

# Toriaezu Densetsu no Yūsha no Densetsu:Volume 2 The Assassin's Dream...

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*Memorial Denyuuden*

## The Assassin's Dream...[\[edit\]](#)

"Kill Ryner Lute, belonging to the 42nd squadron of the Hidden Elites."

Biore Mente looked at the piece of paper wordlessly.

She had red hair that stopped at her shoulders.

She held a calm disposition, a dark expression and cold eyes unbecoming a 15-year-old.

Everything about her told of her life up to this point.

Her life as an assassin...

Biore read the piece of paper in her hand again.

Ryner Lute.

Aged ten. Under the 42nd squadron of the Hidden Elites.

Bearer of **Alpha Stigma**.

This information alone was enough to tell her about her target's nature.

And why she had to kill him...

People who belong to the Hidden Elites squadron are special even amongst the Roland army.

And on top of that, Ryner Lute is a bearer of **Alpha Stigma**...

A bearer of **Alpha Stigma**...

"...are they making me kill a **monster** this time...?"

Biore smiled thinly and muttered to herself.

This was her mission as an assassin raised by Roland.

An assassination.

The missions have been going on for three years, ever since she was twelve...

Obtain orders, eliminate target. Obtain orders, eliminate target. Obtain orders, eliminate target.

Every day was a repeat of yesterday.

And she accomplished all her missions perfectly.

They might be spies from an enemy country, they might be Roland officials, or they might be people who knew too much of Roland's secrets. Sometimes - due to some emotional affairs -, she'd be ordered to assassinate the lover of some great figure, sometimes she'd be ordered to assassinate someone's wife as well.

Women, men, children...it didn't matter.

She only had to eliminate her target according to orders.

Her records were top class.

It might not even be an exaggeration to say that her assassination skills were beyond human. Her physical abilities were threatening enough, but she also had extremely accurate senses, sharp as the point of a knife.

She was only fifteen years old, yet she was already called a genius at assassination. The most important missions were all given to her.

She was born to be an assassin.

No, her teaching made it seem that way.

People who couldn't accomplish that were all dead. And she was left alone...

This alone defined her entire existence.

She was raised to do it; she was born to do it.

Yes, that's what she was taught.

But...

This piece of paper was given to her...

Biore read on.

"Also, after this mission's completion, Biore Mente will be hereby dismissed from all assassination duties. Because the war with Estabul has reached a momentary ceasefire...and also in recognition of your superior achievements. We shall reward you accordingly and give you permission to leave the Roland army. You shall attain a new name, a new life - you will be given the right to live as you choose. This is your last mission, please do your best."

Those were the words written.

"....my last...mission...?"

Biore froze at those sudden words.

She never thought about anything like that.

Her last mission.

A different life.

A different life, where killing isn't a necessity...

She never thought about it - no, she didn't even dream about it.

A new, free life...?

"...what should I do...?"

She was only fifteen - young enough to be called a girl, but she never thought about any goals or dreams aside from assassination.

Meaningless contact was forbidden. Walls were erected, for contact without a facade was strictly forbidden.

And now, she was told of freedom...

But.

"...freedom...huh..."

She muttered to herself.

It sounded nicer than she'd expected.

Really, what should she do?

She thought, and calmly began to prepare for her mission.

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This time's mission was one of the easier ones.

Because her target lived alone...

Actually, most of the Hidden Elites either had mental problems or forcibly altered their own body. Because it was such a congregation of eccentric people, they couldn't really live together for the most part.

This is where Roland's darkness gathered.

A place to gather the monsters born from the overtly vicious wars.

The cursed department that had to be shrouded from the commoner's eyes.

People who would be immediately disposed of following the war's end.

Usually, they'd be executed with normal methods.

They'll be surrounded by a huge army and killed under accusations of rebellion.

But the same cannot be said of Ryner Lue, a bearer of **Alpha Stigma** who can easily start a bloodbath.

If the army tried to surround and kill him, but made his **Alpha Stigma** go berserk instead, both the soldiers and a huge amount of people nearby will feel the effects.

Additionally, **Alpha Stigma** grants its user the ability to read compositions of magic and is much feared for its power.

They won't be able to kill him easily.

And the countrymen would find out that the Roland army has been keeping a destructive monster on a leash- an

**Alpha Stigma** bearer...

That would be bad.

So, Biore was given this mission.

Most of the times, **Alpha Stigma** bearers go out of control during highly emotional experiences.

"So I'll just kill him before he gets there...this is what I'm good at..."

Biore muttered to herself and lifted her head to face the building in front of her.

It was a mansion made from bricks.

The country has given Ryner Lute this building for his personal use.

And,

"...it's way too large for one person's use."

This treatment is also one of the Hidden Elites' characteristics. If the circumstance calls for it, the Roland army will treat their monsters nicely in hopes of controlling them.

You are the chosen ones.

You are different from normal humans.

You are special humans chosen for the sake of Roland. So, we'll give you a good life. In return, do everything you can for the country.

They control members of the Hidden Elites like this, even when they call them 'monsters' in the dark.

That's why he was an easy target.

Ryner was a chosen human, and was given such a huge mansion despite the fact that he was living alone...

So it's completely natural for Biore to be hired as a helper...

If she can get close to him, it'll be easy to kill him.

Even though he might possess **Alpha Stigma**, he's still a ten year old boy.

"And when I accomplish this request..."

She stopped herself and narrowed her eyes.

The eyes of a professional at her job.

She wiped her face blank, and locked up her heart.

She won't pity anyone. She won't trust anyone. She won't let anyone touch her heart.

Emotions disappeared completely from her face - an unbelievable feat coming from a fifteen year old.

She became a cold machine whose only goal is to kill her target.

And just like that, she wore a smile that painted her as a completely different person, and Biore knocked on the building's door.

And,

"Um, excuse me? Is Master Ryner Lute currently in?"

She called out. In a gentle, kind voice.

"..."

And no reply came from the mansion.

Biore tilted her head in confusion, an action befitting a fifteen year old girl.

"Huh? Is he not here?"

She thought to her self.

Something's wrong. According to her information, he should be at home right now. He should've responded...

But right then,

"Ah- I'm coming, coming. I'm opening the door."

Footsteps and the innocent voice of a boy sounded. And she heard the sound of the door unlocking...

Biore sighed in relief in a decidedly cute fashion.

"That's good to know. I wouldn't know what to do if he wasn't here."

However, she was secretly gauging Ryner's physical abilities by the sound of his footsteps.

It didn't sound like the footsteps of someone who underwent training.

His movements were normal for a young boy. She didn't feel any hint of tension in his voice either.

And the person who opened the door and emerged was...

A sleepy and slightly idiotic-looking boy. Messily cut hair and relaxed black eyes.

He was about as tall as Biore, who pretty much stopped growing after reaching the average height of females.

But he's pretty tall for a ten year old.

Which means that their combat range is about the same, if it comes to that.

Well, judging from his movements, that's probably not going to happen...

Biore smiled and bowed slightly.

"Please to meet you. I am Biore Mente. On orders from the country, I'm here to work as a housekeeper."

Ryner nodded.

"Ahh...yeah. I heard about it. I've been waiting for you. Apparently you're really good at cooking, right?"

"Yes! Master Lute. I love cooking! And I'm also good at washing and cleaning!"

For some reason, Ryner looked bothered by her words.

"Woah...Master Lute...? You're referring to....well, yeah, I guess you're referring to me, right? Hmmm~ I don't quite

like it. Makes me sound like someone important, doesn't it?"

He said.

Biore looked blankly at him.

And in her heart...

*Yeah right, sure you don't like it...*

Biore thought.

The Hidden Elites are all very conscious of their status.

They were the chosen ones. They're different from everyone else.

That should be what they're thinking.

Yes, they're so numb that they don't find it strange for a mere ten year old to hire a housekeeper...

But...

Ryner folded his arms with a troubled expression.

"Hmm, er...right. Anyways, just call me Ryner. You're not really serving me since you're just following the country's orders."

"Yes. So, Master Ryner..."

"Geez. It's 'Ry-ner'. I'm not going to respond if you don't drop the title. Oh, and take it easy - since I'll be happy enough if you could just make me some food when you're making your own meals."

He said.

"No, but..."

"And the house's unnecessarily large, so just sleep wherever you'd like. And..that's about it~ Here's the key of the mansion. I'll just go back and take a nap. Good night~"

He turned around and began making his way up the stairs near the entrance.

Biore was completely baffled when Ryner betrayed her expectations.

"Um, master Ryner? Even if you tell me to use any room I'd like..."

But Ryner didn't turn around.

"M-Master Ryner....?"

He still didn't turn around.

And...

"U, um...R-ry....ner. Please listen to me."

She dropped the title. The boy turned around and smiled with an childlike expression,

"It's easier to make friends if you dropped that, right? I'm not really good with all these master-servant relationships.

So, what do you want me to call you?"

"Eh? Ah..whatever Mas- I mean, Ryner finds convenient."

Just then, Ryner smiled slyly and said,

"Alright. I'll call you Master Biore."

"Huuuuuuuh!? Th-that's..."

"Hmm, you don't like it? Even though that's what you called me? Don't tell me, you were intentionally trying to make me dislike you?"

"Uh..."

Biore was at a loss for words, but Ryner smiled innocently.

"Joking. I'll call you Biore. Ah, should I call you Miss Mente instead, since you're older than me?"

Biore hurriedly answered,

"P-please call me Biore."

"Okay, Biore. Just do whatever you like, wherever you like, since I'll be doing my own thing. So, good night~"

And Ryner went up the stairs again.

Biore stared at him in shock...

"...what's with him?....this is getting pretty difficult..."

She was completely led by the nose.

Just from their conversation, she felt that his conversation and thinking skills were beyond a ten year old's level.

But still...he's innocent...

More so than any of the targets she assassinated....

He smiled with a tinge of sleepiness, but without any malicious intent....

For some reason, that made it harder for her.

But the feeling was over the next moment.

She immediately reverted to her calm smile, and said,

"Okay, so which room should I pick? I'll have to start cleaning up and making dinner after I choose."

Her mission began.

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She memorized the general structure of the mansion after glancing over the floor plan she was given before the mission.

However, she still looked around the house while cleaning. It's not unusual for an assassination attempt to fail because of unknown factors that weren't present in the floor plan.

She had to eliminate as many uncertain factors as possible. Her scrupulous inspection has enabled her to remain as the top assassin.

And this time, she'll eliminate her target with certainty.

She definitely won't fail.

So, she couldn't afford to be hasty. No matter how weak her opponent is, she won't be hasty. She'll only act when a surefire opportunity arises.

"Hmhmmm~♪ hmhmmm~♪"

Biore continued to clean up while humming to herself.

The floor plan she received from the country was pretty accurate.

It'd be possible for her to kill him in sleep at night.

She thought, and began making dinner after finishing the cleanup.

She baked some bread, made some soup, sprinkled some spices on the meat and put it into the oven.

"Let's make some nice, nice food~♪"

All while singing an improvised song...

However, in her head, she was deciding whether to poison the food or not. Poison has a taste. A very slight taste...

The trained ones will notice its presence before their intake becomes fatal.

But judging from that boy's movements, he's still inexperienced.

If she mixed poison with the food, she could kill him easily.

*I'll put this poison in...* Biore took out a bag of powder hidden above her chest.

But at that moment,

"Woah~ That smells reaaaaaally good~ It was so good that I woke up. Is that dinner? Dinner? My portion included, maybe?"

Biore hurriedly stuffed the powder back to its hiding place. However, she turned around calmly and said,

"Of course. It'll be done soon, so please look forward to it."

"Okay! Then I'll be at the table! Sleeping! So wake me up when you're done! Man...all I've been eating for these past three days were dried potatoes that I bought from the store, so I'm really looking forward to it."

"...dried potatoes...? Geez, that's all you're eating? You're a growing boy, but you're not getting a balanced nutrient intake!"

"Ah...she's pissed. But from now on I'll be able to eat Biore's cooking, so I'm on my way to a healthy life. 'Good children should sleep well and eat well'...was it? Alright! I'll be sleeping then! Wake me up when it's time for food."

He said and made a dash for the table. Not even 5 seconds passed before he fell asleep.

Biore looked at him with a deadpan expression.

He really was innocent.

Completely different from herself.

Ever since she became self-aware, she had been trained as an assassin. A training where one mistake could cost her life...

She retrieved the bag of powder and looked at it again.

Biore could drink three times the fatal dosage and still survive.

Ever since her childhood, she was being fed the poison in small doses to improve her resistance to it.

Day after day, she drank poison and writhed in agony, screamed, threw up...all while looking at others who went through the same training beside her, but died after going insane or throwing up blood...

However, the poison's dosage kept increasing...

Those were the days she had to go through.

However, the boy in front of her...

He must've never endured such suffering.

From where she was standing in the kitchen, Biore stared Ryner, who was sprawled all over the table and sleeping.

She stared at the boy who merely snored adorably without any wariness...

The boy who said he was looking forward to Biore's cooking just now...

Biore narrowed her eyes and put the powder back. There was no need to kill him with this drug.

It would be a painful death.

There was no need to impose the same kind of suffering she went through onto this blissfully ignorant boy.

There were many other ways to kill him without him ever noticing.

And she was skilled enough to carry them out.

Plus...

"..."

There's always the possibility of the poison being discovered before it became fatal...

That's the main reason.

Her emotions didn't get the better of her, she was merely aiming for a flawless execution.

Biore nodded once, and carried the food over to Ryner.

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While stuffing himself with food, Ryner exclaimed,

"Woah! This is really good! Way better than dried potatoes!"

Biore smiled bitterly.

"It doesn't feel like praise when you're comparing it to dried potatoes."

"Ah, sorry. Erm...anyways, even without comparing it to dried potatoes, it's much better than restaurant food! Just by thinking that I'd be able to eat this kind of food every day...y'know, that feels like heaven right now. I'll sleep, I'll get some good food, sleep again, eat, and sleep! How can it get any better?"

Biore smiled at Ryner old man-like words.

It was the first time anyone praised her cooking this much. For the most part, whenever she was hired as a helper for nobility, they'd always belittle or complain about her cooking...

It really does feel good to be praised like this...

She self-learned cooking to better her assassination odds, but it quickly became an area of interest.

Biore said happily.

"Geez, Ryner. You flatter me."

"I'm not flattering you. It's true, y'know? You shouldn't even be here! You should be out there, starting your own restaurant. I'm sure it'll be a huge hit."

"A restaurant, huh~ That'd be nice~"

Yes, a restaurant would be nice.

After this mission's over...maybe it'd be nice to open a restaurant.

She thought.

She quite liked cooking.

After this mission's over.

After she killed...

This boy...

"Woah. I'm full~ I've even gone past the point where I couldn't even take another bite!"

"Ah, did it fit your tastes?"

Ryner nodded.

"It was prefect! It was soo good!"

"That's great. Um, there's still the dessert....but if you're full..."

But Biore was interrupted.

"I'll eat it! That's for sure!"

"Then, I'll bring it over now."

"This is exciting...I think it's normal for kids to be obsessed with desserts. And I'm a kid, I'm completely obsessed with desserts, so even if I'm full, I think it's fine for me to push myself a little. Alright, that's how I'm convincing

myself."

Ryner muttered to himself, and Biore smiled at his antics.

"Okay. It's just some fruit jelly, so it won't be too painful for your stomach..."

She began, but Ryner was already digging in with a happy face.

And...

"Ah, this is delicious. I've never eaten this before. How did you make it?"

"Huh? Oh, first I..."

Biore began to explain, but Ryner nodded along and said,

"Ah~ well, even if you explain it to me....I won't be able to make it myself. Biore is really good at cooking. Where did you learn?"

Biore smiled embarrassedly.

"I learned it by myself, for the most part. I bought some cooking books from the bookstore, and simply tried them out..."

"Huh. You got this good from that alone? You really are talented."

"You're making me embarrassed."

"Hmm? Really? Is that how it is....ah well, I've never been praised, so I wouldn't know. Should I cut down on the praises?"

Ryner asked her seriously, and Biore hurriedly said,

"Ah, no. Being praised makes me happy."

Those were her honest feelings.

She was barely praised for anything not related to her assassination skills. She was allowed to live as long as she could kill.

Still, he...

"I see. That's good to know. Praising you makes me happy as well, since it was really delicious. Thank you."

"...u, um...okay. I-I'm grateful as well...ah, I'll bring some tea over."

"Oh no, it's okay. I'm full, so I've become sleepy again. I'm sleeping."

He said and stood up, leaving the room. He really seemed sleepy this time, and he dragged his feet a little.

"...he really...sleeps a lot..."

Biore muttered and looked at the empty plate before her.

She smiled slightly and began to tidy up the dishes.

While she was washing the utensils....

She was planning for the night.

She thinks that she should kill him tonight.

Slip in the room that Ryner is sleeping in and slice off his head with her knife.

He shouldn't feel any pain. There shouldn't be any sound, either. She had enough skill to sharply cut off his head.

She was completely confident.

However, she still ran numerous simulations in her head.

She gently pushes open the door. She makes her presence disappear. Ryner doesn't notice her. And she closes in. She lifts up her knife.

And cuts...

And cuts off...

Ryner's head.

She cuts off Ryner's head, when she had been talking to him just a while ago.

She was happy that he praised her cooking.

She took a liking to Ryner with all his innocent responses.

She thought of Ryner's smile. She thought of Ryner's happy face when he ate. She thought of Ryner, sleeping on the table with an innocent expression.

But-

No matter how many simulations she went through, her knife would slice off Ryner's head cleanly.

That's simply who Biore was.

She, who remained at the top of all assassins throughout these three years...

Killing was her only meaning in life.

She'd even kill women and children without a second thought.

She should kill him tonight.

That's what she thought.

Ryner let his guard down around her. He also ate too much.

Even if he wasn't sleeping, he probably won't be able to move that well.

She won't let him feel pain.

She liked Ryner's smile.

That's why Ryner'll probably die before he even feels it.

After cleaning up the kitchen, she confirmed the presence of the knife she prepared...

And waited for night.



Midnight.

Ryner slept in a room on the second floor.

Of the four rooms, it was the one in the corner.

Biore silenced her footsteps and closed in upon that room.

The wooden door was half open. Darkness within. There were no lights.

She could hear faint, adorable snores. She knew that Ryner was sleeping.

"..."

While hiding her presence, she slipped into the room without moving the half-open door.

She entered the room without a sound...and squatted within the room's darkness.

And while confirming Ryner's status once again, she made herself inured to the darkness.

Her trained eyes were able to adapt to the room's darkness immediately, and she was able to see.

Ryner was snoring on the bed, as always.

He probably rolls and tosses a lot in his sleep, as the blanket fell onto the floor.

Biore smiled lightly at that.

She held the expression of an older sister observing the foolish antics of a younger brother.

She kept her smile, but took out a sharp knife from her pocket.

Everything was going smoothly.

Now she only had to get near and kill him...

Biore stood up.

Ryner's snores didn't change.

She took one step closer.

No change.

Another step. She was only one step away from him.

Still, his snores didn't change.

There was no need to hurry. Her opponent won't notice her. Because she hid her presence completely.

And he must be sleeping soundly if he's snoring.

If she took another step and swung down her knife, everything will be over.

She just had to close in upon him while keeping her presence hidden and kill him.

There was no need to hurry.

*Now, let's finish this mission.*

Biore attempted to take another step.

But right then,

"Ah~...actually, I need to use the toilet now. How about it?"

Suddenly, Ryner spoke up in a tired and unmotivated voice.

Biore was taken by surprise, and questioned herself.

*He woke up? Did he notice me? Did he see me? Or did he really just happen to wake up to go to the toilet? He didn't see my knife because he's still sleepy?*

However, she dispelled all her thoughts immediately.

*Whatever it is, I'll have to kill him now!*

Ryner's movements spoke of no training. No matter what kind of situation it is, she can definitely kill him if she takes him by surprise!

Biore's body moved in an unbelievable speed.

She crossed the distance between her and Ryner in a split second. She didn't even swing up her knife, but directed it straight at Ryner's head.

However...

"Alrighty."

Ryner lifted his head slightly and dodged her knife. And just like that, he jumped back in a burst of speed.

"Wha..."

Biore couldn't help but shout in amazement.

Ryner's reaction was incredible.

Biore immediately tried to follow Ryner's movements just now, but could only see his back...

In an unbelievable demonstration of skill, he jumped back from the bed, kicked off the wall and disappeared from her sight.

"Ugh..."

Biore groaned. Things have taken a turn for the worse. It was the first time she failed like this.

She misjudged her target's power...

What did she say when she saw Ryner?

That he was just a ten year old boy?

An innocent child that lived days of peace and calm, unlike her?

What kind of stupid things were she thinking?

A ten year old was able to move like that...

He must've experienced the same...no, he probably experienced deeper levels of bloodshed and hell than she did.

Her target was...

**A monster...**

She felt an enormous killer intent behind her.

If she was a normal person, she'd be frozen on the spot.

The boy...Ryner was exhibiting such killer intent.

He'll attack.

From where? Right? Left?

If she didn't move, she'd die.

If she made a mistake, she'd die!?

She threw the knife behind her and jumped left, opposite the room's entrance.

Her bet...

Was successful. Ryner wasn't there.

He caught her thrown knife, and stood in front of the room's door.

He probably thought she'd try to escape from this room. That's why she jumped towards the opposite direction...

But her situation didn't change.

"Shit..."

Biore couldn't stop herself from swearing.

She understood from their scuffle just now. It was obvious that Ryner's abilities were above hers.

Overwhelmingly so.

The Ryner that wore an innocent expression, the one she dined with, disappeared.

Instead, he gazed at the knife in his hands with disinterested and tired eyes.

Biore said.

"...I was completely fooled. Your sleepy expressions, your sluggish footsteps..."

Shit. It was her last mission after all, there's no way it can go smoothly...

"..."

However, Ryner didn't turn to look at her, as if he wasn't interested at all.

So stalling for time was useless.

Using the little time she had, Biore looked around her, frantically thinking. Her only ways out were the door blocked by Ryner, and the window. However, because it's raining, the storm shutters were drawn, and she wouldn't be able to slip through. So her only way out was the door behind Ryner...

Biore looked at Ryner with sharp eyes.

"...now, do I have enough skills to get behind him?"

She said in barely audible voice.

Honestly, she had no confidence. Ryner's movements were simply that good.

At that moment, Ryner turned to look at her.

His eyes were dark and sharp. He looked at her and said,

"This is really troublesome, so I'll put an end to it now."

"It won't be so eas..."

However, before Biore could finish, Ryner fell forward in a small movement and dashed at her.

Biore moved accordingly.

She wasn't fast enough to dodge, but she observed Ryner's movements and swung out her fist towards him.

However, as if he'd expected that, Ryner casually grabbed her right hand, twisted her wrist and slammed her against the bed.

And with his right hand holding her knife, he swung it towards her head.

Within the darkness, the knife shone with reflected light from the corridors.

It was splendid.

His skill was too marvelous, and she couldn't do anything.

She'll die.

She knew that.

It's her turn to die..

She thought as if in a trance.

But...

"There you have it. I win this time...so I was thinking that the loser should do one thing the winner asks. That's the rule, no?"

Suddenly, Ryner spoke to her with his usual tired and sluggish voice...

"Huh?"

Biore said stupidly.

Ryner shrugged and stood up. He twirled the knife in his hands so that its handle was facing her.

"Here you go. I'm returning it."

"Eh? Huh? I mean, what are you..."

"Ah~ Just, be quiet and listen to me. So...where should I start?"

The ten year old boy folded his arms, looking troubled. Then,

"Alright. Er...Biore, why did you come here? I mean, I get that you're trying to kill me, but on whose orders did you come to kill me?"



She was suddenly asked...

And she understood.

Ryner knew that he was overwhelmingly stronger than Biore, and was trying to find out who was behind her.

Well, it's a natural reaction.

But she didn't have anything to tell him. Assassins were trained that way. No information is to be revealed. No matter what kind of torture they're subject to - and even under the threat of death.

Biore didn't answer.

She didn't resist.

Because she knew that the huge gap between their power made resistance futile...

But Ryner nodded.

"Ah, well, if you're not gonna say, then I guess I'll tell you. Biore, you came to kill me on Roland's orders."

"..."

Biore didn't answer.

But Ryner continued nonchalantly.

"Additionally, you'll be dismissed from your duties as an assassin following the completion of this mission. You'll be given a new name and a new life, was it?"

Instantly,

"How did you know that!?"

Biore shouted.

And she started thinking again.

What did this mean? Why did Ryner know about the contents of her orders?

Was there an information leak somewhere?

Or...

Ryner looked at her sadly.

"By the way, the mission that I was assigned..."

He took out some documents from the drawer beside him and handed them to Biore.

And...

"My mission was to eliminate the assassin Biore Mente. She was fairly active during the long war, and well, you know what happens. She knew too much about the inside workings of the country, she'd be a liability if left alive - so let's make her disappear."

He said...

Biore read the documents.

It really was an order from the Roland army, and the target for assassination was unmistakably Biore herself.

"Impossible..."

The words came from her mouth before she could stop herself.

"No, the country does it all the time. They'll use you for all you're worth, and kill you when you become a liability. The high and important people of Roland are always like this."

Ryner said in a passive voice, as if he'd already given up on life.

They didn't sound like the words of a ten year old.

This boy, at the age of ten, was already better fit for assassination than Biore was.

His movements, his thoughts...

Ryner continued.

"Also, it seems to be some sort of training for me. To see whether I can kill the greatest assassin, Biore Mente when I'm already on her radar. You're just an experiment for me. It's amazing, isn't it? How Roland plays with human lives. I couldn't be any more impressed."

Biore raised her face and looked at Ryner.

"I see...so are you going to kill me?"

Ryner nodded.

"Hm. Right. That's my job and all."

He said right away.

Biore smiled bitterly.

That's right. Eliminate the target. That's an assassin's job. It just happened that the target was herself this time.

She'll die here.

When that thought crossed her mind, she began to feel funny.

She gave her all for the country. She endured deadly training, followed orders and killed many...and in the end, she was told that she can be free, for the first time of her life. She allowed herself to dream just a bit, but...

The country that she gave up everything for betrayed her.

She killed lots of people.

Children and women.

If she had orders, she'd kill anyone.

And she dreamed of a free life that would begin tomorrow...

She thought that someone who deprived many of their freedom could be free tomorrow.

That's funny.

Her own naivety was funny.

There was no way that someone like her could become happy.

She'll die after being betrayed by something she gave her life for...

What a fitting end.

That's what she thought.

Biore smiled, and said to Ryner.

"Kill me already."

But Ryner wore a troubled expression.

"Eh- What's with you? You're going to be killed right now, and you're smiling like that?"

"Hm? You don't kill smiling girls? So you like killing girls who run away crying? What a pervert. No matter how good your skills are, as an assassin, you're nothing."

She knew that there were many of those perverts in the Hidden Elites. People who mistakenly think that they're chosen and look down on everyone else as trash.

But Ryner shrugged.

"No, I'm not interested in that. Please don't lump me with the other Hidden Elites. I...I know what they're calling me...I know that the one who should disappear is..."

For a split second, the boy's face twisted in sadness. However, his expression quickly returned to its sleepy state.

"Ahh well, whatever. In my scenario, I killed the assassin Biore Mente, and she gained a new name and a new life. So I'd be troubled if you looked like you're ready to die."

He suddenly said to her.

"Huh? W-wait a second, what are you talking about?"

"I said~ I'll let Biore escape from Roland and start a new life somewhere else. But I'll tell the country that I've disposed of you. Understand?"

' *Understand?* ' Just what is he saying?

"You...I mean, even a child should know that it's impossible."

However, Ryner tilted his head in confusion.

"Hmm? Impossible how?"

"Everything. Everything's impossible! First things first, do you know how hard it is to cross Roland's borders without permission?"

"I did it before."

"No way!"

"Way."

His reply was immediate.

Biore was silent for a moment...

".....b-but still, even if I successfully escaped from the country, you were ordered to kill me, weren't you? So if you didn't kill me properly, you'd be punished, right? You might even get executed, y'know? I'm sure they'll try to see my body with their own eyes. Then what are you going to do?"

But Ryner smiled.

"Hey, hey, is that how you actually speak, Biore? It's different from your calm tone just now, and your 'nice girl' facade when we just met, right? Does that mean you're expecting to live a new life?"

"Don't change the subject!"

She shouted before she could stop herself.

"Ah, geez..."

Biore sighed tiredly.

She noticed this ever since their first meeting....but this Ryner boy is really good at breaking her own pace...

And what is this conversation all about?

*Why is this boy worried about my life? No matter which one of us is the assassin, we're enemies...*

Biore looked at the boy and said.

"I have something I'd like to ask. Is that alright?"

"What?"

"Have I met you before?"

"No?"

"True. So I'm a stranger that you just met today."

"Yeah."

"So, I'll ask you again. What do stand to gain my helping me? If you kill me, you can avoid the punishment, and the Roland army will think higher of you, no? So why don't you kill me?"

Ryner folded his arms, scowling. After thinking for a few moments, he said,

"It's a pain."

"Huh? Pain? What?"

"Killing you is such a pain."

"Huh? And letting me escape and lying to the army isn't ' *such a pain* '?"

Ryner frowned deeply.

"No, that's pretty troublesome as well. Argh, I hate troublesome things. But-"

He looked at Biore kindly.

"But it's better than bearing the weight of having killed Biore, right? Killing is the most troublesome thing of all. No matter how calm you may look after killing someone, there are things that you have to bear, right? You'd just feel really bad, and ghosts might just pop up during the middle of the night. The more you kill, the heavier it gets, and you don't even feel like walking anymore...'aah, I'm so sleepy I don't want to go to school anymore'...ah, well, that might be a bit different....but anyways, it's a pain. It must've been pretty hard on you to do an assassin's job, right? The war's over now. You don't need to kill anyone anymore. Good work."

He said.

"..."

For an instant, Biore was at a loss for words.

It was hard?

Was it...hard on herself?

What did she think when she killed?

When she killed more and more, she couldn't even feel anything. Killing humans didn't feel painful to her. Even happy things don't bring enjoyment to her.

She was merely following orders day by day.

Because she only existed to kill people...

Ryner said ' *The more you kill, the heavier it gets...* '

But, ' *you don't need to kill anymore...* '?

(*If that's the case...then what's the purpose of my existence?*)

*I wasn't taught a way of life without killing...*

*I...*

*I...*

She asked herself.

The boy was smiling.

He was looking at her with a sleepy yet kind smile.

"Actually, the orphanage I was in was a pretty special place, and a few of my friends back then became assassins. Me...well, I hate troublesome things, and didn't succeed at all in assassinations, so the verdict was that I'm not fit for an assassin..."

His words stopped once, but he began again.

"Oh well, enough about me. Anyways - my friends. They smiled normally at first. But the next time I met them, they all wore painful expressions. And when I last saw them, they looked like corpses. Everyone went through such pains. Living in society must be hard. But I understood just from looking at you, Biore. You really don't want to kill anymore, right?"

"..."

*I don't want to kill anymore?*

*Who? Me?*

*When the only thing I know is killing?*

*When I'm the one with the highest marks amongst all assassins?*

"If you were someone who derived pleasure from murder, then I planned to kill you. But Biore, you're different. So start your life over. Because Biore...unlike me...you're not a **monster**."

"..."

Biore stared at Ryner.

She stared at the boy who talked to her through his sleepy smile...

Her orders were to kill the **monster**.

But....

**Monster?**

This is a **monster**?

No.

She thought.

The country is the real monster.

The real monster....

*Is me, who continued to kill without a second thought...*

*Me, who could not survive without killing...*

But still, the boy...

Tried to spare her.

Tried to spare someone who couldn't kill anymore and lost her meaning of existence.

He could forgive....someone like her.

He told her to start over.

*What's wrong with him...*

She didn't know what was happening anymore. The boy's words battered painfully at her heart...

Biore stared at the boy in front of her.

A boy...only ten years old...

But he didn't look like a child. He had unbelievably sad eyes. He called himself a **monster** with unbelievably tired eyes. And he led Biore around by the nose - that's what she thought, but then he told her of salvation.

Even though he's a stranger that she just met today.

"...if I could get out of Roland, Ryner, you'll report to the army that you've killed me?"

"That's right, and...?"

"They'll find out if there's no corpse."

"True."

"If they do, then you'll be punished."

Ryner smiled sheepishly at that.

"Did you know? The **monster** shunned and hated by everyone will get punished for no reason at all. So I'm used to it, don't mind..."

His words trailed off.

Biore's heart hurt just by looking at his expression. Maybe that's what sparked it off. Looking at his smile unsuitable for a ten year old, a smile of self-deprecation and resignation...

"I do mind!!!"

Without thinking, Biore shouted. She didn't know why, but she shouted. Her mouth moved, almost as if it was separate from her will.

*What is this...*

"Even if you don't mind, Ryner, I do mind!"

Ryner looked at Biore with surprise on his face.

"Huh? Why? I mean, you and I just met today, right? We're total strangers? But you care about that? I'm not going to get killed or anything, y'know? And I'm a bearer of **Alpha Stigma**, a **mons..**"

However, Biore interrupted before Ryner could finish.

"Shut up! Anyways, I just mind it! Because...um.....yeah, that! So...I can't help it, alright!?"

"Huh? Erm, what exactly is it? Sorry. I couldn't really hear, so...what?"

Biore cast her face downwards and,

"Eh...ah...so that! Um, like, erm, you know! I don't know why, but I just don't want you to suffer..."

"Why?"

A beat.

"I said~ It's because I love you!"

Those words came out of her mouth.

She said them herself, and she was surprised.

What is she saying?

What is this?

What is happening?

She became confused at her own words.

She just didn't want to see Ryner before her twisting his face in pain. She didn't want to see him wear a sad expression.

For some reason, she suddenly wanted to protect him.

This was the first time she'd ever felt like this.

**Love...**

She never felt this way towards anyone...

She read that there were different kinds of love.

Love for your own child, love for the animals you live with...love that manifests itself as a desire to protect the weak.

And the other kind is a sudden change of emotions for a member of the opposite gender...

No matter how many books she read, she could never comprehend. She didn't think that risking your life for someone else without any expectation of rewards was realistic.

But what is this feeling inside her now?

At the very least, she was obviously weaker than Ryner...

So her love was of the other kind? Or is it some form of love that she didn't know about?

Her head spun with all these thoughts.

As expected, Ryner wore an expression of shock and stared at her for a few moments.

".....HUH!? Wait a bit...no way? Erm, by love, you mean...that kind of love? Why? We just met today, didn't we?"

"I-I know that!"

"A-and I'm still ten years old, and Biore, you're..."

"I said I know that! But, I couldn't help it, can I? It's the first time I've ever felt like this. And I'm as shocked as you are!"

"Ah, o, okay. I see....and...I mean....well, what now....?"

"Don't ask me!"

She shouted, and couldn't face Ryner anymore. Blood rushed to her head, and she began to feel faint. It was the first time she'd experienced something like this.

This is a serious disease...

Who would think that loving someone would bring such drastic changes to her body...

When she killed.

When she was surrounded by danger.

She should've been trained to keep a cool head under those situations and act...

Biore touched her chest.

"Uh...I'm beat...it feels like my heart is trying to jump out of my mouth."

"Seriously!? You mean, y-you're going to die?"

"I-I think it'll be fine. It's a bit painful, but I don't hate it. A pleasant kind of pain. So this is what they call love, huh?"

She asked. Whether her feelings were that of love, or something else...

But Ryner...

"Woah.....somehow that sounded really lame..."

Biore didn't deny it. She smiled,

".....I see. You're right. I think so too...but do normal fifteen year old girls always feel like this? That's pretty hard on them."

"Yeah, I wonder."

"Indeed."

That was their conversation.

But it was her first.

She felt like she became human for the first time.

Biore pressed on her chest, took deep breaths and attempted to calm her beating heart.

Ryner waited silently.

She discovered so many new things while talking with Ryner...

◆

While waiting for her to calm down, they talked about mundane things.

It was the first time she talked about mundane things. She talked about cooking, about books she'd read without any facade...

And...

Biore looked at Ryner, who was sitting on a chair in the room's corner, and said,

"Anyways, let's get back on topic. So I don't think it's fine for Ryner to stay in Roland and be punished. You know why, right?"

"....well yeah, I do, but I don't think you can get far enough from Roland to outrun pursues unless I stay and lie to the army. And since you can use magic, the **Taboo Breaker** Pursuit Squad will come after you as well..."

"But I can't just leave you behind, Ryner! I can't leave you in a country that treats you as a **monster**."

Ryner looked troubled.

"...hmm~..."

"Ah, or is it that you don't want to escape with me, Ryner?"

"No, I'm fine with that...is it going to work..."

"I won't run away unless Ryner comes with me!"

"Y-you'll be killed, you know?"

"Still, I won't run!"

Ryner frowned even deeper and folded his arms.

"Hmm~"

"We'll be fine! Ryner, you crossed the borders once, didn't you?"

"Yeah. But that was simple. It shouldn't be hard for someone with skills like yours, Biore."

"Then we can do it. Ryner, you're unbelievably strong as well....I'm sure we can do it."

However, Ryner was still frowning.

"I do believe that we'll succeed in crossing the borders. But I really want to do it without getting into conflicts, if possible. If I don't draw the army's attention somewhere else, I'm sure there'll be pursuers....fighting is a pain."

He even thought about that.

He didn't want to hurt the pursuers.

But now is not the time.

They had to escape from this hellish country of Roland...

Ryner thought for a bit, and,

"Guess I'm left with no choice...alright, I'll work a bit harder. When we get out of the country...where do you want to go? There are three countries neighboring Roland. The kingdom of Estabul, the imperial kingdom of Nelpha, and the empire of Runa...Runa has relatively low security since it's allied with Roland. But because of that, pursuers will come after us immediately. On the contrary, even though Estabul is on ceasefire right now, it's still a country that warred with Roland recently. Border security should be tight as hell, but in exchange..."

Biore nodded.

"There probably won't be any pursuers. Maybe they'd even welcome us, since we have assassination orders above

our heads."

"That's true. And the imperial kingdom of Nelpha is somewhere in between. Some pursuers will come after us, and it'll be moderately difficult to cross the borders...so, which one would you like?"

However, her answer was decided.

Biore said immediately,

"I want to go to the imperial kingdom of Nelpha."

"Why?"

"I mean, Nelpha hadn't been involved in any wars since the current king's reign, right?"

"Yes."

"And because you hate killing or seeing people killed....I thought Nelpha was a good place..."

Adorable words.

And Ryner wore his troubled expression again.

"...I, I see...okay, it'll be Nelpha, then..."

"Alright!"

She nodded.

In a high voice that surprised even herself.

She was changing...

In such a short period of time, she was changing so much, it was embarrassing.

Even her manner of speaking was changing. How mysterious. When she was with Ryner, she really believed that she could start over.

That's what she thought.

Ryner said,

"So, we're leaving....ah, what a pain. It'll be bad if we couldn't make it out tonight. And since we'd both be disappearing at the same time...I was planning to let Biore escape before noon tomorrow, and I'll make up some excuses to fool the army in the afternoon...it'll be strange if both of us were alive tomorrow...so, how about it? Can we leave tonight?"

Her answer was decided.

"Of course. Who do you think I am?"

Biore said proudly.

◆

Even during midnight, the border between Roland and Nelpha was lit brightly by bonfire.

A huge door separated the two countries, and a dozen of soldiers were carefully guarding it.

Of course, with Biore and Ryner's abilities, they could kill all of them...

But probably not without making any sounds. It'll be a conflict - and that'll attract reinforcements.

If they drag it out long enough, the main squadron will arrive.

And the **Taboo Breaker** Pursuit Squad will come as well. It was rumored that the team led by Rahel Miller was a group of powerful fighters.

They couldn't afford to make a fuss here.

Biore looked at Ryner.

"Of course, we won't be able to get past. I'd love to cross over and walk leisurely upon the nicely paved roads, but that's probably impossible, so we'll cross the mountain. There are cliffs, peaks, and carnivorous animals...and we can't light a fire..."

"It's alright. Thanks to my profession, I can see well in the night."

"That's true. You saw everything in the room when you came to attack me."

"It was hard to follow your movements, though...but I'm glad that I didn't kill you back then. Well, I *wasn't able to*...Ryner is so strong...I can't believe you're younger than me..."

"Really?"

"Yeah! I think you're pretty cool."

"..."

But Ryner shrugged with a troubled expression and said,

"A-alright. Let's go then."

He walked away.

And Biore,

"Yeah."

Nodded and began walking.

◆

They walked on unlit paths at night.

They've only talked a few times when walking, but they were happy with that.

After walking along the border for two hours, they saw it.

The entrance to a mountain that didn't seem particularly inviting. That's why there weren't any guards, but...

Ryner turned around.

"We're here. Think you can go?"

Biore looked at the mountain hidden in darkness, and nodded immediately.

"Yep. I think it'll be okay."

"Let's go then."

"Y-yeah."

And Ryner made his way smoothly through the mountain overgrown with trees but lacking any paths.

But Biore looked at the mountain in front of her and couldn't move.

Ryner called out to her.

"What's wrong? You okay?"

Of course it's okay. Mountains like these are nothing to her. But she couldn't move.

If she took just one step, she'd be out of Roland. A completely different place awaited her.

A free place where she won't be ordered by anyone, where she won't have to kill anyone.

And Ryner was with her...

It was too good to be true.

It was too good for her.

A new life.

*I can start over.*

It all sounded really amazing to her. A fifteen year old girl can love, work normally, smile...

Wow.

She never even imagined any of that.

"Wow...Ryner...it's amazing."

Ryner tilted his head in confusion,

"Huh? What is?"

Biore lifted her head and looked at Ryner. Then...

"I'm amazingly happy right now. And I want to be happy. This is the first time I've ever felt like this. I'm almost shaking...thank you, Ryner."

"...hmm. I think it's weird for you to thank me, but...being happy is good. But you have to get even happier from now on."

"Yes, you're right. But can I really become any happier than this?"

Ryner said smugly,

"Of course. If you nap all day, you'll get even happier."

Biore laughed.

"Ah, I see. Ryner, you sleep a lot, don't you."

"Yep. I'm a proper person who puts the saying " *Sleeping is a child's job* " to good practice. I'm working so hard at that, I might just become the king of the kingdom of afternoon naps in the future."

"Ahaha. Seriously? ...but, yes, you're right..."

A peaceful, mundane everyday life...where people didn't need to be killed, where she didn't need to kill...if she could just stare at her king's sleeping face...

Then she might just become even happier...

That's what she thought.

From the very bottom of her heart.

If she just took a step, she might just reach that kind of happiness.

Ryner extended his hand, and,

"Come, let's go, Biore."

Biore nodded happily...

And tried to take a step forward.

It all happened in an instant.

She heard a sound like wind being sliced apart, and felt something hit her side with a light sound.

"Ah."

Ryner widened his eyes and looked at Biore.

"Huh?"

Biore looked at her side...

And...

She saw something.

A thin, wooden stick stuck in her side.

It was an arrow.

It was buried so deeply that she couldn't even see the arrowhead. And with that as the center, her clothes were quickly stained black.

"Biore!?"

Ryner shouted, but Biore analyzed her current condition calmly.

It wasn't fatal. Her insides weren't injured. She could still move.

But...

"Ryner, I'm fine. The injury wasn't too bad."

But Ryner ran at her.

"Shit. My mistake. Just how did they....why are they here..."

Around ten men wearing armor ran towards them from the darkness...

One of the taller men began to speak.

"Haha. You acted according to our predictions, Ryner Lute. You never succeeded in any assassination missions. We knew that you'd do something like this, you worthless monster."

Ryner glared at him.

"...you old fart..."

But the old man smiled as if was making a fool out of his opponent.

"But everything went according to our predictions. It seems like you got pretty close with that girl. Just as planned. Now, let us continue the experiment."

"E-experiment?"

Biore groaned, and the old man said happily,

"That's right. An experiment. Because **Alpha Stigma** bearers often go berserk when they're in a state of heightened emotions...it's especially likely to happen when people familiar to them get killed or tortured before their own eyes. That being said, I'm rather sketchy on the details since he never went berserk during the experiments. That **monster** never listens to us, and the experiment is getting pretty difficult. I thought about killing him and being done with it...but we can't really kill the only abnormality that managed to regain his sanity after going berserk..."

He said.

Experiment...

This is an experiment.

They predicted that the two of them would escape and come here.

Everything went according to plan.

She was supposed to be a trigger to make Ryner go berserk. And Ryner will go berserk after she's killed.

Everything went according to plan...

But Ryner grabbed Biore's shoulder.

"I won't let you do that. I won't let you kill Biore."

The old man laughed again.

"You can't stop us. This isn't all of our men - we prepared a hundred of them. Well, it's a different case if your **eyes** go berserk. Or are you planning to go berserk without us even killing the girl?"

"..."

Ryner didn't reply.

He turned towards Biore.

"I'm sorry. It's my fault. Because I'm...a monster..."

But Biore shook her head desperately.

"No. It's not your fault, Ryner. This country is mad. I never realized until now...I never realized because all I did was follow orders and kill...but this country is mad...it's not Ryner's fault..."

But he wasn't listening to Biore's words.

He glared at the old man.

"Shit...I'll never let you kill Biore. How can I keep letting things happen your way...? Biore, cross the borders by yourself. I won't let anyone past me."

He lowered his stance.

He exhibited a pressuring aura that was on a completely different level than the killer intent she experienced in the room.

It was overwhelming.

She knew how strong he was just by that. Maybe he really can hold back a hundred soldiers.

She felt that he was strong enough for that.

But that only applies if he didn't hold back, and acted with the full intent of killing every single enemy.

Then Ryner would have to take a lot of lives here.

To protect her, Ryner would have to take a lot of lives.

Ryner, who said that killing was a pain...

And...

Biore looked at her wound. Blood was still flowing, even if it was bit by bit. It wasn't fatal, but it wasn't a shallow wound either...

She probably couldn't escape successfully.

She'll be caught while Ryner is fighting.

And...she'll be killed in front of Ryner...

And she'll leave him in solitude again.

He'll be called a **monster** again.

Everything went according to their scenario...

Even though the real monster of madness was this country. Even though the real monster was this man smiling before her eyes, playing with people's hearts.

Ryner will be called a **monster** by them again.

She didn't want that.

She fell in love with him. With this boy. She wanted to laugh and live with him.

Biore turned around for a moment.

It was only a step.

A step was all it took for her to attain freedom. It was a dark, unlit mountain, but somehow, she saw brilliance. She saw a place of freedom that someone like her could never reach.

At a distance.

"I wanted to say this just once..."

She whispered softly.

She turned her eyes back to Ryner, who was ready to battle.

She looked at Ryner, who was trying to fight to protect her.

Even though he hated killing people, he was trying to fight.

*(For someone like me)*

Biore said in an inaudible whisper.

*(For someone like me, who killed lots of people...)*

She gazed at Ryner with happiness in her eyes.

*I wanted to see Ryner's sleeping figure one last time.*

She thought.

She imagined Ryner as the king of the kingdom of afternoon naps, and herself right beside him, gazing at his innocent sleeping face.

She wore an expression of pure bliss.

Every day was an ordinary day, but she was so happy...

Biore smiled gently.

And,

"I, I'm so happy that I've met you, Ryner."

Ryner nodded.

"Spare me the goodbyes. Just run. It'll be alright, I won't let them kill you, Biore."

But Biore didn't move.

She calmly gazed at Ryner's back...

"I don't think I can get any happier. That's why it's okay. Ryner, you won't have to do anything *troublesome*. I won't let anyone call you a **monster**, Ryner...Ryner won't become a **monster**..."

Ryner turned around at her words. He turned around with a face full of confusion.

Looking at his face, Biore smiled even more. She felt a sense of relief just from looking at his face. Her freedom was

right there.

"I'm glad that I met you, Ryner. I'm so glad that I met you...I'm glad that I met you, Ryner."

"Biore, what are you..."

The moment that Ryner spoke, Biore pulled out the arrow in her side and said,

"I won't let myself be controlled by anyone. Because I'm free. I won't do whatever Roland tells me to do. I, I'll live as I like, and I'll find happiness."

"Wai..."

But Biore didn't let Ryner finish and embraced him.

She embraced him tightly.

"Eh? Huh!? Wait, Biore..."

She embraced him tightly.

Just like that, she drew her hand towards herself....

And stabbed herself in the chest with the arrow she held.

The pain was only momentary.

She felt something warm rush out of her chest.

She knew immediately that she suffered a fatal wound.

She was scared.

It was the first time that she was scared of death. She never thought that way before.

Because she didn't have anything...

She was taught that way...

But now...

She was scared to be away from Ryner. She was scared that she'd close her eyes and never hear Ryner's voice again.

She won't be able to see his face. Won't be able to touch him. She couldn't even make light conversation with him and laugh with him anymore.

She was terrified of that.

Because of him, she felt that she'd become human...

*But still, I will...*

She said in a small voice that only Ryner could hear.

"...I'm glad that I fell in love with you, Ryner. I was happy enough with that. I can't get any happier. So...so..."

Her words stopped.

She felt her body growing weaker by the moment.

Ryner was panicking.

"Biore! Look at the situation. Now's not the time for..."

But Ryner realized what Biore was trying to do. He shouted in a voice completely different from his usual tone,

"Wha!? What are you doing!? Let go! Wh-why are you doing this!?"

But she won't let go. If she did, she won't have enough strength to embrace Ryner again. She wanted to be with him for a bit longer.

That's why,

".....Ry...ner...I'm sorry. Even if I let go..."

"Tell me you're lying!?"

Ryner shouted. His voice sounded close to breaking.

In reply...

"But...don't be sad. I...did this...out of my will...I won't let myself be killed by them...Ryner, you're not a **monster**..."

Her words trailed off. She couldn't speak anymore. Even though she still had lots to say, she couldn't speak anymore.

She wanted to say that she loved him. She wanted to say that she was happy with him. She wanted to tell him that she was becoming a completely different person in his presence.

But she couldn't...

She could barely even feel her own body within Ryner's arms.

Ryner shouted.

"Tell me you're lying! You can't do this, Biore!? If you died, then everything is..."

But even his voice sounded like it came from a distance.

So this is death.

She gradually lost her sense of feeling, slowly but surely...

She couldn't feel anything of her beloved.

But she opened her eyes slightly.

Everything was blurry. She couldn't see much. But she knew that Ryner was embracing her.

It was too good to be true.

That's what she thought.

She was so happy, and so sleepy.

*It seems like I'll become a citizen of the kingdom of afternoon naps before you, Ryner...*



"Killing is such a pain, right..."

He whispered. And her face, as if in reply...



The king of that country was said to sleep a lot.

Time passed in peace and calm, and the sun set.

It was an ordinary day.

She spent her days gazing at her king's sleeping face.

The expression she wore was one of utmost bliss...

-End