? I have no memories of coming to this place. It feels like I'm forgetting something important]

A second strain ran through my back.

Misaki spent the last month as a Shishikuibana, there's no way she could remember what happened during that period. The concept of her boyfriend is gone because I fixed that idea in her brain by my constant whispering, However, that's just an addition.

Explaining her the whole story up to now is also an impossible option. I mean, It's the same as informing her of the shocking truth that she's not a human anymore.

[It's because, you see, last night you fell down the stairs and hit your head causing you to lose your memories. I had a hard time carrying you to my house you know]

Come on, you could make up a better lie than this. I scolded myself with cold sweat running through my body. Too many contradictions could be noticed with this, why didn't I bring her to a hospital and where's the wound on her head? I'm at a loss in making a reasonable explanation for finding herself naked too. There's no way she will agree with such a ridiculous lie.

There shouldn't be a way.

Yet she easily let it slip with, "Is that so. Well, it's just a trivial fact anyway", along with a short laugh. Her docile character lets me down instead.

In the end, I wasn't able to give her an agreeable reason for her lost memories or for staying in my house, but regarding being together with me, she didn't raise the least doubt.

After that, we spent three days in the house.

Isezaki's name was never referred during that while.

Contrary to my expectations, Misaki had the kind of personality who strikes her words with no reserve.

[Kuuya, are you a priest in pursuit of knowledge?]

[What does that have to do with me?]

[Your room doesn't have a TV or a computer, there's not even one erotic book around. I thought you were the type who can't control his sexual desires]

[I don't think a girl should talk about stuff like this with a guy of the same age]

[You're speaking like an old man, Kuuya. Those type of girls have been extinguished a long time ago. Your ideas are old fashioned and your desires are dead just like an old man]

[I believe I'm normal for my age]

[No, that's not normal. In the first place, how are you not laying a hand on this defenseless cutie in front of you? Didn't you ever think about pushing me

down? That's definitely not normal for a man close to his twenties]

[It's not normal to call yourself as cutie either]

[Those kinds of comebacks were made for boys like you, weren't they. Your appearance is that of a child while your inside is that of an old man, and to top it off, a Ronin life]

[That doesn't make sense!]

We had conversations about everything we thought of. I was already fed up with Erisa's wicked tongue, but Misaki ended up being at the same level. She mercilessly spoke up anything on her mind playing on my feelings. Yet I enjoyed talking with her. At least it's much better than those awkward conversations I have with unknown people. But the definite difference between her and Erisa is the affection contained in her words. Erisa's words gouge out the heart while Misaki's heal it instead.

I stopped going to the library, deciding to study at home these days. Having Misaki helping me with my English, I realized my comprehension ability wasn't that bad.

[Maybe you're the type who can't make a good performance under pressure and unease]

I don't remember feeling pressed or uneasy when I was taking my tests, but the regretful idea that I will be separated with Misaki in one month had a strong presence at that time. Who knows, it could be the main reason behind my failing on the tests.

We spent our days at the same room, chatted all the time and slept in the same bed. It wasn't because of my dead desires that I didn't touch her in the night, but because of my lack of self-confidence.

I became used to making three meals a day for Misaki and leaving the rest for Rosari at night. Every time, Misaki ate the entire meal I made for her. There were some occasions when I messed up the ingredients, but she still ate it without complaints to the point where I was astonished by her irregular gluttony despite her slender body. I was hoping Erisa's advice about the Shishikuibana being a glutton wasn't true.

Thus, our peaceful moments proceeded leisurely.

Thinking about it again, the last few days were similar to the Eden for me, supreme blissful days. A treasure sealed in my heart giving me painful times whenever I recall it later.

After all, the Eden didn't allow my stay for too long.

Those carrying sin always end up getting expelled.

\*\*\*\*\*

In the breakfast of the fourth morning, Misaki suggested we go on a date.

[How about we go out sometimes? It's too much of a waste to stay home in this nice weather. Try to forget about your studies for a day at least and have fun]

Her invitation made me very glad, but for me who never experienced going out with a girl in the street, I didn't have the confidence to maintain the enjoyable mood.

[Such an idiot. You're not a street performer to be worried about ruining the mood. It will be all good if you were able to enjoy yourself for the whole day. If you enjoy your time, then that will make me happy too]

Misaki brightly declared so to my expressed concerns.

Her words helped at pushing me and pressing me at the same time forcing today's schedule to be settled.

[With that out of the way, I need to return home and take a change of clothes. I mean, it would be pretty embarrassing to walk around the town with this appearance]

Gazing at the bashful Misaki, I started pondering about what I should be wearing too, when suddenly the sound of the knocking on the door leaped to my ears.

[I'm back! You awake Kuuya?]

It was Haruhito.

I wouldn't call it a good timing, but his absence for Misaki's revival was a

helpful thing.

In front of me is a good looking young woman wearing my clothes.

How am I supposed to explain to him this situation? How should I introduce him to Misaki?

Thinking over and over about what to do, Haruhito opened the door and entered.

The time stopped for an instant in the kitchen.

[O, oh my. Hello there]

Getting all confused by the unforeseen guest, Haruhito dropped his usual speaking manner and made a ridiculous greeting. Misaki answered with a “sorry for the intrusion” and bowed her head.

[So yeah, Kuuya, I’m going back for now. Let’s meet later]

Leaving behind her lovely smile, Misaki left the house.

I guess having Haruhito shooting a barrage of questions at me after that is a natural outcome.

[I thought you were a kid this whole time, but I guess you’re a man now, huh]

When I tried to honestly state our relationship to him, Haruhito returned me a smirk and said as such.

Telling him sincerely that I have a date tonight with Misaki, he said “Ooh, of course, just go, go, who cares about those studies anyway” and cheerfully pulled out two bills of ten thousand yen from his wallet.

[Just accept them. You may end up needing them at some point you know]

His unclean expression clearly divulged where I may need all that money. Leaving out this strange behavior for a middle aged man, I was delighted by his offer and gladly accepted the two bills.

I went back to my room and dressed up for the date. A white shirt and a gray jersey, as for the bottoms, I went for straight jeans. For someone at my age, my closet offered very few dressing choices.

In the middle of changing my clothes, the pot I put away entered my vision

field.

Only a few days ago, Misaki was sitting on top of this pot, eating flesh with a blank expression and silent mouth.

Now, I'm having a date with that Misaki. Such an emotional feeling.

After this date, I'm going to bring her back home and take permission from Haruhito to let her stay along. I had no basis of him approving, but at that time, I sensed that everything will advance smoothly.

On my way down leaving the entrance, I bumped into the delivery guy carrying a box wrapped in styrofoam.

[Could you please sign over here?]

Signing down, I checked the delivery box to find Haruhito's name on it.

When I handed it to him, he replied with "oh, that was fast", unsealed the box and took out a lump of something from the inside.

[What's that?]

[I found a great meat trader on my last work trip and asked for it to be delivered instead of increasing my luggage]

A new lump of meat was inserted again to the refrigerator. I moved my sight near the sink and noticed a cooler box. Instantly, my heart leaped from its place. Isezaki and the run over boy's flesh are placed in there. I didn't have the time to take it back to my room due to Haruhito's sudden return.

What's going to happen if he recognizes it? Cold sweat started running through my whole body.

[You still have time? Weren't you going out?]

Checking the wall clock, Haruhito urged me to go out. Fortunately, he doesn't seem to be doubting the cooler box.

Let's just pray that he wouldn't open it up.

Fifteen minutes on the train and three minutes walking out from the station, I finally arrived at the appointed location fifteen minutes before the exact time.

I spent the leftover minutes watching people coming and going in the town.

Seeing all these people walking under the summer sunlight sometimes, I couldn't believe that I was at their center.

When the traffic light turned green, the crowd standing on the road path gushed out to the street. Inside of that swarm, I could see a shadow of someone half running toward me.

[I'm back]

The long haired Misaki who arrived at the meeting place was wearing black trousers, a cream colored jersey and a transparent summer cardigan. Despite wearing this simple outfit, she looked more brilliant and prettier than any of the women passing by near.

[Shall we go then?]

I held hands with Misaki. Not just seizing hands, but entangling our fingers together, in other words, lovers hand holding. It felt the best to tie hands with her that way until I started thinking about my reflection for other people.

There's no need to argue about Misaki's grace. Her small face and well-ordered body would undoubtedly snatch the sight of every man passing near. Since she possesses a slender figure taller than me a little bit, she's probably wearing a sandal out of consideration. Should I feel miserable or sorry? I was caught by a complicated mood.

A queen and a mouse. A rose and a stone. Saying it favorably, it would look something like a sister and her little brother.

Considering the off balance between our appearance, I couldn't help but think people didn't look at me with those kinds of eyes.

[Hey hey, Kuuya, let's eat some crepes. That shop over there has some really delicious crepes]

Leaving my gloom aside, Misaki pointed to a crepe stand and raised her voice making it hard for me to refuse, just like how it's hard to stare at the blazing rays of the sun. She then ordered the double cream, grenadine limited crepe. Following her, I ordered the same thing too. Witnessing Misaki cheerfully biting into the crepe, my mood increased as a result. And as expected from her choice, the taste was also outstanding.

About the pomegranates of the grenadine. There's a common saying about its taste being similar to human flesh, so it was quite the strange coincidence for her to order it in the crepe. For some reason, it appeared as if she did that on purpose.

[Ah, the cream fell on my clothes]

Misaki said so with a pitiable voice. Her cardigan was tainted by the white and rose cream falling from the crepe.

[If you don't wipe it will turn into a stain]

When I was about to take out a handkerchief from my pocket, Misaki, unhesitating, dressed out the cardigan.

[I don't need it so I will throw it]

[Are you sure? If you wash it will turn back to normal you know]

Without minding my bewildered opinion, she rolled it up and threw it in a trash box set along the footpath.

[Okay then, let's go to the next place]

Seeing Misaki's cheerful face, an inexplicable unease crawled up onto me.

Rather than I wasn't grasping her character, it could be said that I didn't have a single idea about it. While I'm on my way deepening my relation with her, she's showing me various sides of her personality. Likable sides and undesirable sides. I'm not an esper, so naturally, I wouldn't be able to see through what's going on in her mind. I was intending to embrace everything about Misaki, But now, I wonder if I could keep that intention after touching the dark sides she's concealing.

Considering these heavy thoughts, we kept parading through the town together. We didn't watch a movie or go enjoy shopping. All we did was walking around while talking about the different stuff we see on our way. It was hard to call a stroll as a date, however, Misaki seemed to be enjoying her time. Again, by only looking at her smiling face, the earlier unease gradually faded out in my heart. Around the sunset, I completely forget about the fact of her throwing out the cardigan.

[Ah, it's a florist!]

Walking our way through a lonely alley, a street stall entered my sight as she stated.

It was Erisa's stall.

[Oh my, it's been quite a while]

Erisa's face turned black for a moment upon recognizing me and Misaki, but she immediately went back to her usual appearance. I can somehow read her expression saying something like "what are you doing at such a place?".

[It's rare to find a florist opening a shop at this time and place]

[I do that occasionally to fully enjoy the summer air. I like summer evenings]

Well, I didn't know you had such an elegant interest. I forced back that sentence before it slipped from my mouth. Erisa seemed to be acting as if she doesn't know me. I'm not sure why she's taking this attitude, though, it is surely better to keep quiet about that point. I can easily foresee Misaki ambushing me with questions if she knew we were acquaintances.

Talkativeness will backfire on me. If I keep quiet, nothing will occur.

Misaki was gazing at the flowers when she abruptly raised her head as if she recalled something.

[Come to think about it, we didn't exchange our names. We've known each other for a long time and all]

Erisa already knows Misaki's name, but she still answered with a "yeah, you're right" and nodded to her words.

[My name is Iruse Misaki, nice to meet you once again, Florist]

[Jinga Erisa, glad to meet you too, Miss Iruse]

Watching over both of them introducing themselves, my legs started to hurt from standing.

Erisa was called by Misaki to the construction site last month, to find her dead when arriving. I was waiting for a reference to that time to pop up in the conversation, nevertheless, They didn't show any sign of touching that matter.

Seeing their figures harmoniously talking about several topics, I felt like I gaped at the lurking abyss in a woman's heart.

[By the way Miss Erisa, what flower would you recommend for me today?]

[How about this one?]

Erisa's suggestion was a white refined flower blooming while covering its stalk.

[Amabilis. It's also called as Midi Phalaenopsis. It outshines the large Phalaenopsis with its small garland. It doesn't feel like a hindrance when placed at the window frame which makes it popular nowadays]

[What a beautiful flower]

Misaki viewed the Amabilis looking entranced by its beauty. I was thinking about purchasing it for her as a present, but Erisa lifted the pot and pointed it toward her before I did so.

[You can have it if you like. Consider it as my gratitude for having you often purchasing my flowers]

[Eh, are you sure?]

Misaki, with an excited voice, gleefully fixed her eyes on Erisa who was wrapping the pot in a bag.

Anyone who'd see Erisa's elegant manner of handling her flowers wouldn't be imagining her devouring human flesh every day, I wonder.

[Ah, right, Kuuya, can you come home with me?]

After receiving the bag from Erisa, Misaki directed her attention to me.

[Your house?]

I was always interested in Misaki's house, therefore, I agreed after the next reply.

When we were about to leave the stall, Erisa called me back with "hey, boyfriend, can I have a moment?".

I requested Misaki to walk ahead of me and rushed out to Erisa who then softly whispered into my ear.

I tried to ask her again what she meant, but she sent me back answering “have a lovely night”, along with a typical business smile.

[What, did something happen?]

[Yeah, she told me to take care of my cute girlfriend]

[Oh come on, I’m not that cute~]

Misaki continued to talk about different matters along the road, but my brain was overflowed, pondering about Erisa’s implication in her last whisper.

## Chapter 12

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Collection-memories- [it will only hurt for a moment]- knife

At the time we arrived at a residential area after clearing a mountainous district, the sun had already sunk behind the mountains. Misaki's house was at the inner part of the area connected with a forest.

[There are no street lights in here, so it get's pretty dark once the night falls]

Exactly as Misaki stated, the night street sure felt unreliable without lightning. I remembered the declining town where I live. Misaki's town is expected to prosper in the future, while mine had already reached its decaying stage. In exchange for the darkness that gets chased out from the new towns, it gradually keeps expanding in the old ones.

Misaki's house was a modern two storied building. The garden had trees growing and flowers proudly blooming for their landlord.

[I'm going to prepare some tea, go wait for me in my room. It's the first one you will see on the second floor]

Misaki, holding the Amaris she received from Erisa, disappeared in the interior of the house.

Doing as I was told, I opened the door of Misaki's room while trying my best to control my throbbing heart. It was my first time entering the room of a girl in my age, leaving aside that it was Misaki's room.

The inside was neatly arranged and brimming of freshness. A shelf was installed on the wall with various displayed accessories, shade lamps, bracelets, aroma pots, and pen stands. They all gave the impression of being homemade and their simple design showed that they were made from the same materials, giving the room a fashionable style.

Clothes and underwear were scattered above the bed and makeup tools were disordered on the dresser. When I imagine Misaki preparing for the date in a rush to make it in time, an unconscious grin escapes my control.

[I forgot to place the Amabilis in the room first]

Misaki appeared carrying a tray with tea in one hand and holding the flower with the other one. Placing the Amabilis on the window frame she mumbled in a low voice wondering whether it will look attractive in the daytime.

[Is this your collection?]

Immediately after pointing to the handicraft on the shelf, Misaki puffed her chest as if she was waiting for that question.

[Rather than a collection, I made all of it by myself. I've been collecting the material and crafting them from my middle school days]

[Hee, that's amazing. I didn't know you had such a talent]

Well, I still don't know anything about you anyway.

[I work on them in a cabin near the house since space and tools are necessary, not to mention that crafting them inside will make a mess of the whole place]

[You also have a cabin? It seems like you're taking your stuff seriously, aren't you?]

[Do you want to go take a look?]

Going with the flow of the conversation, I ended up moving to Misaki's cabin. Judging from her excitement, perhaps she invited me to see her works and cabin as the main purpose.

I proceeded behind Misaki who was holding a flashlight in her hands. The foliage above our heads didn't permit the least amount of light to make it past, rendering the dark path hard enough to cross. By clearing my ears, I could also hear the sound of running water. Apparently, there's a small river near us, according to Misaki.

We finally arrived at a small hovel, a place a bit too cramped to be a residence. The roof was built from corrugated zinc and had countless holes. Obviously, it wouldn't stand a chance against rain.

[To be honest, I didn't want to show it to anybody in this shape, but I made an exception for you, Kuuya]

[What was this place originally?]

[I'm not very sure, it was something like a storage room used by some forestry workers. It looked like it was abandoned, so I'm secretly using it now]

Right after opening the door with a creaking sound, a lot of things entered my field of vision. Rusty tools, fertilizers, and composts were scattered everywhere in the moldy room.

The workplace was behind a door in the inner part. Misaki entered the room first and turned on a lantern switch hanging from the ceiling. It seems there's no electricity. Somehow, I started to faintly recall the thousand yen grandma.

Excluding the single window, there were some furnitures installed here and there, though, all of them were nothing but empty shelves. A lathe and a milling machine were set in the corner covered with vinyl sheets suggesting that they were used not too long ago.

A big wooden table was placed in the center and above it were placed some relatively new looking knives waiting for their turn to be used. One-third of the table was covered by a cloth hiding its inside.

[This is the leather I'm using to make them. It takes a lot of troubles to make it this clean]

[Wait, don't tell me, you also make your own leather?]

Misaki made a giggle to my surprised expression and put the leather on her palm.

[Well, it's indeed quite difficult to make it. The process is long and requires much effort, but the joy I feel once I finish making it makes the whole thing worth it]

[You must be spending a considerable amount of time to make it like this]

[The longest part is separating the fat without scratching the leather I guess. If I leave even a small amount, it will oxidize and get maggot-infested afterwards]

[Such a sensitive task]

[If you laze around at that part, it will have a huge effect in the end. If you're too slow the leather will deteriorate and getting too impatient will risk to wound it. You need both prudence and speed in order to perfectly achieve the job]

[I really didn't imagine you'd have such a special skill]

Misaki raised a triumphant air due to my praising words.

[Then, after chipping the fat, you need to soak it in a special chemical medicine for a few months to turn into a good leather. The medicine's ingredients are a secret by the way. Even though I was never asked about it. Next, you stretch it on the back of a chair below the lamp shade. By using a lamp of warm colors, the light reflects a beautiful appearance on the pores and guarantees the good quality of the leather]

Watching Misaki freely explaining the process to me, I felt a bit happy. The unease I had earlier in the town turned into an enjoyment thanks to discovering another new side of her. I guess it will be normal to face those kinds of worries, get angry, and sometimes even enter into an argument with her. But the moments when I will be delighted and laugh from the bottom of my heart are going visit at the same frequency for sure. The future is not something to be

scared of, the fact that we don't know what's waiting for us is what makes it entertaining.

[But this leather here you see, I just can't bring myself to accept it]

Misaki picked a piece of leather from its edge. The part she pointed to had a wound similar to a sunburn. The amber color in that scratch made it look very strange.

[I didn't realize when I was peeling off the skin. But when the tan became visible later I regretted killing it for nothing in the first place]

[Killing it? You mean you also go out of your way to kill the animal and obtain its leather?]

I replied with a high pitched voice.

[There's a limit to how enthusiastic you can get. To begin with, How do you acquire it?]

[That's easy. All you need to do is randomly walk around. When you find one, just call for it, then it will follow you until this place]

[It's like you're using Hamelin's flute]

That's interesting. I wonder what animal possessing this leather live near these mountains.

[Buy wait, wouldn't you face troubles if you kill it by yourself? You can simply deliver it to a specialist and he will give you back the leather you know]

[I have no clue about this specialist. I mean, I'm not sure if there's someone who'd accept a human dismantling task]

–What did she just say?!

Before I asked her again, Misaki swiftly embraced me.

Her breath tickled my ears.

[Sorry Kuuya, it will hurt for only a moment]

A simultaneous gouging pain with her whisper ran through my flank resulting in me collapsing.

Tormenting pain and confusion swirled in my head.

What the heck happened?

Why am I collapsing?

Misaki, why are you looking down at me with those cold eyes?

The old phone she was seizing in her right hand released a dangerous looking purple lightning.

[Did you know, stun guns have lots of styles and shapes. Out of all of them, the phone model is the handiest, you can act as if you're talking and take your opponent by surprise. You don't need a special permission to use it either, as for the efficacy, you're currently experiencing it. By merely running a spark of electricity, you lose control over your body]

Having my head all hazy, I barely listened to Misaki's statement of efficiency. Precisely as she said, all my muscles are paralyzed halting me from moving my arms. My flank is continuously dispatching an explosive pain to my brain and disturbing my thought. If a female college student is able to obtain such a disturbing weapon, I wouldn't really support the actual Japanese law.

[To be honest, I didn't want to do this. I wished to live a carefree life in your house. But those feelings were blown off once I met Jinka Erisa again. At that moment, I remembered that I still had something left to achieve]

I can't keep with her story because of the pain and numbness in my brain caused by the electric shock.

In the first place, why did Erisa's name pop up here?

[I'm not going to let her live. But before I go trouble her again, It's important to take care of my regrets first. So yeah, Kuuya, could you die for me?]

[Wa-wa-wait!! Why am I supposed to die?]

I was finally able to squeeze out those words with my trembling voice.

[You're really dense, aren't you kuuya?]

Misaki's amazed voice hovered in the dark corner of the room. Her tone was as cool as the cold water of a freezing lake.

[Just to let you know Kuuya, I always watched you these last three years. It's true that I had an enjoyable time with Akira, but I couldn't find what I really craved in him. Frankly speaking, I thought of him as an annoying person. Sometimes, it was awfully painful to be recognized and applauded as the official couple of the class with him]

I couldn't control my astonishment hearing Isezaki's name from her mouth. How is that even possible.

I certainly did whisper it in her ears, Isezaki Akira doesn't exist. There shouldn't be any remaining memories of him in her brain.

[Why is it me and not him? Did I ever do something offending you?]

[Did something offensive? Hm, that's pretty weird. If I'm not wrong, I was constantly loved and protected by you kuuya wasn't I? And I should be loving you forever as well, right? By the way, who did you mean by "him"?)]

Misaki's face was filled with a distorted grin she never showed me before.

I was assailed by a violent chill as if my blood was flowing out from my entire body.

She didn't only keep her memories about Isezaki, but she also maintained the false ones I planted in her.

To top it off, she can distinguish both of them without confusion. What's happening to Misaki exceeded my level of comprehension.

[You know, the reason you attracted my attention was because despite being a man, you had a white, fine and smooth skin. The first time I noticed it was in the fall of the first year of high school, the day when you confessed your love to me. And remember what was my reply? "I never saw you from that kind of light, Mamesaki". You wouldn't usually fall in love with a raw material. It's like you're waiting for a person to fall for a chicken used for its eggs]

[What in the world do you mean by raw material?]

[Just look at this room. Can't you realize such an obvious fact? You're really dense, Kuuya]

I think I would never forget that cruel voice she directed to me like a gleaming

sword while giving me her scorning glances.

[I am going to kill you and peel off your skin, that's what I mean]

Misaki leisurely turned her back to me who didn't have much difference from a harmless hornworm at that time, and grabbed a rustic knife unbecoming of her looks from the shelf.

[Usually, I would have done this near the river leaving this place clean. Welp, it's a dull cabin anyway, I guess it doesn't really matter, although it would be a pain to get rid of the unnecessary parts later]

A sharp sound in the air echoed by her waving the knife.

Erisa's first words played back on my mind.

–That girl is a monster, be careful.

With her majestic steps, Misaki leisurely approached me, looking like a beast licking its' lips and drawing near its' captured prey.

[Be relieved, I'm not interested in torturing people before finishing them. If you stay quiet, I will easily slit your throat, blood will quickly come out like a water fountain and it will be the end. After I check that your heart has stopped, I will then neatly peel off your skin. Hey Kuuya, what do you want to become? A lamp? A cushion? A place mat? Or shall I turn you into a diary cover? I can write my daily life events under that light lamp made from the skin and bones of a college student and while smelling the fragrance of the aroma pot fabricated from the shaved cranium of a kindergartener. It will sound like I'm talking to you at that time. Ah, I may as well make a pen from your finger then. How does it sound? Writing down my life events addressed to you with a pen made from your finger and calling it a night with a kiss on the front cover. Don't you think that's a lovely idea?]

Raising her innocent voice, she kept on attentively spewing her disturbing imagination. Meanwhile, I desperately searched for a way to rescue myself. During the time she was talking to herself, my body had considerably recovered. It was still impossible for me to escape, however, I could at least move my arms and legs. I examined my surroundings looking for something to be used as a weapon nearby, but unfortunately, the ground was full of nothing

but garbage and piled up dust.

[I've been doing this from my middle school days so I'm used to killing people without making them suffer. Although I did mess up a bit with that child three years ago]

Speaking of three years ago, I remembered the incident of the orphan child in the next town. His corpse was missing its left arm and had his back skin tragically torn off.

[I never thought I would be meeting the criminal of that unsettled case]

[I don't give signs. But I can accept your skin instead. You know, your skin's quality is the best, Kuuya. It's number one for me out of all the materials I saw. I will thoughtfully tan it for you so you can rest in peace]

Misaki's face was too close, to the point where I felt her breath.

I charged most of my remaining strength to my legs and stretched them to blow her off.

Her body received the unforeseen blow and bumped into the table, resulting in the operating tools falling on the ground.

Making use of that opportunity, I stood up relying on my unsteady legs.

When only a few steps were left for me to make it to the door, Misaki pinioned me.

I tried to shake her off left and right using my barely mobilized body but she didn't show a sign of letting go. It feels like I got caught in a spider web.

[Don't wriggle and die already!!]

Along with her demonic roar, Misaki thrust the knife edge against my neck. An assault filled with killing intent rather than love struck a sharp blade in my neck instead of a kiss. I'm experiencing a deadly black love comedy.

Once again, I rolled on the floor and attempted my best to make it out of her binding.

Misaki's legs started to faintly shake.

I imitated a sumo wrestling technique and with all my might, jumped aiming

my back toward Misaki, then sank my entire weight above her.

Fortunate for me and unluckily for her, an iron machine tool was set in the place where we collapsed.

A dull stabbing sound echoed in the room.

Having Misaki crushed beneath me, we both fell to the ground.

I depended on my wobbly legs to somehow stand up again and nervously rubbed my neck ascertaining the wound's condition.

I didn't find any cut trace.

I reverted my sight to Misaki who dropped the knife from her hands. Her slender limbs were convulsed. In the center of her head, blood petals were slowly crawling on the ground.

I remained standing in a daze and gazing down on Misaki who wasn't moving anymore, looking like a mannequin.

Her half opened eyes were blank and her white teeth were peeking from her lips.

Except the blood rushing out of her head, her body was clean and unharmed. She looked as if she was about to wake up if I called her, answering me with her cheerful voice "Morning Kuuya, what's for breakfast today?"

Misaki has died again.

Exceeding the sorrow of losing her for the second time, my heart was raging from anguish, as if it was getting battered by a storm.

Where did I go wrong?

What did I miss up?

Why did I end up murdering her?

The open-hearted Misaki of the high school days. Misaki who transfigured into a bewitching adult. Misaki who drank my blood and fed on flesh. Misaki who bloomed a flower in my room. Misaki who loved me and acted as my lover. Misaki who held Isezaki's memories. Misaki who joyfully talked about her strange hobby. Misaki who brandished a knife and tried to kill me.

I wonder which Misaki was the real one.

I became unable to discern what happened.

## Chapter 13

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metal bat-A new seed-Ovary

Leaving Misaki's corpse behind, I dragged my stiffened body and returned back home. Both my mind and body were exhausted to the utmost having experienced such a long day, however, falling asleep senseless in that dilapidated cabin next to her was out of the question.

Haruhito was in the living room lying on the sofa and watching TV while using his elbow as a pillow.

[Eh? I thought you were not coming back tonight—]

Probably because he noticed my depressed expression, Haruhito halted his words in midway.

He then jumped up from the sofa and went to the kitchen.

[Did you eat something yet?]

Replying with a short, “No”, Haruhito picked a cutlet placed on the table and warmed it using the microwave oven.

The weak sound of the turntable moving reverberated in the silent kitchen.

[Well, yeah, you see...]

Unable to endure the heavy silence anymore, Haruhito, for the first time in a long while, started talking around in a lost manner.

[Life is full of wounding events. Getting bloodstained or covered in wounds is not that bad. Receiving an injury will result in a trace remaining, but that trace you see, it helps to avoid getting injured at the same place again. That’s how a person grows up. Having a lot of scars is evidence of amassed experience]

The microwave finished the warming right after Haruhito ended his words.

He took the cutlet letting out steam and placed it on the table once again.

[That’s why you need to keep acquiring experience while you’re still young. Learn how to heal your wounds because recovering gets slower the older you get. The girl I saw this morning was indeed cute, but it seems your affinity wasn’t compatible, you just had a poor chance this time. There are countless women in the earth. All you need to do is get over—]

[You’re wrong, I wasn’t rejected]

Realizing that he hastily jumped over to the conclusion, Haruhito made a bitter smile.

[A, Aah, I see! A quarrel was it? You could’ve told me so earlier you know. I thought for sure that you were rebuffed by that girl. I’m not sure what’s the problem, but don’t let it get you down. It’s much better than being dumped after all]

Haruhito raised a cheerful voice to me who was keeping silent.

[It’s not the end of your friendship, you can think about a way to make up with her later. So yeah, don’t be dejected like that, c’mon now, eat the meal before it cools down]

There's no possible way for Haruhito to guess the real reason for my dejection. And I'm not planning on speaking of it to him either.

I finished the evening meal which felt tasteless at that time, dragged myself as if I was walking in a dream, and left the house. Haruhito quietly allowed me to do so without asking me where I'm going.

I walked through the main road, spent thirty minutes on the way until I reached a familiar western style building. Lights were still visible from its windows.

[I am very sorry, we have already closed—]

Kanade stopped apologizing half-way. She was facing Erisa in front of the counter and checking into the register.

[What are you doing here at such a time. I thought you were definitely spending a hot night with your girlfriend]

I ignored Erisa's jeering and went directly to the core of the matter.

[I want a new seed]

Erisa returned a dubious face to my request. Kanade considered the situation and dived into the basement.

[What do you mean? Wasn't she healthy and all just now?]

[Yeah, she was healthy earlier. It's just that your misgiving hit the mark]

[So something did happen. Could you explain me the story?]

I then divulged everything about the four last days I spent with Misaki. Without forgetting the part where she tried to kill me in the cabin of course.

Hearing me out until the end, Erisa showed a face of being convinced.

[So that's how it is. I finally understood the reason for her following me around after hearing out your story. Iruse Misaki was striving for my body]

[Your body? What, you mean she is that type of girl?]

[Could you just tell me from where do you get these coarse ideas in such a situation? She assaulted you because she wanted to make a handicraft with your body, and the same thing applies for me too. When I say she's striving for

my body, I mean it literally. She's aiming for my parts]

[How did you arrive at this conclusion?]

[The truth is, I faked some of the details about what actually happened when she called for me. It's not wrong that she called me out to meet her, However, the part about finding her dead was a lie. What really happened is that she tried to murder me]

Misaki attacked Erisa?

[At that evening, when I made it to the construction site, nobody was around. After I kept waiting for a good amount of time, I decided to go back my way thinking it was some sort of tease, when she suddenly appeared out of the blue raising a metal bat above her head. I was somehow able to dodge the first hit, but she didn't seem to be stopping anytime soon and persistently continued on attacking me. I then lured her to a spot stacked up with materials while avoiding her hits at the last moments. Fortunately, the managing of the spot was negligent, which lead to her unforeseen end]

[The missed strike you dodged hit the piled up materials instead resulting in her getting crushed beneath them. Said differently, you killed Misaki]

Erisa made a fed up face to my conclusion.

[She arbitrarily ruined herself. Even if I was the one who induced her to do so. But still, she was quite a beast. She didn't waver in the least in trying to murder me. That's why I also moved with the intention of snatching her life]

[—Why didn't you tell me about this in the first time?]

[Humans are living beings who only believe the things they want. If I told you the truth back then, you wouldn't have believed me and you'd still be blindly loving Iruse Misaki in any case]

[You could've at least handed me a warning or something at that time. Same thing applies for when we met in town. You could've spoken to me straight rather than leaving me hanging with your riddles]

[Do you really think you would have believed me if I expressed my honest opinion to you? If I warned you in a straight way, do you think you would have

avoided tonight's event?]

Erisa's words were spot on.

Just like she said now, even if she told me the entire truth instead of concealing it for herself, I would have definitely denied it.

Besides, Erisa's hidden truth doesn't have anything to do with Misaki assaulting me. And assuming that I knew what was going to occur, the only change that would have taken place is me dodging the stun gun.

[I did feel a faint killing intent left in her when you both visited my shop today, but that was confirmed, along with her objective of following me around right after hearing out your side of the story. Perhaps she was planning on attacking me again this time]

Erisa's skin was white and clear, similar to clay. For Misaki who doesn't permit the slightest stain, it was quite hard for her to look over Erisa who held a refined beauty. I guess it's safe to assume that her guess unfolds the complete truth.

[Crafting with human materials is a long labor process that requires considerable knowledge and skills. For her to accomplish such a difficult job alone, she must be pretty devoted to human craftsmanship]

Erisa moved behind the counter and sat on the stool.

[I'm not interested in the details of her work, however, her addiction and mindset are indeed intriguing. It's not a question of ugliness and beauty, but I wonder if she understands the meaning of using human parts as materials. Although I would like to pass on offering her my skin, I'd like to invite her to my place]

[I don't care about that. Tell me, are you going to give the seed or not?]

[Now that I know about her wicked obsession, I wouldn't recommend you to release her again. Apart from that, you need to think up a way to dispose of her body. The Shishikuibana's exterior appearance is similar to that of a human. It will be troublesome if it was to be seen by somebody else]

I slammed my hand against the counter.

[I'd do anything if I can obtain the seed. I'd even bring a new corpse if you ask me to do so. I don't want to abandon Misaki yet. Please, could you spare me a seed?]

[—Would you really do anything for that sake?]

Erisa's pupils released a very suspicious light.

Getting pressed down by the unusual mood, I gulped down my saliva and nodded.

[Bring me a corpse, that is my demand. However, the corpse should meet one condition. It should be a woman who has already passed her first menstruation and did not reach to her menopause yet. Accurately speaking, I want the ovary of a young woman. Aside of that, I'm not requiring anything special about the appearance or the condition]

[A young woman's ovary.....]

I recalled Ando proudly saying something about a sanitary napkin found with the body he brought for the first time. He satisfied the requirements of obtaining the seed, which is delivering the corpse of a woman able to give birth.

Erisa added, "Ah, that's right", as if she remembered something.

[It's better to not ask the Mogura for help since they habitually choose the lower half for their compensation. You already know that from the time with that grandma. There's no better feast than the legs filled with muscles and genital organs for them]

[How am I supposed to do that then? You telling me to carry the body on my back?]

[This is not a comic story, you don't have to do anything like that. You can simply cut the corpse and pack it in a case just like Ando. You can even drag her alive to this shop before making any move. Do you still remember the woman who turned her husband into a Shishikuibana? She submitted to me her own ovary in order to do so. In short, If you can just bring me the ovary, as long as it's not rotten, I wouldn't complain about the body's condition]

I bitterly regretted asking. Unlike Ando, I don't have a fortune, nor do I have

the skills of the Mogura.

All that I own is the firm resolution of reviving Misaki again.

[You said that you wouldn't mind any woman as long as she's young, right?]

[That is if she's able to give birth. I'm not sure whether you happen to know one or not though]

I have an idea about one.

The remaining problem is how I can successfully lure her to this place.

\*\*\*\*\*

It is two AM currently.

I was in a small alley somewhere inside the red light district.

Only the infrequent voice of barking dogs and the sounds of the plants ruffled by the breeze could be heard on this peaceful summer night.

Standing next to a pole, I was waiting for a certain person.

Judging from the time, she should pass by this place soon enough, but I still can't discern her figure anywhere.

When I was about to give up and withdraw, footsteps sounds interrupted the silence around.

[Sari!]

Calling out for her, Sari made a startled expression and stood still.

Right after she realized that the calling voice was mine, her stiffened face took back its usual look.

[Eh, it's Kuuya! What are you doing here in the middle of the night?]

[I was waiting for you, Sari]

[Me?]

I used a serious voice tone to Sari who rounded her eyes.

[About the time I showed you....yeah, you apparently don't remember. My friend has died]

[Eeh, really!?!]

[I was looking for that friend this whole time until the body was discovered not too long ago]

[I see, that must feel hard for you]

Despite declaring the abrupt death of a person, Sari's reaction was too weak.

It was quite apparent that she didn't remember the slightest thing about me searching for Misaki.

[She was a very important friend to me. A friend who trusted me and allowed me to frankly speak up my mind to her. The shock was too strong, to the point where I didn't know what to do and left the house to walk aimlessly throughout the town]

[It sounds painful, doesn't it? Don't let get to you for too long, there, there~]

Sari gently stroked my hair.

Things are not progressing well.

The plan should advance to her "comforting" me at this rate.

Were my words lacking emotions, or maybe she saw through my lie?

It would be terrifying if it was the latter. I mean, that would mean she feigns being an idiot the entire time while grasping a hold on everything occurring nearby.

I can't argue with Ando's loss of faith in women if that was true.

In the first place, am I even able to cleverly lead a conversation with another woman? I felt ashamed of my hopeless love experience.

[I don't want to go back home]

I worked my head to finally put that much into words.

[I want to stay with someone until I settle down]

[Someone? Who?]

[With you, till morning]

In the end, I didn't happen to be the type who beats around the bush. I just

honestly declared my thoughts. That was my only weapon after all.

And because of its simplicity, the effect was also immediate since Sari's eyes started to dart across.

[I will be scolded if I worked outside the store, but I will let that pass exceptionally for you, Kuuya]

I shouted in joy inside my heart to Sari's mutter.

She then entwined her arms around mine and puffed.

[Okay then, where do you want to go?]

The soapy scent emitted from Sari's body tickled my nose. The sense of her touching breasts was greater than what I imagined. If her intelligence was a little bit higher, she would definitely serve as a useful honey trap working in the secret services.

[The place is kind of far, is it fine? I can call a car if you want]

[You're well prepared. Don't tell me, are you taking me to those love hotels with hired cars?]

Such hotels don't exist in Japan to begin with.

[It's not high class, but I thought it's the ideal place for us to relax. A calm and peaceful location perfect for spending a single night]

[Really? It makes me very happy to know you were thinking this far about me]

Sari believed every single word of my irresponsible lies. Forgetting about her main purpose for accompanying me, her eyes continued sparkling in excitement.

I felt bad for deceiving her, however, there was no going back at this late timing. I already cast the die.

Walking our way leisurely through the dark road, the headlight of Erisa's car approached us.

When I glanced at Sari who was cheerfully cuddling me, somehow my heart chilled. The feeling of guilt I had when trying to persuade her earlier has significantly decreased by now.

I bet she didn't have the slightest foresight of me soon snatching away her

life. It was arranged in the previous meeting to have her enter the basement room, thrust a knife in her neck and gouge her throat by stirring it up until she dies. I considered speeding up the process to let her pass away without much suffering, but then again, she would probably forget about her death several seconds later anyway.

Watching the approaching car of Erisa, I deeply apologized for what was going to happen to Sari.

## Chapter 14

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the depth of Hell-revelation- Dagger knife- [I am a human]

The streets, the crowds, and inside the trains were filled back up once again with students wearing uniforms.

I repeated the days of going to Misaki's house while acting as I was moving to the library. I'd have preferred to raise her at home instead, but Haruhito is there now. Honestly, concealing her in the house is too much of a pain, and even if I did so, Haruhito had already seen Misaki previously. I have no explanation ready for him in case he found out about the Shishikuibana.

It's now September.

The seed which I obtained by exchanging Sari's ovary had grown into a new Misaki above the pot waiting for its second awakening. It was fortunate that the ovary was in perfect condition. Receiving the seed, I told Erisa "You didn't stop

me this time, did you?" but she replied with a shocked expression, "It's useless to do so anyway".

I then planted the seed in Misaki's cut open head and dripped some blood. I also begged Erisa to share with me Sari's flesh so I would have more time to gaze at Misaki to my heart's content instead of going out to search for a new corpse.

Aside from picking up her head in the cabin, I didn't go back there a second time. Though, I was blessed to find the necessary tools to behead her set all in one place. The remainder of the body was left rotting due to microbes and enzyme.

I tried to brainwash Misaki once again.

I made her forget about Isezaki for real this time.

To not assault me.

To love me from the bottom of her heart.

As if I was praying, I repeated this imprinting as long as I was awake.

Right after the flower fell, I started releasing Misaki.

As I was cutting the root, her eyebrow started to quiver.

[You were protecting me and loving me? How gross. I can't believe you're approaching me like that. And hey, could you stop staring at me? You're disgusting, give me a break!]

The second Misaki was a person who abused and criticised me for my looks and character. I already knew about her too-frank personality, but this time her filthy speech made her look like a different woman.

She was straightforwardly making every thought she had in mind into words. The Misaki in front of my eyes was a lump of rudeness.

This is not the Misaki that I wanted to resuscitate.

An abrupt fire ignited in my head and before I realized it, I found myself thrusting the dagger knife I picked from the cabin into her neck.

The sharp edge pierced her throat making her unpleasant voice come to a

halt.

Pulling out the knife, brand new blood floated in the floor and Misaki began to aimlessly walk inside the room until she eventually ran out of battery and collapsed on the floor turning into an unmoving doll.

The crafted tools she worked hard to make when she was still a human were painted with her splattered blood turning the room interior into a grotesque picture.

When I noticed that Misaki stopped moving, I was attacked by an intense regret.

I killed Misaki again.

Not because I was defending myself, but only due to my uncontrolled emotions.

I need to acquire another seed from Erisa. However, now that I already submitted Sari's corpse, I don't have any more measures left. If I lazed around, Misaki's head will rot and the worm's athletic meeting will take place inside her skull.

As I was troubled by this obstacle, a sole idea popped in my mind. It could be even described as a revelation.

I took Misaki to the bathroom and ripped off her abdomen with a carver.

Using a medical book I found in her house as a reference, I kept on churning her insides while pushing my way through her pink organs drenched by blood and detached them until I attained what I was looking for before long.

The organ I was looking for was the ovary.

I heard from Erisa about the Shishikuibana's constitution being similar to humans, but I was still delighted by apprehending that the same thing applies to the internal organs as well.

Without further delay, I brought the ovary with me to Erisa in the shop who then showed me a grim face.

[I don't mind if it's just the ovary, but...]

Erisa picked the genitalia I carried by her fingers.

[I'd like it if you told me its owner at least]

When I remained silent to her sharp question, she made a sigh.

[I didn't want to say this but let me go out of my way now. You know about Iruse Misaki's body, I actually hired the Mogura to deliver it for me here. After some negotiation, they stepped back on taking the lower half]

Erisa's words cleared away the doubt I had from a while ago. She told me that she cut Misaki's head at the construction site. However, I didn't hear anything in the news mentioning the discovery of a headless lump of meat. That is of course because Erisa brought it with her.

[Most of her parts were crushed by the mountain of materials, but I was barely able to safely extract the ovary. Which I used to make the seed I offered you for the first time]

I can't blame her act. Erisa wasn't planning on murdering Misaki in the first place, it was the complete opposite that took place. Rather she had the compassion to offer a piece of bread to the person who slapped her in the face. Although I was the one who received that piece of bread.

[As I thought. You were intending on reviving Misaki from the first time]

[That is if you look at it from the results]

[Even though she tried to kill you?]

[I wanted to hear the reason she did that from her mouth. What left me hesitating was the precaution of whether she will perhaps assault me once I revive her, or the lack of will to waste a seed out of curiosity]

I was about to ask her why she didn't simply brainwash Misaki, but I decided to keep quiet.

I learned the hard way that brainwashing doesn't always succeed. For Erisa who's well versed in the Shishikuibana, it's quite possible that she already thought about such possibility.

[By your unexpected entry, Iruse Misaki took her shape once again. Perhaps if you didn't show up, I would have handed the seed to somebody else]

Saying that, Erisa took out a new seed from the vault.

[My misgiving is about you possibly holding an ideal too high for Iruse Misaki. Just like a painter who is hard to please, try to not smash every piece that doesn't suit your taste]

Feeling as if she saw through my soul, I received the seed and excused myself from the shop.

Returning back to the room, I instantly beheaded the abusive Misaki and planted the seed.

Last time, I left Misaki's corpse in the cabin for a long while. Not to mention her head being damaged, her brain that began rotting is surely the origin of the inferior growth which led to the revival of an ill-natured Misaki. But this time it's okay, I can give birth to a pure, obedient one.

Unfortunately, my wishful thinking was quickly betrayed.

The third Misaki was a child.

Staring at me with her vacant eyes, she repeatedly called "Ku~ya, Ku~ya" like an idiot who doesn't remember anything aside from that name.

She didn't change her words no matter how long I talked to her.

I couldn't even check whether she's possessing an affection towards me or not.

I recalled the moment when she teased me saying "Your appearance is that of a child while your inside is that of an old man".

Isn't it the opposite for you know? You look as an adult while you're a child in the inside.

She didn't reply to my retort.

Getting controlled by my irritation again, I struck the knife in her bare chest.

I dragged the dying Misaki to the bathroom, ripped open her belly and took out the ovary. Right next to me, the rotting headless corpse of the rude Misaki was releasing a concentrated stench.

After bringing the ovary with me to the shop, Erisa handed me the seed

without speaking a word. She didn't attempt to convince me anymore.

Regarding the raising of the third body, I remained in Misaki's house instead of returning home. I lost sight of my phone somewhere along the way, but that served more as a relief since I became out of range from any outside contact. I could finally focus completely on reviving Misaki.

Her parent's long absence was also a helpful aspect. I'm not sure whether they're ignoring their daughter or they're just blindly believing in her.

I started sleeping during the day and waking up in the dusk to go wander around the town searching for a new flesh.

Business district, riverbed, railways and dump sites.

With the eyes of a predator, I visited every possible place where I could find a corpse lying on the ground. In case I don't find anything, I then proceed to the vagrants gathering spots or to the prostitution quarters. I either drag the vagrants using money or approach a mature prostitute while wearing the mask of a customer.

[This is not a dump site! You're troubling me by bringing this low-quality flesh every single day. Give me a break]

I listened to Erisa's complaints, however, to me, the quality of the flesh was not important. What really mattered is collecting a large amount in a short time.

In the process of raising the Shishikuibana, I noticed that its development rate is related to the amount of meat I feed it. The more I offer it flesh, the Shishikuibana's maturing speeds up. And so, I continued to collect more flesh whilst hearing out Erisa's complaints every time.

Misaki's house became overflowing from the stink of her headless bodies and the rotting flesh which she had yet to eat. Throwing away the unnecessary parts in a garbage site was out of the question. The entire house got polluted by the extreme hellish miasma, though for me who was immersed in raising up Misaki forgetting to eat and sleep, it didn't really matter. I poured all of my time and labour in bringing her up. Exactly as Erisa mentioned, I kept on doing so for the sake of making my ideal Misaki.

However, seeming to be ridiculing my hard work, the more I redid the resuscitation process, the more Misaki kept swaying away from being human. The outward appearance was indeed consistent, but her inside was empty.

Up from the fourth try, she didn't emit the smallest voice anymore and remained absent-mindedly gaping at my face with her vacant eyes. It was even suspicious if she recognised me or not. Cutting the root didn't result in the least change of emotions in her face.

I killed Misaki out of disappointment and planted the seed in her skull again.

Raising Misaki then killing her to raise her again and kill her.

My life became the embodiment of this repetition.

Who cares about college entry exams anyway.

Continuing to endlessly construct my elaborate doll in the depths of hell, I expected Misaki to smile to me one day. I am a miserable Pygmalion who was rescued by nobody. The goddess didn't seem to be descending upon me anytime soon.

I eventually lost sight of my purpose. Am I killing Misaki in order to revive her, or am I reviving her in order to kill her? I couldn't distinguish between them anymore.

[You look too pale, are you eating well?]

When I was receiving the seed for the XX time, Erisa pointed to my health condition to get "I'm fine" as a reply from me. But in the actual truth, my body stopped accepting food. I wonder if my mental condition affected my health. No matter what I ate, it just disappears as if I swallowed a dumpling, leaving only an uncomfortable feeling behind.

[You need to eat something of high nutrition, else you will be ruined. If you get too worked up with Iruse Misaki's resuscitation you will end up just like her]

If it's about high nutrition food then I literally have a mountain of it in Misaki's house. However, there's no way for me to resort to eating human flesh.

I am a human, not a Shishikuibana.

I am a human, no matter how much I starve, I wouldn't resort to eating

human flesh.

I am a human, I wish for my beloved person to come back.

I am a human, if I fail, I'm going to have to kill Misaki again.

I am a human, I make use of this fact to draw near humanity even more.

I am a human, my left arm that got bitten by the vagrant I attacked is throbbing.

I am a human, I murder people in order to acquire flesh.

I am a human, somehow using the knife became difficult.

I am a human, I rip off Misaki's abdomen in order to acquire the seed.

I am a human, I would never eat that rotten flesh.

I am a human, wait, where did my left arm go again?

\*\*\*\*\*

Erisa has said it once.

The end abruptly knocks on the doors, without any previous notice nor restraint.

In my case, rather than knocking, it rang the bell.

The season turned into winter.

That faint resounding sound stirred up my heart and drove me out of my abyss of despair.

It's been three months since I decided to stay in Misaki's house and nobody had visited in that period.

Misaki's parents wouldn't ring the bell.

Misaki's friends wouldn't violently strike the door.

The neighbours wouldn't tear down the lock.

The bill collector wouldn't step in the house without permission. Newspaper or religion employees wouldn't scream "It stinks! What's this smell?!" in the corridor of the first floor. A door-to-door salesman wouldn't go up the stairs.

Countless possibilities emerged and disappeared in my mind. My brain changed into a crucible of madness and I went all rigid in Misaki's room while waiting for the end to show up.

The intruder who walked up the stairs opened the door with no hesitation.

[I started thinking about an excuse to make if I struck the wrong house, but...]

A familiar voice of a well-known person.

The last person I was expecting to find me in this place.

[It seems there was no need to worry about that]

Haruhito looked down on me who was lying on the floor.

His face felt somehow grieved.

[Finally, when I thought I found you, things turned out like this. To make the matter even worse, it was you who turned this house into a mess]

[Haruhito, I—]

[You can still talk? That means you're still in your last moments]

Haruhito didn't mention a word about the Misaki above the pot.

I tried standing up, but all I could do at that time was lifting my head.

It's only natural. After all, I have already lost my arms and legs.

My insides are feeling heavy and muddled similar to melting lead.

[I'll scold you later. Now we're going back]

Haruhito displayed a rare tender expression filled with his warmth toward me.

I just recalled that he made the same face in the morning when I was informed of my mother's death. He interrupted my question back then saying "I'll explain things for you later".

Leaving that verbal promise unprotected, I still don't know the reason for my mother's death even until now.

Haruhito reached his hands to my back and lifted me up.

BON!

I fell into the floor.

But I wonder why.

My eyes still reflect my torso held in his hands.

[Dammit! Am I late!?!]

Late from what? I attempted to ask him, but I couldn't let out my voice.

My field of vision is gradually getting darker.

What's this?

What's going on?

What's happening to me?

\*\*\*\*\*

Someone is singing.

Covered by warmth, I perked my ears to the singing voice.

I was dozing off on someone's chest.

It doesn't look like I'm in Misaki's room.

Is it Haruhito who's embracing me like this?

No. This is another level of softness and warmth. A hug wrapping me up til my very soul.

Why am I lacking the faintest idea of me ending up in this place?

I feel like something grave had occurred, but I don't remember anything besides that.

I moved my neck and noticed the figure of a girl and boy standing on the opposite path.

They were both dressed in the uniform of a school I was attending this last spring.

The boy had an angry expression while the girl seemed to be in the depth of sadness, and they were both shedding floods of tears.

I wonder who they are.

I can somehow recall their faces, yet I can't remember their names.

The girl moved her lips. Even though I could tell what she's saying, her voice didn't reach my ears as if we were separated by a thick wall of glass.

The singing voice is still on-going.

Swaying like a wave.

Swiftly flowing like a clear stream.

Before I realised it, my surroundings changed into a purplish, red field full of blooming flowers.

The flowers that don't seize in their petals get blown off and shaken by the breeze.

The girl and the boy disappeared from my view.

The person hugging me kept singing while walking in the field.

I raised my head trying to confirm that person's face but, I couldn't see well due to the light.

Making our way out of the field, we arrived at a deserted land.

The idyllic ambience was nowhere to be found, but the dazzling light above our heads didn't show any sign of dimming.

Don't be scared, it's not scary. You are fine, you're okay.

Everything will turn out well once you open your eyes again.

That's why you can take a little break now.

It took me quite a bit of time to recognise that the song's lyrics were directed to persuade me.

A warm drop fell on my cheek.

This person is crying.

I'm sorry, Kuuya.

I finally realized that the owner of that sorrowful voice was my mother.

Suddenly the sky was clouded and the light started weakening allowing me to see my mother's face.

Aah, that's right. It was this face. I wonder why I forgot about my mother's face until now.

Strangely enough, it wasn't like I didn't recall her face, but I felt that remembering it will only bring me a strong regret.

Sorry.

My mother repeated the same phrase.

Vaguely wondering about why my mother was apologising and why is she pushing something cool in my neck, a sharp sensation ran through my nape making my consciousness sink into the depth of the darkness.

## Chapter 15 (final)

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Pygmalion is planting seeds

Snow started falling down as if it was erasing the remains of the fall.

Snowfall in this town was so rare to the point where rumors about it being a weather anomaly, roamed the streets.

Inside the basement of an old art nouveau building hiding in the woods next to the suburbs, a man seeming to be in his forties and a beautiful little girl were sitting with a stainless table interposed between them.

Above the table was a nude boy laying down.

Although, describing him as 'laying down' may be a bit unbecoming for his current condition.

His head was separated from his body and his lost limbs were also placed

close to him.

The cut section of his neck and limbs were dissolved and yellow pus was overflowing from his body filling the room with a wicked odor crooking the nose.

The man and the little girl didn't appear to mind that smell in the slightest and remained gazing at the boy's body.

[Four and a half years, that's indeed an impressive durability]

The short little girl raised her voice which sounded like the ringing of a bell. Her cold and mature manner of speech was unsuitable for her young appearance and somehow ruined her innocent characteristic.

The man was stiffly folding his arms while delivering a grim glance to the little girl.

[You knew about it, didn't you? That Kuuya ran away from home and repeated the revival many times. Why didn't you stop him?]

[I knew about it and I already gave him a warning. But he didn't lend his ears to me. He was completely immersed inside the balm of the Shishikuibana]

The little girl coldly eluded the man's rebuke.

[Giving up on persuading is the same as smothering him. Your words are nothing but an excuse. If you tried doing so more seriously, things wouldn't have proceeded with this result]

[And how about you? Despite being his caretaker, why didn't you realize that he was raising a Shishikuibana?]

[I knew that he was hiding something from me, but not even in my wildest dreams would I think about it being a Shishikuibana]

The man's face became clouded from getting hit in a sensible spot.

[So, there's really no way for him to recover?]

[He's not a lizard or a planarian. Once his parts become rotten, treating them back to normal is out of question. The sole way to restore him back is by planting another seed in his brain again. It could be said that he's lucky for

having this remaining possibility]

[You mean I did well by securing his head before it completely rotted?]

The angry man took out a cigarette, however, the little girls rebuked him with “No smoking!” before he held it in his mouth.

The man unwillingly returned the cigarette to the case while observing the room. Then, he noticed that something was missing.

[Where did you put Iruse Misaki’s pot, by the way?]

[I disposed of it]

[What a waste! Even though she was a cutie]

[Her soul has crumbled apart. It is indeed a waste of flesh, but there’s no meaning in resuscitating her]

[Is it the result of what you call as multiple copies?]

The little girl affirmed the man’s question.

[The revival of Shishikuibana is always followed by a loss or disruption of memories, a decline in morals, sociality and also, a partial dysfunction of the mind. Let’s call it as noise. No matter what you do during the resuscitation process, avoiding the noise is an impossible task. It’s similar to dubbing an analogue tape. Do you know about a man called Ando?]

[You mean the man who was found decaying in his apartment recently?]

Ando’s death was a very strange case that gathered a large amount of attention.

Discovered inside a locked mansion, Ando’s body was found scattered around as if it was eaten by carnivorous animals and seemingly left to decay for a few months. Corpses of women with torn off limbs were also discovered along with it and the mass media started unfolding a battle of false reports every single day.

[All of those women were Shishikuibana. Ando was repeatedly whispering in their ears believing that he could brainwash them by altering their memories. What an idiot, there’s no actual way to do so. The Shishikuibana maintain their

memories and emotions when reviving]

[In short, he was murdered by his Shishikuibana]

The little girl affirmed the man's words again.

[The Shishikuibana is always aware of itself not being a human. Above knowing that fact, it could still deceive itself by cleverly acting as one and sometimes even by feigning silliness. All of that in order to approach the human world and obtain flesh, said differently, something like camouflage. Similar to how Iruse Misaki tried murdering Kuuya and how Ando didn't perceive that their soul was composed only externally while internally, they were holding a rebellious spirit, resulting in him getting killed. If Ando was to repeatedly murder and revive them again, he would be able to increase the noise and torpor their senses. However, that would be no different from monopolising a doll]

[The brain tissues turn into a desert of noise due to the frequent revival. In other words, multiple copies cause a deterioration in the brain's functions, thus the death of the creature as an intelligent form]

[But that's quite strange]

The little girl inclined her head.

[In Kuuya's case, he wasn't mimicking humanity but was really unaware of himself being a Shishikuibana. He didn't look as he was pretending to me, and to top it off, he didn't touch a single piece of flesh he was supplying for Iruse Misaki as well. Did you do something to him?]

[I didn't pull any strings. He forgot everything on his own. Leaving aside the fact of Kuuya being a Shishikuibana, he even forgot about himself being murdered by his mother]

[This is my first time witnessing a case of memory loss]

[I don't really need to inform you about this, but...]

The man dropped his sight toward the deceased boy.

[I started noticing the slight change in my sister-in-law's mentality about the time when my brother suggested the divorce. After she broke up with him and

took Kuuya along, her heart became entirely worn out. She was possessed by a firm conviction that Kuuya was the mastermind behind her situation, if he didn't exist, she would've won back my brother's heart. This guy here wasn't to be blamed, he was only dragged into someone else's fight]

[Which led to you embracing Kuuya's ripped off head and knocking on this shop's door]

This time, it was the man's turn to affirm her words.

[I was hearing rumors about you a long time ago, but every time I did, my reaction was a scornful laugh, thinking that such a miraculous sorcery doesn't exist in this world. And in the end, I found myself grinding my forehead to the ground while begging you to bring Kuuya back to life. Just like a slave asking for his master's forgiveness]

[Still though, thanks to throwing away your dignity, Kuuya was able to return alive. Forgetting about himself being a Shishikuibana in addition]

[Was he asleep when he was murdered, or maybe the shock of witnessing his mom murdering him caused a gap in his memories. I have no idea. The only thing that was obvious is him coming back to life with a pure human heart]

[The lack of memories regarding his death restrained the Shishikuibana's ego from sprouting. Usually, his body should collapse and pass away if he didn't eat human flesh for longer than one month, surprisingly enough, however, he was able to maintain his will and consciousness for a whole three months. I wonder if the lack of self-consciousness as a Shishikuibana exerts an influence on its health. If that was to be true, he would turn into a very interesting example]

[That's not interesting, dammit!]

With an extremely displeased face, the man clicked his tongue.

[The first flesh you fed him was his mother's. Not because she desired it, but because it was your self-righteous judgment, is that right?]

[My sister-in-law was entirely broken, though the only thing she still recalled is Kuuya's face. Seeing the resuscitating Kuuya again made her fall into a panicky condition, it was quite possible for her to try killing him again. So yeah, considering these circumstances, I ended up making that bitter decision]

[It must have been difficult. Not only killing his mother, but a common freelancer like you provisioning corpses is quite...]

[The killing part is not that hard. What requires a lot of effort, is performing that act without leaving the least trace. It would be troubling if somebody was to witness me during those times after all. The quantity of the flesh I take back home is not that large either, so it doesn't really pay off enough]

[And so, you feed him the flesh you acquire after a hard time. Keeping up this laborious task for four and a half years is pretty impressive]

[Every day, I continuously disciplined him to eat meat. In times of my absence, I hire a prostitute to cook the meals for him after making her promise to not pry too much]

[Your cooking skills must have increased]

[Yeah. It just that, I never made him a hamburger steak]

[Why is that?]

[Hamburger steak was the last meal my sister-in-law cooked for him]

Silence dominated the room for a short while.

Eventually, their eyes slowly fell to the boy above the table.

Murdered by his mother, resuscitated with a strange method, carried on with his life a person, fell in love, and destroyed by his deep passion for the girl he loved. A pathetic, pitiful boy.

[Getting back to the main topic]

The man directed his sharp glance to the little girl once again.

[Why didn't you inform Kuuya about the noise following the repeated resuscitation?]

[I just told you, trying to convince him otherwise of his blind belief of bringing back Iruse Misaki is no different from speaking to a wall. All of his beliefs were hanging by a sole expectation of reviving her. Even if he was to be convinced that his actions were completely futile and that it would only break her, then his own mind would've faced the same result. It would be too heavy for him to end

his faint love story in such a way]

[Still, staying silent is—]

[Iruse Misaki withered away and can't be restored. That is the "Truth"]

The boy was recreating a soulless doll until the end.

Chasing after the illusion of his beloved girl, he kept on walking through a thorny path without averting his eyes to the surroundings.

The only thing which was waiting for him on the other side of the path was a fleeting and brittle sand tower ready to crumble down the instant he steps inside of it. However, for the boy, he may have seen it as a shining arcadia instead.

[You're making a face as if you're unrelated to all this stuff. Speaking to you makes me feel like I'm having a conversation with a demon]

[My mind and soul are both those of a human. Despite having a fake body]

[You're pretty cruel for a human, though]

[I am an eternal girl who's lived for hundreds of years. I left my human heart behind during this long period. The secret of retaining my youth is a shower of a maiden's blood and black pudding. Hiding the fact of being a Shishikuibana while deceiving people with this flavored story is much safer you know]

The man didn't reply to the little girl's sarcastic answer.

[In the first place, you knew about Kuuya being a Shishikuibana from the start, didn't you]

[I realized that on the way. At first, I thought he was just a middle schooler acting tough by walking in the night town. His family name, Mamesaki had caught my attention, but it didn't ring a bell until he already fed Iruse Misaki the first piece of flesh]

[You didn't try to stop him because you were anticipating this result, no, you were the one who induced Kuuya to walk in this path]

[Why would I do that?]

[To increase the Shishikuibana holding an ego. The reason you let him die was

because you desired for his reset]

The little girl drew back her smile to glare at the man with a cold expression.

[That's a silly suspicion. I didn't confirm my doubt of whether he was aware or not until just now to begin with. What is your basis for saying this?]

[You were never someone who gets satisfied by an explanation. Nor were you someone who generously informs others of the secret of making a Shishikuibana that easily. I don't understand the motive behind you frankly telling him the fact you're a Shishikuibana as well. This might not be my concern but, by observing your chain of actions I can't help but see them belonging to one sentence]

[So that's how you arrived at this conclusion of me moving in order to recruit a new member to my club. Increasing my kind means decreasing my food. Obtaining human flesh is not something I could readily do. It's me who will end up with a heavy loss]

[If that wasn't your reason, then I'd appreciate it if you told me why you gave him the first seed for free]

[It's the same as you when you didn't notify Kuuya about himself, I don't think that I am obliged to express my true purpose to you. But one thing is true, which is that I wanted to stop him]

[This is hard to believe. Even if you were thinking so, is it because he was my nephew?]

[Seeing his hands which were consumed with love and pure feelings for Iruse Misaki, I didn't want to witness them getting tainted by blood. It is indeed a sentimental reason if I say so myself]

[Heh, so that's it. Then why did you abandon him in the end? He didn't lend an ear to your warning and lost his self-control. You couldn't bring him back after he was swaying to his ruin, am I wrong? You threw him away just like a child who lost interest in his broken toy]

[Is it strange to throw away a broken toy?]

The man's head turned numb once again from anger due to the little girl's

wicked response.

He didn't affirm her words nor did he clearly deny them.

This woman is desiring for a comrade.

Not because she needed someone to comfort her from her loneliness.

She desired for someone sharing the same accursed fate as her, someone corrupted by the addiction of eating human flesh.

—I mean, isn't unfair, being the only one facing this destination?

She would definitely answer something like that with a carefree face.

However, she didn't want a cannibalistic flower depending on its survival instinct and devouring flesh.

All that she desired for, was a family member who's in an environment already aware of himself not being a human, understands that fact very well, and possesses a never-disappearing wound.

Concealing that intent of hers, she makes use of her cajolery and conversation skills to persuade people before offering them the forbidden suggestion.

—Did you ever think about resuscitating your beloved person?

It didn't matter for her whether those who were manipulated by her words end up in ruins.

In contrast to her desires, a person's life was lighter than fluff.

And because of her selfishness, Kuuya was—

The man who was swelling with flames of anger barely managed to control his impulse to hit the little girl.

It wasn't because he considered his situation about reviving the boy, but because he knew that even if he tears off her limbs while she's still alive, the little girl would probably show him a grin, stating something like, "I think I should appreciate the exhibition of a lonely human swallowed up by his anger".

[Aaah! Let's call it quits here]

The man was able to appease his irritation.

[You're awfully selfish and your ideas considerably deviates from the common, However, The point where you're honest with your desires is completely normal I guess]

[How about you try writing a report about me, with the title as "The women who's selling ruin"? Now that you praised me, I can even accept an interview request]

[I didn't praise you and I'm not planning on writing about you either. The food I'd buy with such a poor article income wouldn't taste good anyway. And I don't think there would be somebody who's intrigued enough to read a report like that to begin with]

[You shouldn't be accused of what you're writing. No matter what kind of big talk or idle gossip you write, depending on the reader, it could turn into a descriptive poetry of an uncommon minstrel. I think that's something you are familiar with as a writer]

The little girl placed down a worn out diary she was holding in her arm at the corner of the table.

[What's that?]

[A lesson explaining the heavy compensation a person would have to pay if he rebelled against God's will, a fable written down by a single man]

[–heck does that mean]

The little girl peered at the man's face with her black eyes similar to the abyss.

[So what are you planning to do, Mr. Haruhito Mamesaki? Are you going to revive Kuuya once again?]

[There's no need to answer such a question]

[You've already acknowledged the danger of the deteriorating copies, right?]

[I will keep looking after this guy, even if his brain grows completely empty]

[Excuse me, that was a foolish question, wasn't it?]

A brand new hole was drilled in the boy's head.

[I don't have any relatives to prove this but, an uncle being devoted to his

nephew this much is quite unnatural. It seems close to a father doing his best to look after his son while resorting to every possible means]

[Isn't that simply a silly suspicion?]

[Did I strike the mark?]

[Give me a break]

The man standing behind the little girl who was skilfully handling the seed felt like he witnessed the figures of countless engravers standing in a row, waiting for her to bestow them a hammer and chisel.

Don't they realize the little girl's sly? Or maybe they're already aware of the ruin arranged for them. Either way, they were all foolish engravers trifled, confused and charmed by the Shishikuibana's sweet allure.

Those who were bewildered and deceived by the words of sorcery released from her fascinating lips; exactly like as a worker bee offering its collected pollen to the queen, they continued offering her their blood and flesh until they were reduced to ashes by the despair of the hellfire born from their brought up nihilism.

–So I'm one of those idiots too, huh!

Ridiculing his own actions, the man watched the little girl silently burying the seed inside the ashy brown deserted field.

# Translator's Note

Hey!

We are finally at the last chapter now, after 3 months and 3 weeks. I'm aware that the release frequency might be a bit slow, sorry about that. But still, I ended up finishing the entire novel this time, unlike most of the stuff I do.

Anyway, thank you for following the story up till today!

Enjoy the last chapter!

-Reizenchuu

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# Editor's Note

E/N: Hey, it's Xilphidae!

Well that was quite an interesting info-dump. I don't know about you all but I finally/possibly found out why Haruhito choked from Kuuya's food and Misaki didn't. Afterall, if JP novels taught us one thing(or me that is), it's that characters who can't cook, really *can't* cook, **EVER!**(Except for Shion of "Slime Tensei", that damn cheat skill). Anyway, thanks for reading and joining the dark side(yes, you joined, by reading this story, you joined).

Xilphidae, signing out.

P.S. I already ate your promised cookies.

P.P.S. My bad.

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# **The Pygmalion is Planting Seeds - Volume 2**

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