

Chapter 346 - The Beginning

"Kaede, huh? Is he possibly a reincarnator? Nemus, are you a former Japanese?"

"I'm Nemus!"

It's Nemus' usual sentence, but he shouts it full of spirit. And then he energetically bends his upper body, bringing his rectangle face close to my face.

The weird movements of his twig eyelashes are cute...

But, Nemus is crying. Gem-like tears are spilling out of his crystalline eyes. Each of the tears is very pretty as it falls. They look mysterious, as if liquid has accumulated in a transparent, crystalline egg. Those tears drop down from his steely wooden collar to the decollete. The decollete is a very deep collarbone similar to a marble fountain disk. As they slid down along the decollete, the tears leaped off the bones' edges which looked like bending and winding ski jumping hills.

Beneath the decollete, an unusually shaped sternum follows. That sternum has many layers of folded wood and metal, which seem to have had a Damascus finish applied to them, as if countless swirls are coiling while combining with each other in complex patterns. A huge crest and a huge brooch with chaotic, geometrical patterns are installed on his sternum. Its surface reminds me of a 『shriveled pear』 or 『a grimace full of pain』.

Rather than one part of his torso which maintains such a mysterious shape...it's about Nemus' heart - the meaning why he's brought his face so close to me that it actually fills my entire field of vision.

I wonder, is it okay for me to take this as his reaction to my question whether he is a reincarnator? ...I mean, he can't say anything but "I'm Nemus", so it's kinda unclear. And I don't have a Nemus inspection-like skill like Moga does. That's why I can't read what he's thinking or feeling.

For starters, let's think about a way how I'll understand the answer from his body language.

...His crystalline eyes stare at me while I'm pondering about all that.

"...Nemus, umm, is it alright for me to interpret you having brought your head close as you 'comprehending my words?'"

"I, am Nemus." Nemus opens his mouth, and says. His lips and teeth are made out of wood and a sharp-looking, steely material.

"Okay, then I'll go on with the conversation based on that assumption. So, assuming you're a reincarnator and if this just now meant to be a confirmation, could you vertically bend your big trunk once? And if you mean to deny it, please shake it sideways."

"...I am, Neemus!"

Nemus seems to have understood me. But, where are Nemus' ears actually located? Oh, well...that

doesn't matter now anyway.

I think Nemus is hurrying after hearing my words, but his body still moves slowly with the joints in his torso creaking. Still, he properly answers me by vertically bending his body.

So he's confirming, meaning Nemus is a reincarnator, huh?

"...Reincarnator... If I assume that Kaede was your former name, would that make you a former Japanese woman?"

"I...am...Nemus."

Another confirmation. So, she's Kaede-san, huh...? Judging by the name being somewhat old-styled, she maybe comes from the Heian period (794-1185 AD)?

Well, as result of complex phenomenons or the existence of high-ranking gods, who govern the dimensions that interfere through other worlds, quantum-based multiverses, many-worlds interpretation, and divine ID operations, many people seem to have been transferred or reincarnated into his world from various epochs including the past and modern days... It's possible that she could come from any era and world.

Pelneet alone already houses quite a few reincarnators and transferees such as Diviner Kazane, Manabu who commands firebugs through his mallet, Kirie who works under the second prince right now, Tanaka who runs a sweets store with wonderful ice, and Taichi who possesses a divine, right arm who allowed him to create ten-ten-dutea. There might also be non-Japanese around as well. Even on my Earth, there were some beings who were born while having memories of their past.

The stories in Tibetan Buddhism about that are quite famous. According to that kind of Buddhism, all living beings are part of an endless circle of birth, death, and rebirth. That circle of transmigration allows your soul to live eternally, even if your body perishes temporarily. Though there will be no end if you consider this in regards to karma...

Well, Pelneet might have so many because it's a labyrinth city. No, in the first place, I'm me, right?

The Beginning. The previous white space where I had been sucked into through that cosmos-like, black vortex. A chair and table awaited me there. Just when I thought that the chair's surface had awfully many decorations, I found out that those were actually faces. Many, many, black eyeballs appeared out of the eye sockets of those faces. That army of eyeballs scanned me while repeatedly zooming in and out like a camera.

The beings who created the white space where such things exist...are they aliens with a highly advanced civilization capable of traveling through dimensions? Gods? Or maybe both?

Blood-smeared boots had been casually left behind underneath the table. Did those boots...belong to someone? It's also strange that they fit my feet perfectly.

Since I've lived for a long time in the underground after reincarnating, those boots naturally became worn-down and tattered... I don't think there's any particular meaning behind them since they weren't really anything special to begin with, but...no wait, blood was clinging to the boots. That

means, the blood was carried over to the world here from a world in another dimension. Would that be okay in regards to germs and such?

Blood...the race before Light Demon Lucival was Half Vampire. And I became a Light Demon Lucival by choosing <Granted Seal of Light>. Has the blood anything to do with vampires? ...I guess I'm overthinking here.

Moreover, this vast universe, and a world where gods roll their dice. A world filled with mana and magic where the gods have formed an eternal connection extending over past, present, and future without altering the true form of things while all phenomena are ever changing. Its universe follows somewhat different physical laws from the universe I know of. A world where I want to believe that it's not a world that has been programmed in advance. Though I possess no more than trivial knowledge about it, even if I include the universe I know of...

And then there's the reason why I was reincarnated on this planet among all the countless galaxies spreading across the navy blue, aubergine night sky. It's a planet with the appropriate distance to the sun, allowing for life to exist. Is it a coincidence that I arrived on this planet consisting of abundant water and nature? I wonder about it every time, but am I dancing on the palm of Fate God Ashura like people dance on Buddha's palm? Is it 『because it's just right』 like the girl appearing in Britain folklore?

My formidable enemy Takebayashi mentioned that he was being influenced by the power of the Forest's Reincarnation God Goddeath or some such. Is it actually the effect of the Reincarnation Seed of Dimension Tearing which Kazane's party had obtained from a rainbow-colored treasure chest on the tenth floor of the labyrinth?

...The Reincarnation Seed of Dimension Tearing, huh? It was sold from the Radford Empire to Seven Florseil... In the end, it's the item considered to have become the main cause for Takebayashi and the others to have been transferred into this world.

That Takebayashi was a human, but at the same time he was a strong fighter using skills and powers based on the blessing of a god I've never heard of. The words of him as a warrior, who had grown by surviving many years on battlefields, were no lies. He used a sword style where he had mastered an exciting, magnificent, and unique dual-wielding style...it was as skillful and mighty as the sword style used by Galroh, the leader of the Shadow Wing Brigade.

Galroh used a two-handed sword, but...in the fights with Takebayashi and Galroh...

As I continue my lengthy deliberations while imagining the stylish ten blade nails of Hoffmann...

"...I, I, am, Nemus..." Nemus talks to me with a gentle, low voice as if worrying about me.

Occasionally I end up realizing my own foolish ignorance, but it looks like it's shown on my face this time.

"...Sorry. So, Nemus, would it be better for me to call you Kaede as it's written on your shoulder?"

"I am, Nemus!"

She calmly shakes her body left and right. So, it's a no. Nemus is Nemus, eh? A woman is hidden within, but she appears to prefer her name to be Nemus.

No...if I assume Kaede-san existed within the steel tree for such a long time that it actually felt like eternity...it might be inevitable for her to reach the conclusion that it's fine to call her Nemus at this point.

Well, this is just my own selfish guess, though. Thus it might be completely wrong as well.

Nemus has been continuing to shake her body while I've been pondering. There's life in the swarm of twigs growing out from her torso and shoulders. Small buds with new leaves are growing, multicolored flowers are blooming, and red, dry leaves are still stuck on the twigs. The countless twigs, which are branching out in all directions, are trembling like a field of flowers that's visited by a gust of wind while she continues to shake.

And then the red, dry leaves sadly flutter down after having served their purpose. Even the most clinging to the wood's surface falls off as if sliding down. The moss then sticks to her huge legs. All kinds of bugs, who have been nesting in the holes and trenches on the surface of Nemus' body, crawl out of their hiding.

Fallen leaves and bugs? It does have a charm. The circle of life is continuing in Nemus' body. If now it only snowed as well, she could represent all four seasons on her body. Those holes look like a golden caterpillar like Catiza could creep out of them.

Still, the whole is a very mysterious life form. Suddenly Rollodeen moves after having her interest piqued.

"Nn~, nyanyano." She meows as if saying, 『Nemus' body is funny ~nya』.

And then she circles around on the spot as if chasing after her own tail. It looks like she plans to match Nemus' left-right shaking with a weird dance. Rollodeen continues to move sideways just like I'd do when rotating on my toes while delivering cat punches at Nemus' huge legs.

I watch the Nemus dance as well... It's almost as if my Spirit value is being sucked into those small holes... That mysterious dance looks like it's got a hypnotic element.

Rollodeen has become completely engrossed with tapping Nemus' legs. Seeing how she's a panther right now, the pads on her paws' soles are naturally big as well.

As those two keep messing around, I keep gazing at the falling red leaves, which drop from branches that look similar to those of maples, just like the kanji suggests.

"...Nyaa." Rollodeen also notices the red leaves. "Nnn——"

She wields her forepaws as if doing kung-fu. She splendidly hits the leaves, as they sway in the wind, with her sharp claws, cleanly bisecting them. Since she also unleashes a cat punch every once in a while, it looks like she's dancing.

Going by the gloss of her black fur as black panther, which is called puma in America, and her

movements resembling a kung-fu panda from some movie, I guess you could call her a kung-fu puma... But, at the same time her doing this jabbing training means that she's not watching our vicinity.

"...Rollo, please watch the surroundings for now."

"Nn." She stops her cat punches while growling throatily.

"The vampire Hoffmann, and especially the Death Butterfly people, who are trying to revive their god, might come to pick a fight with. Please stay on guard."

"Nyaa."

Rollodeen tears her eyes off Nemus after answering with a clear, high-pitched meow. And then she immediately moves her nose, sniffing the air. My partner shifts her head around to take in the surrounding scent.

Suddenly, her head stops while pointing diagonally to the left front, as she apparently smelled something bothering her. She takes one step forward with her left forepaw. But then turns her head my way, staring at me with her red eyes.

"Partner, I'm going to be fine."

My partner acts as if nodding.

"Nn, nyao——"

After meowing once more, she extends her left forepaw once more, and starts running. Her long tail isn't swaying. Going by her speed, she seems to have sensed a monster diagonally to the left front.

Higlia keeps gazing at the powerful and smooth way of Rollodeen's running. Her blue eyes are adorable.

Rollodeen leaps on a decayed tree that looks like it's going to crumble apart anytime soon. But, using it as a scaffolding, she immediately uses her hind legs to leap to the front. For a short moment, she flies through the air. As she does, she releases tentacles to the left and right front. The tentacles stab into two thick trees on either side - I guess they serve as replacement for their usual anchors - and then she instantly accelerates by using the force of reeling the two tentacles back into her torso again. It's a terrifying acceleration that makes her look like a single streak of lightning. Rollodeen vanishes between the trees while only leaving her afterimage behind.

I keep watching the movements, which befit a divine beast, together with Higlia. She had been occasionally mingling with the rescued people including Moga, Nemus, Arry, and Taack while using a haughty tone, but she kept all kinds of conversations going, giving me the impression that she's rather sociable.

But, in the end, she appears to be a basically polite woman. Since I've been focusing on my conversation with Nemus and Rollodeen, I haven't listened in on her much, but she got quite excited during some conversations that interested her.

『The military forces of the Tree Apparition King have been expanding their sphere of influence』

『A goblin telka has a hundred testicles』

『Don't underestimate intelligent orcs』

『Isn't there a user of Silver Light Spiders and the <Demonic Beast Seal> among those who have been rescued?』

『If there isn't, the woman, who acted so intimately with Shuuya back then, must have been a warrior at the level of a division commander, possessing a precious bloodline, just like she hinted at with her talk about "family"...』

At this moment, the children asked her, "Difishion komanda?" and "What's a difishion komanda?", but Higlia didn't answer their question.

『Unknown Skill Search Church? I've never heard about something like that. Rather than that, just how many adventurers are currently investigating this area?』

『Recently, the neighborhood of the 【Ancient Keel Tunnel】, which continues to the 【Graveyard of Ancient Gods】, has been rather noisy. Battles with people, who are operating based on various ulterior motives of the underground world such as the underlings of Ancient God Go Rad, have been going on all over the place. Make absolutely sure to not get close to them. The underground is a vast, different world. Think of it as being connected to an abyss of darkness. You'll go astray in the realm of the dead』

The karmnian man and old human, who heard Higlia's warning, said, 『Graveyard of Ancient Gods?』, 『Is there such a place in the Sea of Trees?』, 『I've never heard of it』, 『Silver-haired, pretty lady, you appear to be quite a formidable adventurer』, and 『Your blue eyes are beautiful』, turning into seduction midway, but it didn't cause any change on Higlia's expression.

『Are the black nobleman and the powerful vampire, who fought the Death Butterfly woman earlier, truly unrelated?』

『I'm satisfied since I could get revenge for Zacksel...besides I told Shuuya my name...afterwards, we'll together...on the divine bedding...』

And such she said. Higlia directed a womanly look at me while mixing words oozing with her affection for me at some points in the conversations with the other people. However, she didn't tell anyone about her being an ancient wolfwoman. It's probably because she understood from her earlier conversation with Nora that there are big differences between human and ancient wolfmen.

Once I meet her eyes now, she bashfully averts hers, just to look back at me soon again with a slightly shyness coloring her face. When I cast a smile at her, she mutters under her breath, "Shu-Shuuya, please don't be too hard on me during the duel..."

"...I'm sorry, but I don't plan to duel you."

"W-What was that!?"

Her expression dyes in shock as if you could hear a wham from it. Even so, Higlia has been maintaining the pretty E-line on her slender chin.

However, look, I'm sorry, but I'd like to avoid troublesome matters if possible. I have to return to Quiche's village while taking Arry and Taack along. I'm also worried about my friend's butt...though it should be fine as long as Helme doesn't do anything weird.

While thinking about all that, I shift my eyes back to Nemus who's stopped her weird dance. Her crystalline eyes are pointed at Moga.

"Nemus, we must go back to the exploration party we lost on the way, you know?"

"I'm Nemus."

"Yes, the dwarven professor who tried to cut off your arms and legs."

"I, a, m, Neeemus."

"Hahaha, do you hate him that much? But, timewise, they might already be on their way back to Hekatrail, I think."

"...I, am Nemus."

"Hmm? You're not all that eager? It looks like you had a chat with Shuuya, but is there something bothering you?"

"I'm Nemus!"

"I see."

Moga spreads his small arms to the sides with the intent to indicate his understanding. The hakama-styled attire he's wearing and his penguin plumes suit each other in an odd way...

After gesturing with his small hands as if playing around, Moga turns his eyes at me.

"...It seems my partner wishes to speak with you. Shuuya, so you can also talk with Nemus, like the black panther, right? I'm surprised."

"Is it that much of a surprise? Well, aren't there other ways besides her "I'm Nemus" that you can use to communicate with her?"

"That should be difficult, I think..." Moga pauses, and looks at me after adding a sharp glint to his penguin eyes.

"You're right, her extremely loose movements in addition to her mysterious dancing make it hard to understand her."

"...Hahaha, that's why it's odd for you to understand all of that——" While laughing, Moga nimbly wards off Taack's hand who tried to hug him from the side.

"Moga-ccchi! You're so quick!"

"Kukuku, it's ten years too early for you to manage touching me!"

It sure looks like Taack likes Moga. I turn my eyes away from the two, looking at Nemus' head.

"...So the beauty hidden deep in your eyes came from you being a woman, huh?"

"...I, am, Nemus."

I don't know whether Nemus has confirmed or denied my question. She's still shedding pretty tears...

After moving her thick trunk vertically, she jolts it to the side.

"Woman? What do you mean by that, Shuuya?" Moga asks while being startled after listening to our conversation.

"Ah, the mark on her shoulder is a character I know."

"That was a character? Are you knowledgeable about ancient characters? Ah, speaking of ancient characters...I still didn't properly tell you about our employer."

"If it's that, you seem to have talked with your partner about it moments ago. Were you two in the middle of a request?"

"Indeed. We were with the Domidon Exploration Party. You see, rather than being a scholar, that Domidon is a dwarf using magic and magic arms despite being a scholar. Anyway, he seems to be famous in that field."

"Hee..."

I feel like I've heard the name Domidon somewhere.

"The Sea of Trees is brimming with ancient ruins. We accepted while thinking that it'd be an easy request for one of the escort requests, but we lost the party on the way..."

"...I'm Neeeeemus."

"...What the hell are you saying! Don't play dumb! In the first place, you're the reason for us losing them, no?"

"I, a, m Nemus..."

Nemus answers, looking somewhat remorseful, when Moga scolds her. She's still crying.

"Even if you talk while making your eyes tremble, it remains that we got lost because of you. Good grief..."

They seem to have strayed off their party because Nemus was impertinent. I reflexively end up laughing when I watch Moga preach to her as a penguin.

As I'm listening to their conversation while grinning, "...But, I wonder how many years has it been since you last used movements that are so easy to understand...ever since Shijima Town? Or rather, Nemus, your tears are precious, so I'll pick them up, okay?"

Moga takes a handheld box as they're used in kabuki out of the pocket of his walnut-colored haori. Folded strings automatically extend from within the box, and attach themselves to his waist. It's obvious at a glance that it's a special item. Maybe an item box?

I'm kinda curious about the items hanging from the upper part of the box, which is endowed with mana, in the shape of having been bound together with a string belt that connected to a decoration-like, purple metal fitting. An orb, an oil pouch, a book entangled by many weighty strings...all of them are abnormal. They all contain such a huge amount of mana that anyone can tell about them not being normal items.

Something so special...

"I, a, m, Neeemus."

"Sit down over there."

Hearing Moga's instruction, Nemus retreats backwards while still facing forward, and then lowers her posture with slow movements. As soon as she sits down, a heavy thud reverberates to the vicinity. And then she turns her cute but big head towards Moga, slowly closing her sparkling, crystalline eyes.

"Hey, Moga, those items connected to your waist..."

Moga is about to pick up the tears spilled by Nemus, but when he hears my voice, "——Uaah, you realized? T-These are, you see...haha, guhahaha!"

Moga acts flustered all of a sudden, trying his best to be evasive. He laughs in a weird way with his penguin mouth widening to the sides.

"A penguin face that flaunts its fangs...what a strange face..."

The fangs appear to be sharp.

"The hell are you saying!? I ain't no penguin! I'm a moga."

"Hahaha, I know that. You want to say that you've got a cool, classy raccoon-like head, right?"

"Oohh, so you do understand that it's cool. Hmm? I feel like you just messed with me..."

Well, I said all that while grinning after all.

"...Maybe."

As I'm looking at Moga, I somehow cannot help breaking into laughter.

"Whaaa!? Don't use me as a laughingstock, goddamnit! Just leave me alone!"

"Sorry, I won't call you a raccoon again, okay?"

At that moment, several people started laughing while watching our exchange.

"I ain't no racoon! I told you, I am a m-o-g-a! Got it? Shuuya, you dimwit! Otherwise I'm gonna shave that black hair on your messed-up head so that you'll look like a bald racoon!"

"Eehh?"

"Open your eyes and look at me properly, dude! There's no other moga as awesome as I am! I'm the moga among all moga!"

Moving his penguin head like a yabuki actor, Moga-san finishes by making a weird pose. I bring my face close to him, trying to take a close look.

"Humph, you stupid oaf, I'll get rid of all that hair on your head! How about I let you also experience the wind when the sword on my shoulder flashes past you!?" Moga angrily yells while pointing his child-sized index finger at my head.

An angry penguin's face is kinda scary.

"...Sorry, sorry. Moga, you're a moga, okay? And exactly because you're a sword king I could feel your strength as king penguin."

"...Humph, don't be stupid... The part about the penguin is unnecessary, but I guess you finally get that I'm a sword king! Yep, I'm a sword king!"

Moga-san's mood immediately improves thanks to my praise. He places a hand on the hilt of the sword hanging at his waist, and adopts the 『Bloody fool!』 Tokyo-styled pose. [efn_note]The term used here refers to an expression by a famous oddball in the Edo period. Explaining all of it would take too much time, so you can read it up here if you want: <http://edosanpo.blog109.fc2.com/blog-entry-658.html> [/efn_note]

I guess he's a simple and adorable guy. And, the items at his waist smell quite a bit...of being dangerous.

"...So, what's up with those items at your waist?"

"...As a matter of fact, a room we trespassed into after Nemus destroyed the door was a treasure room by chance. So, anyone would laugh at you as an adventurer if you abandoned treasures thrust into your face, right?" Moga laughs while showing his fangs again.

"So you stole them..."

I suppose that's the reason why they were chased by the vampires. It was unthinkable for small fry vampires to chase after Moga's group which was simply escaping after breaking out of their cell.

"Guhahaha, you see, I also have some thief skills. The treasure chests in the labyrinth are easy peasy, too. Right, Nemus?"

"...I'm, Nemus."

"That's nothing to be proud of? Isn't it fine, partner?"

Going by Nemus' words, they're managing to hold a normal conversation. Watching them like this, I can fully understand that they're partners. However, if those items are things belonging to the Valmask family...wouldn't that raise the probability of Hoffmann chasing after us? They don't have any trackers or bugs attached to them, do they?

Wondering that, I stare at the items Moga stole...

The quality of their magic elements, their shapes, and the magic characters look like fine ornaments...no matter how you look at them, I feel like they're Legendary or Mythological items that would even surprise Suloza's shopkeeper.

I can't tell whether they've got any trackers installed, though. Well, I doubt that Hoffmann got an ability to perceive stolen items, and it's unlikely that he'll come back to retrieve the items after having chased after the Death Butterfly women.

If it's something like tracking the blood of demons, as the Holy Church's tools do, there might unexpectedly exist many of such abilities, though.

"...I, am, Nemus."

"Tears? Yeah, I gotcha. I'm going to collect them right away, so sit tight."

Moga swiftly picks up Nemus' tears. Thereupon, the children start to become all excited after seeing the beautiful tears collected by Moga.

"Waaa~ how mysterious~"

"I want one as well."

"Ah, me tooo!"

"I'll make an exception for you this time, okay? Each of you gets one."

Moga hands the gems to the children.

"Yay~ It's all dark around us already, but isn't there a little light shining out of this gem, similar to

that of Nemus' eyes? My hands are slightly bright, see?"

"Pretty~"

Arry and Taack hold up their tear gems as if to mix their glow with the faint light of dusk. The beautiful gems sprout within the twilight, extending many transparent, crystal spheres. They look just like the gems created by the expert demonic gold artisans through the Rejin craftsmanship. They have a design you won't find often. Nemus' tears are truly beautiful.

"I think they've the same loveliness like the ones in the Crystal Pond and the Plemos Basin." Higlia says with a fascinated look while staring at the tears.

I'm also spellbound by the twinkling gems. ...That faint green glow reminds me of Murasame's blade.

As a test I drew the hilt I didn't use in the battle against the Death Butterfly woman. I grasp it while wondering whether I should use this blade next. While pouring mana into the steel hilt, I don't make the blade appear, but instead rotate the hilt on my palm like a gun.

While wondering whether I should activate the blade next, I carefully advance through the Sea of Trees as if tailing Rollodeen. Everyone also travels through the forest while getting all excited over the tear gems.

Soon I step out onto a place where Rollodeen seems to have scattered monsters after eating them. There's countless corpses around. Going by the claw and fang marks, it must have been Rollodeen. There are also signs of her having played ice hockey with them.

"...Monster corpses are laying all over, but Rollo-chan is still further ahead?"

"Looks like it. We'll keep walking."

Since Arry looks tired, I think it's soon time to take a break. I pour mana into the hilt while deciding that we'd take a rest after walking for a bit longer.

The light blade shoots out of the hilt with a buzzing. The shining blade greenly encroaches the darkness at my feet. Probably because it's dark, the plasma-like blade seems brighter and more conspicuous than usual.

When I hit a leaf fluttering down from a willow with the blade, it evaporates in an instant. Unconsciously, out of habit, I shift into the one-handed <Waterwheel Slash> next. Murasame's blade looks like it's dancing through the dim darkness.

In the end, I continue by moving down other leaves. I...start to train my swordsmanship while walking.

"...An-chan, that's damn awesome."

"Whoa~ What a dreamy sword~ Shuuya-an-chan, are you also a demon sword user?"

"...Bloody hell! What swordsmanship."

"I am Nemus."

Everyone praises my messy swordplay, but...since I honestly don't have any skill in swordsmanship I could boast about, I don't really feel all that happy about it.

I'm not a Sea of trees guide, but...I feel like I'm holding a green bonfire in my hand.

"...It's nothing worth mentioning."

While answering that, I feel the urge Quiche's smile as soon as possible.

"...So you're not just a spearmaster, but also a sword fighter." Higlia warbles with a lewd expression as if she's horny.

A flirtatious glance with her blue eyes, huh...? They have a touch of Demonic Eyes. She moves while seductively spreading her arms as if to catch all of the moonlight basking her.

Thereupon, a mark glistens on her nape.

"Even if it's unrequited, and even if it won't turn it a much better relationship right now..."

"What are you mumbling there..."

The surface of Higlia's cheeks, which resemble those of female humans with their thin layer of silver fur, continue dyeing scarlet.

"...No need for the Kagura ceremony. Still, there's also the burial ceremony for Zacksel, but..."

Even if I'm told terms of the ancient wolfman culture, I won't understand their meaning just like that. She runs ahead with a speed that makes her legs blur as if to show off the power of ancient wolfmen.

Closing the distance to me in an instant, she quickly hugs my arm. Then she cuddles up to me as if we're new lovers. She rubs her soft cheek, which has become as red as an apple, against my arm.

On that occasion I can sense the lovely touch of her boobs, which are softer than her cheek, through my armor. ...Uh-huh, they pack quite the volume. She's just one step short of me calling them huge.

The futuristic Gatrance-form I'm currently wearing is equipped with a high-grade boob sensor. So I know even without borrowing the powers of the Boob God.

As my lewd imaginations are blown away by me thinking about such a silly joke, Higlia calls my name while looking up to me, "...Shuuya."

Somehow, she's quite sexy. The aura of her alluring body adds to her sweet smile.

"...What is it?"

"I don't particularly mind if you don't want to duel me...but, I'm not going to stop following you, even if I have to become a Kagutsuchi or a grass blade fragment, okay?" Higlia squeezes her breasts against my arm, and while releasing an erotic sigh, she talks in ancient wolfman language again.

Guuh, even though I tried to expel my boob delusions...

"The silver-haired lady is attacking Shuuya-an-chan~"

"Are you going to tell Quiche-nee-chan?"

"Yep, I must report it."

"...Are you going to start making out here?" Moga laughs as he opens his mouth.

And at the same time he messes around by showing an indecent signal with his finger.

Seeing that, Nemus yells with a weird voice, "...I, a, M, Neeeeemus!"

I separated my arm from Higlia since I'm bothered by all of them staring at us, and coldly tell Higlia without leaving any room for ambiguity, "——That's your own choice, do as you see fit."

At least that's what I intended, but...hearing my words, Higlia smiles cheerfully while showing me a womanly expression instead.

Cute...she does have some destructive power. But...if Quiche sees this, she'll likely get angry.

"Fufu, I'll do as I please then."

Well, cuteness is justice, I guess. Now then, everyone still seems to be in high spirits, but I still tell everyone that we should take a break around here. And just then, Rollodeen returns through the thicket in front. At the same time, a tick stench of blood is carried over by the wind.