

More than half of the summer vacation has already passed after the Bon Festival.

Some of the students who had been back home began to return to their dormitories, as if they had had enough of their parents' homes and elegant vacations.

Akiharu Hino blinked his eyes at the entrance of the dormitory, wondering what he had heard wrong, and immediately asked the person in front of him.

"..... Sorry, what did you just say? I think my brain has been hit by the summer heat.

In response to this comment, he opens his mouth without breaking into a natural smile and says, "That's why I asked you to go on a date with me."

Tomomi Saikei said so again.

..... It seems that I did not mishear Akiharu earlier.

It was so unnatural and outlandish that my brain thought, "There's no way that's possible.

The company simply refused to recognize the fact that it had been involved in the project.

I was relaxing in my room reading a book when the phone rang, and when I answered it, Tomomi said, "I'm at the Education Department's dormitory. Can you come out to the front door?"

I thought it was just another nefarious scheme, but ..... I see.

Tomomi's guy, slowly accepting the fact that she's asking him out on a date, slowly swallows it down and says, "....., what's the trick with that?"

"Hmm, it's terrible that it's a trap. How can you take it in such a way?"

I think it's because of what I've experienced. The only reason you would ask me out on a date is to either entrap me or entrap someone else.

I will not be fooled by their pretty, protesting eyes.

Whenever he did something, I was either lured in with a sweet offer or lured in by force, and the damage I suffered as a boy remains deep in my mind.

As a result of being inadvertently taken for a ride, I had to walk two kilometers in mud and wander around the school at night half-naked.

Now that he has grown up, Akiharu stared at the girl he grew up with, determined that he would not be so easily deceived.

I can't believe that you would come all the way to the dormitory for that. You must have something to hide, right?

It's not that Akiharu is wrong. If she had had a cell phone, I would have just texted her. I think Akiharu is the only one in Hakuryo who doesn't have a cell phone because it can only be used in the dormitory."

....., if you ask me. ....

(alt: "..... If you say so ....." ) Even Daichi's guys have cell phones, not to mention Todoroki's and Sanke's.

I believe Shikikagami should have had a mirror, and I remember seeing Selnia using it during the last exam.

Yes, it's forbidden to have it on campus, but it's allowed in the dorms, so it's valuable enough to use as a private phone, and of course you'll carry it with you when you go out.

I guess I'll have to make an exception if I don't have one.

Tomomi sighs in annoyance, her cheeks relaxing into a slightly bitter smile, "Besides, it's not that big of a deal. Tomorrow I want to go out and have fun in the city for the first time in a long time, so I want you to accompany me.

..... something more normal than I expected .....? However, the opponent is Tomomi, who is as powerful an opponent as a veteran politician in terms of black-heartedness.

"Oh, that's the extent of it."

It is still too early to relax.

But if you just go to ..... for fun, isn't that a terrible thing by any stretch of the imagination .....? Maybe it's naive of me to think so, but seeing Tomomi's face as we face each other like this, hey.

I think it's because she is not wearing the mask of an honor student, but is more like a normal, bright girl who only peeks out when she talks to herself.

While scratching my head wondering what was wrong, I said, "Then you shouldn't confusingly call it a date. It's enough to just say, "Let's go out and have fun.

"Oh, a man and a woman at that age going out alone together, so it must be a date, right? Girls sometimes say "date" together, so I don't have a problem with it being used between friends."

But, all that lushness aside, ..... if you want to have some fun, why don't you just ask one of the upperclassmen to play with you? Or maybe you could just ask some of the other guys to join you."

I don't want to be distracted by that. I don't want to be so polite and choose my words with a clear face, just like when I'm playing.

As Akiharu nodded his head in agreement, Tomomi raised her eyebrows in a somewhat grumpy manner and said, "I told you it's a date, didn't I? It's not a very considerate thing to say to ask someone else out, it's not something to be praised."

"....., that's for sure."

(alt: "Mu ..... Sure, that's right." ) It is indeed terrible.

A playboy who is either naive and ignorant of women's feelings, or a playboy who wants to turn down a woman because he doesn't like her, is likely to respond a little better than this.

When I honestly expressed my remorse, Tomomi took the scowl off her face surprisingly easily and laughed mischievously.

I'm glad if I know. .... Well, it's not like we don't have an angle. It's my birthday soon, so I thought I'd get her a present or two as a thank-you for the date.

(alt: "It's okay if you know .... Well, it's not that I have no aim here either. It's my birthday soon, so I'd like to buy one or two presents as a thank you for the date." ) ....., so there's more to it than that.

Oh dear.

But, well, maybe it's not so bad.

Since entering Hakuryo, Akiharu has not had any youthful activities at all.

I like the good food they serve here, but I'm starting to miss the junk food that's bad for my health, and I want to check out the clothing stores and arcade machines.

I'm somewhat reluctant to do it with Tomomi, but I think it's much better than doing it with the other girls from Hakurei Ling.

You never know what kind of trouble they might cause if their out-of-this-world lifestyles were to find their way into the public's playground.

Especially blonde hair. Drill.

I have to buy a gift in return, because if I think this will make Tomomi's mood better ....., what kind of super low-life thinking is this?

How much do you care about this guy?

Well, anyway.

In total, it's not a bad story.

"Okay, I got it. Well, let's go somewhere tomorrow, shall we?

I have already decided on a place and we will arrange a car for you. We have already decided on a place and we will arrange a car for you, so you only need to bring your wallet.

I think it's a scary line to say "only wallets".

The atmosphere was filled with a sense of being watched.

When I nodded back with a subtle expression, Tomomi smiled and said, "Well, I'll see you tomorrow. Then, I'll see you tomorrow.

Then he quietly turned around and walked out the front door.

Looking away from his back ....., Akiharu scratched his neck, feeling an itch somewhere, and said, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry.

(alt: Seeing off his back ... Akiharu felt itchy somewhere and scratched his neck and said a little.

) "....., it's like going on a real date."

(alt: "... It's like having a date." ) I know that's not the case, but I'm going to add to it in my mind: "I know that's not true.

..... didn't you just hear the word "date"?

I said ..... to the voice of Todoroki asking quietly in the shadows of the lobby leading from the entrance of the dormitory. Let's go on a date.

In the same subdued voice, Kaoru affirmed.

In response, Todoroki twisted his body in an exaggerated manner and held his head as if in grief, and said, "Damn it, .....! When did you become such good friends with the Princess of Saikei? ..... I heard you've known each other for a long time, but I didn't know you were going on a date with her. ....?"

Shut up a little, or I'll lose you.

"Oops, Smansman. But you're doing so well for a date and ..... this nice exciting guy, Todoroki-san. You traitorous .....!"

So shut up. .... and Hino agrees.

(alt: "So shut up ..... Hino agreed." ) "That's true, isn't it? Even though Hakurei Ryôg has a great lineup, Saikei's princess is a top-class beauty, and she has a good disposition, so there is no reason to refuse her.

....., it looks like there was a little bit of a struggle to get approval.

(alt: "... It seems that I was rubbing until I consented a little." ) "Oh, that's just because Akki was cowed by the wind of cowardice. If you let him play soccer, he'll be looking for someone to pass to in one-on-one situations with the goalkeeper, I'm sure of it.

(alt: "Oh, that's just because I was blown by the timid wind. If I play soccer, I'm the type who looks for a passer in a one-on-one situation with the goalkeeper, absolutely." ) Unlike Todoroki, who nodded his head in understanding, Kaoru looked at the two seriously as they talked at the entrance and tried to catch their words.

A strange sense of obligation to gather as much detailed information as possible is pressing down on me, and I am moving my body.

Then, Todoroki suddenly said, "But it's surprising that Daichi is so careless with his teeth. I'm not sure if you're secretly in love with the princess of Saikai.

(alt: — Then, Todoroki suddenly said, "But it's surprising that Daichi is a turtle. Maybe Jibun secretly fell in love with the princess of Saikyo !?" ) Kaoru quickly dismisses Todoroki, who is fainting in agony from a palm strike to the jaw from below, and continues watching.

As usual, it will be back in business in less than a minute.

But still, ..... Hino and Saikai.

When I see them talking amicably, I feel a stirring in the back of my chest ..... that makes me strangely irritated.

I have nothing to do with whether those two are dating or going out, so there should be no reason for me to be upset.

But the coiling feeling didn't disappear, rather it swelled up, and Kaoru clenched her fists in front of her chest as if to shake it off. .... "..... Oh?

Todoroki, who seemed to have recovered, made a strange noise, and I looked at him to see if I could use it to silence him for the time being.

What's wrong with .....?

When I asked if I had hit him too hard, Todoroki frowned suspiciously and turned to Kaoru, "I didn't notice because you were so quiet the whole time, but .....

"....."

(alt: 「.....」 ) I wonder where Shikikagami, who was peeking in with me just a few moments ago, went?"

"....."

When Kaoru was told this, she finally realized what was going on.

I was surprised to find out that Shikikagami and Sanae, who had been watching the show together, had disappeared before I knew it.

Sister, sister, sister, sister! And a very, very terrible thing happened.

The first time she ran into the dormitory, she stumbled and fell down, and Sanae had to pick herself up, though she was wobbly with her vision.

It's a little uncomfortable, but nothing painful.

The damage was always so little that it seemed as if the screwups would never go away.

There is a strong belief that it is genetic.

As I was trying to get up with all my might, I was asked, "Well, well, well, what's going on, Sanae-san? You look a little like a crime scene with all the openings in various places, don't you?

My sister, who disappeared at breakneck speed the moment she came into view, came up to me and gave me some very helpful advice.

If you look closely, you can see that the bust and skirt of the maid's dress are torn or rolled up, and things that should be hidden are overflowing.

But that was not enough, so Sanae stood up straight and jumped into her sister's chest who was smiling at her.

"Oh my God, my sister, it's so hard! I'm sure Mr. Hino is the one you're talking about.

(alt: "Your sister is very, very difficult! Hino-san is Hino-san, isn't it?" ) "Mr. Hino, .....? ..... but more importantly, my clothes seem to be in trouble. ....

I'll get to that later.

The sleeveless shirt slipped off my shoulders as I grabbed it, and in addition, the front hook underwear was broken as if it had burst, but that should not matter as it is an everyday occurrence.

What's more important is that I just heard, "Tomorrow, Hino-san is going on a date with Saikyo-san, what should I do? I don't really know, but I heard that she likes you, so I felt like I had to do something about it!

Well, that's the great thing about ....., you have to take it before they take it. Since we're in the same dormitory, I think it's only fitting that we do a little night crawling tonight."

Just before my sister's reliable advice reaches my ears, I ask, "Can you tell me more about what you're talking about?"

How long have you been there?

When Sanae turned around at the sound of a high, hard voice, she saw a classmate wearing a luxurious vertical roll with his arms crossed and his expression drawn back.

The next day, the first night, the next day, the next day, the next day.

"So, where are we going?"

It's downtown nearby, but it's still a 20-minute drive from Hakuryo.

"Oh, I was thinking of going over there or ..... to hang out with the Todoroki before, but it's too far for us without a car, so I couldn't bring myself to go.

Muttering a sigh of relief, Akiharu leaned back deeply against the back seat.

It would take one and a half hours on foot.

The current obedience class has the physical strength to go back and forth ..... but I don't want to walk such a long distance just to play, and the demons are like, "Please give us a break."

I want to take it easy at least on my days off, because I have to give hard classes every day in the middle of the night, and I feel like crying.

So we talked about it, but without a plan in place, it was just left in limbo.

That's why I envy those in higher education who are able to get a ride out of the car like this. "Is this a BMW?"

Yes, it's a luxury car, one of the best in its class. You can tell by the comfort.

I mean, I can't imagine what it would be like to have a carpeted car.

When Akiharu said this with a sigh, Tomomi gave a small chuckle.

To be honest, when he saw Tomomi getting into the car parked in front of the main gate, Akiharu was reminded once again that his childhood friend was a member of the upper class.

The shiny white car and the bearded gentleman in a suit and tie standing in front of it bowed deeply to us, and we couldn't help but be awe-struck.

Although we are immersed in the Hakuryo brand, we are ordinary people, so it is natural and unavoidable for us to react in this way.

..... It's absolutely no secret that I almost got down on my knees to the level of a roar.

Tomomi, on the other hand, was magnificent and simply said, "Mr. Sawai, thank you for your hard work.

The celebrity space was accepted simply by saying, "I'm not a celebrity.

Although he was a former commoner, he was different from the rest, having spent six years in the lap of high society.

Still, it is strange that such sentiments naturally disappear when we sit side by side in the car like this.

The pink camisole-like shirt over her shirt and short denim-like skirt underneath wasn't very ladylike.

I was just imagining what kind of clothes Akiharu would be wearing, so I made sure that she wouldn't look out of place even if we were standing side by side. I knew exactly what kind of clothes Akiharu would be wearing, so I made sure that I wouldn't look out of place even if we were standing side by side.

(alt: "..... So that's it" ) Akiharu is dressed in a gray short-sleeved shirt with a few English tail printed on it and thin black jeans, so he may not feel uncomfortable even if he is standing next to me.

..... Well, it's better than being over-excited .....? Besides, "I don't think he'd be comfortable with the attention he'd get with his conspicuous clothes and haircut like some drillers do. But in his case, I think he's going to stand out no matter what.

For some reason, Tomomi turned her eyes toward us.

Is that what you want? But it seems like that would make it a hell of a lot harder to have a conversation with ..... What do you want me to do?"

"..... something."

He nodded his head and his mouth fell open.

Tomomi today seems to be in a strange ..... mood. ....?

I'm not sure if I'm going to be able to do this, but I'm sure I'll be able to do it. I'm pretty sure that she's planning to take that date worn by that guy in Sunohara.

"Yes, it's a very erotic, erotic, carnal relationship! I don't know why I'm saying this, but I don't think that's true, do you? I'm sure you're too shy and timid to climb the adult stairs yet. He doesn't talk much.

Well, that's good ....., but since you're going on a date in the heat of the moment, there's always the possibility that you'll make a mistake .....

"If things turn out that good, we'll have to go to ..... Oh, no, I'll take that too! You forgot to bring your digital camera for recording!

I was walking around town once and I was asked, "Are you interested in working on TV? I'm sure you're interested, aren't you? There's a good job out there where you get paid to be on TV, and it's a good job in many ways. In many ways, it's a very tasty job. I was scouted by a scout, but while he was explaining the job, I was being videotaped the whole time, which made me think something was wrong. Why did that scout say "appear on TV" instead of "appear on TV?"

Oh, that must have been a job to shoot footage that couldn't be broadcast on terrestrial TV. .... What kind of a situation is that, so dangerous and full of eroticism? Please explain in more detail and with more emotion.

Shut up, you guys!

When Selnia's patience finally ran out and she yelled at them, the two men, who had been making an adulterous racket, shuddered and kept their mouths shut.

However, the subsequent reactions are different.

Shikikagami Sanae shrinks her body and looks around as if she were a farmer who has been captured by aliens, while Todoroki Shingo looks in the direction of the day after tomorrow, whistling with a blank expression on his face.

There's no ..... at all.

Selnia muttered and let out a breath to drive away her frustration.

I have to have a certain attitude when I get into someone else's car. .... Why do I have to share the ride with you guys?"

Yes, it wasn't that I was working with the two students in the obedience department.

Based on the information I heard from Sanae, who seemed to be in a tight spot, I left my car at a position where I could watch the main gate of Hakurei Mausoleum from before 9:00 this morning, and Selnia was staking out the place in the car.

Why?

And "For what?"

I had no reason in my mind to do so, but was motivated by a sense of obligation to do so.

Thirty minutes passed, an hour passed ....., and two hours passed, leaving me impatiently wondering when those two would show up.

Coming out of the front gate were not Tomomi Sayakyo and Akiharu Hino, but a combination of Todoroki and Sanae, a combination that I don't understand.

The roar of the car alerted him to the fact that Selnia's car was there, and he pushed his way into the car.

Just as I was about to complain loudly, a car stopped in front of the main gate, and Tomomi and Akiharu showed up immediately afterwards.

Although we have no choice but to ride together in this way,..... Selnia, of course, is not happy about it.

I glanced sideways at Todoroki, who had forcibly created this situation, and his mouth barely lifted up as he said, "You don't have to make such scary eyes at me, you know. We're cooperating with each other because we have the same goal.

..... Who are you and who are you supposed to be with? I just thought it might be nice to get out on the town once in a while.

I saw Miss Selnia heading for the front gate, but that was more than two hours ago, right? I saw Miss Selnia heading for the front gate, but that was over two hours ago.

"Ugh ....."

Selnia is at a loss for words and drops to her knees at the sight of this unexpected eyewitness testimony.

But it was only for a moment, and within the limits of deception, before he recovered and said, "..... that's because I forgot the ....."

I've been watching from inside the main gate since that time. I should have seen no one except Shikikagami, right ....."

You're acting like a little... .. stalker... ..!

(alt: "Well ....." Imitate something like a stalker ...!" ) I don't like the idea that I'm a stalker when I just did the same thing to your daughter. I'm simply acting out of curiosity because I wouldn't want to miss out on something so interesting.

Before Selnia could argue with him, he said, "Whatever the reason, it's still the same thing you're doing, or rather, it's a worse reason for a human being.

Todoroki's gaze shifted to Sanae and his smile became even deeper.

"But Shikikagami seems to be working for a different reason than I am.

I didn't know what to do, so I talked to my sister about it, and she advised me to watch Hino-san while she's on a date and grab her if I see an opening. ....

(alt: "Wow ... I didn't know what to do, so when I consulted with my sister," I'd like to see Mr. Hino on a date and abduct him if there is a chance. " I got some advice ... " ) That's not advice, that's kidnapping advice!

The out-of-the-ordinary remark started to give her a headache, and she put her palm to her forehead and let out a sigh.

Truly, my classmates haven't changed a bit.

It may seem strange to expect change after only half a year of schooling, but after the hardship of the family's downfall and his decision to take responsibility for the family, he should be able to see at least a glimpse of his growth. In addition, they easily accept the influence of others.

He is a truly troublesome classmate, who is so gullible that he will not give up on you even if you cause him a lot of trouble. ....

(alt: It's easy to be fooled, and if you leave it alone, you're likely to fall into a situation where you can't even see it, so even if you suffer some inconvenience, you won't feel like letting go ... It's a really embarrassing classmate. ) It is highly doubtful that Sanae really likes Akiharu Hino, but she must have a good enough reason to take action.

She is not concerned with the details of logic, as she only sees what is in front of her, good or bad.

Trying to find a way to get the money back.

I will not question the validity of your actions. But what's with the outfit?

"Oh, what do you think of this? It's cool, isn't it?

Saying this, Todoroki proudly put on his sunglasses.

In case you haven't noticed, it's not at all uncool.



The black suit and sunglasses completely ignore the summer season, and the fact that the person wearing them is so frivolous makes the impression even worse.

However, what Selnia does not understand more than that is Sanae.

Shikikagami: ..... Why are you wearing a maid's outfit?

What? Because I've gotten rid of most of my clothes. ....

If that's the case, why don't you borrow it from your sister? You are going out of Hakuryo and dressed like that on your day off. ....

I'm sorry to hear that, but my sister and I don't have the same taste in clothes ..... and since it's a school uniform, it shouldn't be surprising if she wears it when she goes out!

(alt: "Well, even if you say that, my sister doesn't have a hobby of clothes ... and because she's in uniform, it shouldn't be strange to wear it when she goes out!") I'm sure that's true for a normal uniform, but a person going to a playground in a maid's uniform is just plain weird!

(alt: "It's true that it's the case with ordinary uniforms, but it's strange to think of people who go out to play with maid clothes!") Selnia's head really started to hurt, and she let out a deep sigh as her shoulders slumped in anger.

..... I really don't know why I have to spend my life with these two people.

Tomomi Saikei was probably having a pleasant conversation with Akiharu Hino in a car a few dozen meters ahead of them. .... In contrast, Selnia was in the mood to go home right now and have an unfaithful sleep, and she glanced gloomily out the window.

(alt: I'm sure that in a car that goes a few tens of meters away, Saikyo Tomomi is having a joyful conversation with Akiharu Hino .... Compared to that ... I feel like I want to go home and sleep unfaithfully. In the fall, Selnia melancholy turned her gaze out of the window. ) The scenery seen from the car window has already become more chaotic, and we know that Sunohara, the nearest downtown area from Hakuryo, is just around the corner.

It's still ridiculous to come all the way here and go home.

"Well, you see. Rather than staying with Miss Selnia alone, it would be more useful in an emergency if she were with us, anyway.

..... What is that, when the time comes? Are you saying that you will be a shield when thugs show up?"

Even if it wasn't such an emergency, ..... it would be hard for a lone lady to get picked on so loudly, wouldn't it? What's with the clothes that show off your cleavage so much? If you show off your cleavage, I'm sure guys will come up to you in droves.

"....., you're a big help to me."

(alt: "... Hmm, it's a big help." ) Selnia responds to Todoroki's subtly sexually harassing words without hesitation, but inwardly she says, "That may indeed be the case.

The company acknowledged that it was "a good thing" that the company had been able to achieve its goal of "a high level of quality.

There are many men, both domestic and international, who approach me.

If you are alone in the city, you will definitely be approached within minutes.

Although I have already acquired the skills to deal with them, I may lose my target if I am distracted by them, and they may find me if I make a fuss.

In this respect, their presence certainly helps.

If there were only two women, but if there was only one man there, the chance that he would call out to her would be greatly reduced.

And, yes. Even if Akki and the others find us, if I and Shikikagami are with us, we can just say that we came here to shop and we'll get away with it.

"..... So you're saying I'm sending you guys with me as baggage handlers?"

Yes, that's right! It's better for us. If it was Miss Selnia who was leading the group, Akki wouldn't be so angry. If only Shiki and I are found, I don't know how much trouble we'll get into later.

(alt: "Yes, that's right! It wouldn't be convenient if that person was here. If the leader was Miss Selnia, I wouldn't be so angry. If only I and the Shikikagami were found, later. I don't know how terrible my eyes will be. " ) It would have been reassuring if Daichi had come with me, but he told me he didn't want to go to ....."

Sanae muttered something regretful, to which Todoroki responded, "Not at all.

The company agrees with the statement "I agree with the statement.

I think he has a soft spot for Daichi. If he had come to me, there'd be a lot less chance of me beating him up later. ....

(alt: "For some reason, it's sweet to Daichi. If he's there, the chances of being hit by a boco will be drastically reduced ..." ) The power relationship in the education department was somewhat apparent in the wistful words of the students.

It seems that before long, that crude, commoner transfer student has secured a position of his own.

..... though you don't seem to be aware of it.

The first thing that comes to mind is the face of Akiharu, who has bad eyesight and a bad mouth, and then Tomomi Saikei comes up beside him with a friendly smile.

I felt stressed and ..... resigned, wondering why I should be the one to feel such frustration and uncertainty.

I understand. It is with great reluctance that I allow you to accompany me.

"Oh, really?"

"Wow, ..... it's been so long since I've been out with Selnia, I'm so glad!"

Todoroki looked happy, and Sanae looked strangely pleased, but Selnia said, "However..."

I hope you don't misunderstand me," he said, holding out his palm. I'm only concerned about whether or not those two will do something to tarnish the customs and traditions of Hakuryo, and whether or not they'll date or get married is not my concern.

The car stopped by the entrance of the arcade, dropped off Akiharu and Tomomi, and drove away.

In the station area, there are young people around the same age as us here and there, probably because it is summer vacation or because it is just before noon.

There were signs of famous chain stores, and that alone was very nostalgic.

However, ..... I am always nervous when there are only two of us.

No, well, just a little bit.

I understand that what I do is not so different from what I do with my male friends.

And although the gap between us is long, we have known each other since childhood.

Moreover, she was a young lady who could speak well, a rarity at Hakuryo.

She became a rich young lady after her parents remarried, but nothing has changed fundamentally from the past.

..... It would have been helpful if she could have been a little more mature and round ..... but it's better than worse, right .....? As I was thinking about this, Tomomi, who was stretching out of the car probably from the feeling of freedom she felt after getting out of the car, spun around and looked at me, "So, where shall we go first? It's a little early for dinner, isn't it?"

I'm not too hungry. Besides, I don't know where there is anything, so why don't we just wander around?"

Yes, let's go with that. Even downtown is small compared to Shibuya and Shinjuku, so it shouldn't take us too long to go through the whole area.

Tomomi then quickly walks away.

It is not so much that they are quick-tempered or anything, but that they seem to casually take the initiative.

In any case, Akiharu has no objection since his proposal has been adopted, and he begins to walk after them.

But ..... Tomomi's guy.

While they say they are on a date, they do not do anything sexy.

It's not that I was expecting it, or that it would be a problem for me to do such a thing.

I just thought it didn't look like a date at all.

I'm not sure if it's a good idea or not, but it's a good idea.

(alt: —The moment I lined up side by side thinking about that, Tomomi turned to a mischievous smile. ) "Hmmm..... Akiharu, perhaps you want me to hold your hand?"

"No, ....., that can't be right! Don't be stupid!"

"Well, I think you're right on target. Look, I asked you out, so I can at least cross your arms.

..... No, that's okay. It's hard to walk, and it's too hot.

(alt: "... No, that's fine. It's hard to walk and it's hot." ) With a sigh and a curt refusal, Akiharu shifts his gaze from Tomomi to the cityscape.

I was a little nervous inwardly, but I should have been able to fool them.



Well, at this age, it would be strange not to be happy to be able to get close to someone who is more than just a little bit cute, but after all, it is Tomomi.

I don't want to be taken advantage of any more than I already am, and I'm sure that behind this seductive attitude lies a scheme that I don't understand, so I'm going to leave no stone unturned.

(alt: I don't want to grasp the weakness any more, and there must be a plot that I can't understand by myself behind the tempting attitude, so in the direction of no tatari to the untouched god. ) ..... Even so, there is a part of me that is disappointed, which reminds me of how useless men really are.

If I'm tempted one more time, I'm going to get lost, and if he sticks to me without question, I probably won't be able to shake him off.

Well, it seems that such worries are groundless.

Tomomi's eyes were shining at the sight of the city of Sunohara, and she seemed to have forgotten about the conversation they had just had a while ago.

With a vague feeling of half relief and half dissatisfaction, Akiharu also turned his gaze here and there in the arcade.

It is not only shameful but also irritating that I am the only one who cares about myself.

But ..... It's just a typical townscape, but that makes me feel very safe.

I am reminded that I am a commoner, as Selnia says, and that I feel so at home in the mundane world.

And that makes me a little happy.

Wanna come in over there?"

I was called at just the right moment, and while I was a bit nervous inside, I remained calm and looked at the building Tomomi had indicated with her gaze.

More than twice as wide as the general store next door, the building's bright signage and overhanging display of casinos make it easy to see what the store is all about.

In addition, the moment she recognized what that place was, Akiharu felt her body temperature rose a little.

Arcade or .....!"

"It's pretty big, huh? It's three stories tall. .... Oh, and it has a basement.

Tomomi's voice also sounded bouncy.

Although the number of female customers seems to have increased compared to the past, the arcade is still more of a male hangout.

Tomomi is no ordinary woman, or perhaps she is hungry and hungry for stimulation.

Well, as for Akiharu, it doesn't matter either way.

The point is that both sides want in without complaint.

That is important.

"So, do you want to come in for a bit?"

Let's go in. Let's go to ..... for fighting games!

What's the word? Gaming? ..... Hey, wait a minute, Tomomi!"

Tomomi rushes into the arcade ahead of Akiharu, and Akiharu follows her into the arcade. Down the stairs to the basement, we found a relatively bright and open space with dozens of chassis arranged in a neat row.

Compared to the arcade Akiharu used to frequent, it is tidy and not too uncomfortable.

Well, sometimes the noise and the subtly murky air can be rather calming.

I thought it would be empty before noon, but a third of the tables were filled.

Especially at the one-credit table for 50 yen, there are people waiting in the back for their turn.

In this atmosphere, Tomomi looked around the floor with a bright smile and a curious look on her face and said, "Wow ....., I didn't know it was like this. You know, you're playing against the person sitting on the table across from you, right?"

"Yeah, but ..... you've never been in an arcade?"

There are casinos, though. I was banned from the arcade when I was little, right? After my mother remarried, I was not allowed to do so often, and after junior high school I lived in a dormitory at Hakurei Ryo. I never thought of going to a place like this alone on my occasional vacations.

I see.

It makes sense now that you mention it.

Arcade games are usually a somewhat intimidating place for a woman to go alone, especially if she's a young lady.

Considering his outward appearance, he would definitely be concerned about his physical appearance.

For Tomomi, who also enjoyed the kind of fun men like to have, the arcade was the one playground she couldn't go to even if she wanted to.

The unique atmosphere, the intense sound and visuals, and the easy-to-understand struggle of the battles must all be very appealing.

Then, as a pioneer, I should show you an example: "Oh, there's a new Endless Fall! Hey, Akiharu, let's do that one!"

Tomomi then quickly approaches the stand.

Akiharu, who had lost the initiative, sighed in spite of everything.

Just when you were about to take action with the best of intentions, that childhood friend of yours was there.

How much action and leadership is about to overflow.

Well, Akiharu was interested in Tomomi's game, too.

I heard a rumor about a new E.F. .... coming out in the summer."

Endless Fall" appeared in arcades last spring.

It was a fighting game that exploded in popularity, and Akiharu played it many times before joining Hakurei Ling.

It even spread to the dormitories at my former school, where tournaments were even held using home video game consoles and LCD TVs that were secretly brought in.

The game is basically the same as a normal fighting game, but as soon as the game starts, the ground collapses and the player falls to the ground, and if he or she is in a higher position than the opponent at the moment the time is up, the player can ignore his or her health gauge and win the game. The game has become very popular because of its structure, which allows the player to ignore his or her health gauge and win the game.

If you have a new work, of course I want to work on it.

I had completely forgotten about it while I was at Hakuryo, but now that I have it in front of me, I'm itching to do it.

"Hey, Akiharu. Wanna try a little game?"

Tomomi, with a smile on her face that showed she couldn't contain her joy, cut in with the answer I knew I had to give.

Lifting the corners of his mouth to make a fearless smile, Akiharu said, "All right, you know what? But, don't hold back."

"Yes, I've done it before, so that's fine."

I'm not sure I'm going to be able to do it. Let's do it.

(alt: "Oh, do you want to do it?" ) Then, Akiharu turns to the opposite side.

When the player selects a character by inserting a coin at about the same time as Tomomi, the screen looks a little different from the previous game, with a new character that the player has never seen before.

Akiharu chose a well-balanced man with a long sword and a stuffed collar, which he used in the previous work, while Tomomi chose a tricky character, a small girl who wields a steel skeleton.

While she looks cute and has great one-hit attack power, she is also a troublesome character with many awkward and difficult-to-handle moves.

I feel bad for Tomomi, but I have a feeling that this is a convincing victory.

If I, who had been a fairly strong player in the previous game, put my best foot forward, I should be able to win 90% of the time.

So I guess I should go easy on you .....

I have no choice but to take this seriously.

No, no, no, I don't think I'm trying to make up for old grudges by playing games. It's just that Tomomi, who hates to lose and has a lot of pride, would hate me even more than when I won if she found out I took it easy on her.

So, yes, it can't be helped, because it's in each other's best interest to be serious.

Oh, no, I've had it.

I have no choice, so let's go seriously.

Wiping his sweaty hand on the lever with his jeans, Akiharu stared intently at the screen.

And "Ready..."

At the same time, the ground on which the girl was using a long sword and standing on a steel frame collapsed.

Akiharu was watching Tomomi from behind, dumbstruck, as she happily operated the levers and buttons.

The three-fight battle was decided with a 47-second straight loss by Akiharu.

Incidentally, the third one was a perfect loss without a single blow.

"..... なんて?"

"Hmm? Why, what?"

Tomomi asked in an easygoing voice, without taking her eyes off the screen and without stopping her hands from clicking.

On the other side of the screen, a ruptured steel skeleton splits the opponent's brain in two, and at almost the same time, a man's scream of grief can be heard from the other side of the table.

Akiharu understands the feelings of the stranger on the other side of the room.

I know exactly what I'm talking about because I tasted it myself not too long ago.

Because ..... Hey.

He is famous for being difficult to deal with, and his large swings create many deadly openings, but he seems to have discarded this disadvantage, landing one attack after another and crushing my attacks, until finally, I can't even escape and am hit in the brain with a gosuppan.

I would have been tempted to doubt my own eyes.

Those who were intrigued by Tomomi's strength challenged her one after another, but were then buried.

Moreover, to my horror, Tomomi's tone has gone up rather than down.

"How can you be so strong, Tomomi, with .....?"

I used to work on it at home during winter and spring break. During winter and spring break.

"....."? Because, what? The last home version came out at the end of March this year?

I met the chairman of this company at a ..... party at the end of last year, and he kind of took a liking to me. Two days later, the case was delivered to my house ..... and I took it right ..... and played it in my spare time because it was a good way to relieve stress. I was playing in my spare time.

"....."

(alt: 「.....」 ) Akiharu was immobilized by the heartwarming episode.

I was unexpectedly reminded of the power of the rich.

If they liked it, they would receive a game cabinet.

What kind of gift is that?

Tomomi, who apparently doesn't understand how shocked we are, doesn't take her eyes off the game screen, "There are a few things that are different from the previous game, and it's my first time playing against other players, so it didn't go as smoothly as I wanted. .... But yeah, I think I'm getting better at it.

(alt: Tomomi, who seems to have no idea how shocked this is, kept an eye on the game screen and said, "There are some parts that are different from the previous work, and it was the first time for an interpersonal battle, so it wasn't quite what I expected. But ... Yeah, I think I've become better than Oita. " ) "..... is that right?"

And now, let's test the performance of the new technique.

"..... No. .... is good. .... is good."

(alt: "..... No ... I don't think it's okay ..." ) Tomomi's gauge is only slightly reduced, while the other side is already on the verge of death.

Because we are on the brink.

Besides, no one will have an enclosure for themselves.

And then I suddenly realized.

A frenzied situation had developed, with most of the people in the basement gathered around the table where Tomomi was playing.

Tomomi's boyfriend seems to have noticed this, and his tension rises even higher.

And yet, the operation is precise, and the steel-frame massacre show only grows in intensity.

In the midst of all this, Akiharu, left alone and feeling depressed, sighs and mutters secretly .....

"..... I can't even beat this guy at competitive gaming? .....

The voice was drowned out by the sound of a cartoon-voiced girl hurling a steel skeleton at the crowd, which caused a huge smashing sound.



◇A surprise at the boxes stacked with machines and dolls that I had never seen before.

I was surprised to hear the loud and chaotic sound in the brightly lit restaurant.

Above all, Selnia could not hide her surprise at the atmosphere created by young people of the same age who were enjoying these activities as a matter of course.

..... This is the arcade, isn't it?

"Wow ....., it's my first time too. There are so many big, beautiful ones at .....!"

"Well, they're both beginners, aren't they? Well, I guess it can't be helped. .... But more importantly, I can't see Akki and the others."

The voice of Shingo Todoroki, which can be heard without problems even amidst the noise, makes Selnia remember her original purpose and she huffs.

That's right, I followed them here.

We search our surroundings, weaving in and out of machines that we can't quite make out what they are, but being careful to be as invisible as possible to the other side.

..... but no sign of them.

..... is a strange one. Surely you can find it here: ....."

It might be the second floor. It looks like there are three floors, and we can find them if we go up."

Yes, that may be so.

Thinking that Todoroki and Sanae may have been right, Selnia looked at the guide map.

It says what is on the first three floors and what is in the basement. ....

(alt: It says what's on the first floor, the third floor, and the basement ... ) It was difficult for me to make a decision because of the unfamiliar words.

Still, there are things to figure out, so Selnia points to the map and says, "It looks like there's a basement too. Are you sure you're not over there?"

No, no, no, that's not true. The basement is like a competitive gaming floor, so people don't usually go there.

"..... is that right?"

He likes fighting games, but if he can't play against other players, he has to take time to just sit in the back and watch. It's not interesting to watch someone who can't play. Even Akki wouldn't do something so stupid on a date.

..... that's what ..... is for."

I didn't understand it well, but it must have been like taking someone who had no interest in antiques to an antique market.

The world of the common people should be well known to the same common people.

So, for the time being, I think we should follow Todoroki's advice.

Okay, let's go.

With this declaration, without looking back, Selnia took the lead in going up the stairs to the second floor.

The second floor was slightly darker than the first floor and seemed to have fewer machines. However, each one is large, and some are even attached to musical instruments.

Selnia looks around with interest, wondering if this might be the rumored sensory game, and then her attention is caught by a cabinet.

What is that at .....?"

"Hmm? Oh, that's a dancing game. You have to take the steps in the direction of the blue arrow and wave your arms in the direction of the red arrow.

A mumbled comment brought an unexpected commentary.

Selnia glances sideways at Todoroki, who is smiling wryly, and returns her gaze curtly.

It's noisy and unrefined, but it may be convenient in its own way.

Well, I don't care about that now, I care about that game.

I have always been good at dancing.

She danced the waltz, jazz, and salsa, and also enjoyed ballet.

Although she hasn't had the opportunity to perform recently, she was the center of attention at a dance party in Italy last year.

I don't know how to play the other games, so I'm not that interested in them. .... But that sensory game is so exciting that I can't help but get excited about it.

(alt: I'm not so interested in other games because I don't know how to do it well, but ... That experience game is filled with hot things like this. ) That's not what I was going for ..... but .....

"From a quick glance, I don't see the two of you here, either. Maybe they decided to attack from the third floor."

"....., but let me ask you something."

(alt: "..... I will ask you one thing." ) "Oh? What is it? What is it? You can ask me anything you want! Yes, for example, my three sizes.

I don't want any loose-headed nonsense. How long does it usually take to get into a place like ....."

I'm sure it depends on what's in the arcade and what's in your wallet, so it's hard to say. .... Well, I don't think you'll get out in five or ten minutes, do you? There seem to be a lot of interesting games here, and it's been a while since Akki's been to one of these places."

If you trust the word of Todoroki, who has far more information about this kind of thing than I do, you won't be leaving the arcade anytime soon.

And since the stairs to the third floor are in full view of the sensory game cabinet, it should be impossible to lose sight of them as they descend to the bottom floor.

If so, ..... might be a good place to try for a bit.

Deciding to do so, he sneaked a look at Sanae.

It was obvious to me that she was as fascinated as I was.

Serunia thought to herself, "This is it," and then she coughed a little and said, "Shikikagami, you seem to care a lot about that game, don't you?

I can't imagine what it will be like, and I'm very curious about it. But..."

I will not tell you the rest of the story.

Well, then, I guess we have no choice! There you go, you indescribable commoners.

"Oh, what's this ..... about you being crude and me being indebted? No, it's fine.

That's "okay."

Although I am slightly unsure of the spirit of the roar that says, "What is it that you are doing?

Instead, Selnia took a bill from her purse in her handbag and said, "I will ask you to exchange this for money. And, since it's so much trouble, take the money you broke off.

"Oh ....., that's not a good tendency for a rich woman like Miss Selnia to be so carefree with her million-dollar bills, is it?"

I don't have any choice. I don't have a coin purse in my wallet.

Is there such a thing as a wallet in this world?

What? Isn't it normal to have a separate wallet for bills and a separate change purse?"

Sanae, who should have learned her lesson in the old days, made a brilliant young lady's remark, and Todoroki responded, "So this is the kind of celebrity you are ....."

He muttered to himself and wandered off in a daze.

When Todoroki came back after a while and handed me a 100-yen coin, he seemed to be displeased.

So Selnia smiled and thanked him in a gentle tone of voice for his generous gift.

Thank you very much. Will you continue to work hard from now on?"

"Heh, .....? Yeah, well, it's more like ....."

Selnia nodded her head in satisfaction at the stunned response, which was unusual for a man whose clothes are both a joke and a sexual harassment.

A lady of the first rank must be able to make the person she is working for feel comfortable.

As a daughter of an English aristocrat, it was an exchange that I should have been able to make.

Feeling better, Selnia heads to the dance game cabinet ..... and turns around before going up on stage.

What are you doing, Shikikagami? You have to do it with me.

"What? But I don't have any money or anything. ...."

Of course, I'll pay for it, since I invited you. Besides, I heard that you can play for two for 100 yen, so there is no need to worry.

I see... ..... I'll take your word for it then.

(alt: "Well, that's right ... Then, I'll be spoiled for your words." ) Then, Sanae went up on the next stage.

Selnia watches, inserts a coin, and presses the start button on the console.

Immediately, a high-pitched mechanical whirring sound, accompanied by lively music, caused the screen on the large front panel to change, forcing us to choose a style of play.

Press button to select two-player play.

Then, "If two players are playing, you can select two songs.

The message "I have a problem with the system.

Next, you are urged to press the "Decide" button if you want to do so.

Since this is her first time playing this kind of game, Selnia presses the button without understanding what is going on.

As soon as a loud sound is heard again, the screen switches to a vertical list of what appears to be a song list.

I think the number of stars is probably the difficulty level .....

The numbers should indicate the tempo.

By the way, none of the songs seemed to be familiar.

I'm having a hard time deciding which ..... to choose.

Um, Ms. Selnia. Try to make it as easy as possible, but not too fast. ....

(alt: "Oh, Selnia-san. For a song that is as easy and not too fast as possible ..." ) Rejected. Even if this is my first time doing this, it is not possible for me to make a low-level choice. It seems there are up to seven stars, and I'll start with at least four.

"What? Oh, no, man!"

Now, Shikikagami. You can choose your favorite piece of music from the four-star level. I gave her the option with the utmost kindness, and she began to make her choice, fiddling with the console with eyes that looked like they were about to cry.

As Selnia's mouth slowly dropped open at the thought of how broad she was, she heard a high-pitched sound effect.

Then the screen goes dark, and after a short time, the music is displayed along with an illustration, and the screen switches again.

Even though it's my first time in Selnia, I know what's coming next.

Preparations complete, it's time to get started.

Take a deep breath and look at the arrows on the stage.

This is easy because you just follow the directional arrows that appear on the screen.

The swing of the arm is apparently detected by a sensor, so you have to go under the sensor bar ....., but if you play normally, you should be able to reach the detection range naturally.

Still, be careful with the movements.

As I stared at the darkening screen, I saw the countdown display, and as soon as it reached zero, lively music began to play.

On the screen, blue arrows move from bottom to top.

Selnia timed her steps dexterously accordingly.

Since this is an unfamiliar song, be careful until you find the rhythm, and try to follow the arrows as precisely as possible.

..... But by the time my body warmed up, I didn't care anymore.

The waves of arrows flowing in and out of me leave me with no time to think.

At about the same time, my body began to remember the patterns of the steps, and I was able to move smoothly from one movement to the next.

It's a game with a song I don't know, and it only costs 100 yen, but it's fun.

(alt: It's a game that you can play for at most 100 yen with songs you don't know, but it's fun. )

The first song ended and the player ratings appeared on the screen.

Selnia frowns slightly when she sees this.

B rank ..... I don't have a choice. It didn't start out so well."

However, if you do it again, you should be able to get an A.

I will definitely get it.

Meanwhile, Sanae next to her said, "Hey ....., my eyes are rolling ....."

I wondered what kind of dancing he was doing, and he seemed to be unsteady.

The rating on the screen was F, the lowest possible.

Seeing this, Selnia remembered.

There should have been a rumor that more than fifty men had cracked their bones when she stepped on their feet at parties in the past.

Apparently, it is true, even if it may not be.

Although she was not happy about it, Selnia chose the next song to be of the highest level, with seven stars.

Although an A grade may not be possible, we would like to challenge the most difficult one if we are going to do it.

It is shameful for a member of the Flameheart family to be so timid about failure.

The next song will start soon, and Selnia will return to her standing position.

Before we knew it, a crowd of onlookers had formed around our dancing machine. There were at least 20 people in the room, and the density of the population was such that it seemed as if all the guests in the room had gathered.

This made Selnia gasp for a moment, and then she immediately smiled gracefully.

There is no reason to be afraid of doing anything in public.

She is not ashamed to be seen, but is proud of her beauty and attractiveness.

So the presence of an audience, while it might make you burn, should not scare you.

Then, as before, the song began after a three-count, and immediately after that, the crowd erupted in cheers.

The tempo is fast and the steps are difficult.

The waves of arrows flowing one after the other are confusing my mind.

.....

"Hoo .....!"

With a sharp exhale, Selnia makes her turn, clearing the step and swinging her arms at the same time.

The audience cheered again, and their mouths naturally fell open.

Indeed, the music is fast.

The steps are complicated, and if you're not careful, you could end up with a limp.

Even so, Selnia's familiarity with dance allows her to understand what kind of movements are required, so she is able to keep up with the music even when she hears it for the first time.

Don't worry about making mistakes; focus on keeping your rhythm and your body moving.



Wow, ....., that's awesome!  
"Hey, look at that ..... foot ....."  
Oh no. ...."

"Even under ....., a woman who is on a winning streak in the EF is ....."

The voices of the gallery can be heard over and over again, but they do not disturb us.

Rather, the elation of being watched makes every movement more acute, with nerves running down to the tips of one's fingers.

A second that seemed so long - a minute or two - passed in the blink of an eye, and the song ended with a slight reverberation.

Satisfied with her dance, Selnia wipes the sweat from her forehead.

My breathing is a bit uneven, but not to the extent that I breathe through my shoulders.

Monitor: "C" grade.

I was not bothered by this.

The dance should have been evaluated differently because it was judged by the machine's sensors.

The high evaluation was confirmed by the reactions of the audience.

There is no reason for me to feel bad.

As Selnia walked down the stage with a relaxed attitude, Todoroki, who had been waiting for her, approached her with a bright smile.

"Oh, good job! That was awesome!

Of course. Who do you think you are?

Wiping her sweat with a handkerchief from her handbag, ..... she responds, and suddenly, Selnia wonders, "What is it that I'm doing here?

"..... Hey, those date glasses there. What do you have there?

What Todoroki is holding in his hand is clearly a paper box.

I know you didn't have such a thing until just now.

"Well, you two gave such a good performance that the guys came out in droves, didn't they? So I decided to charge them a spectator fee and ..... turned out to be a big profit!"

"What are you doing, you son of a bitch?

When Selnia raised her voice at this unexpected comment, Todoroki, smiling with no malice at all, excitedly said, "A super dance unit consisting of a beautiful blonde quarter-haired girl and a maid! And they're both dancing to the beat, their ample breasts bouncing and bouncing so wildly they look like they're about to fall off, and their skirts are billowing up, making a dangerous duet of bare legs and garters. That's a lot of money, don't you think?

If you say anything further to undermine me, I will not tolerate it!

The ..... Mr. Todoroki is already down from Selnia's relentless elbow strikes, but .....

Selnia turned around and nodded to Sanae, who said fearfully from behind, "I know, Shikikagami-san, I'll put a stop to it.

"No, no, no, that's not what I meant.

If that's the case, it's torture! You must be saying that only after inflicting torture upon torture can the maiden's mind be stilled, right?

No, no! It's very dangerous to aim at a fallen man's head, Miss Selnia!

Selnia, who was about to unleash a kick to punish the obscene and indecent man, somehow desperately struggled with Sanae, who was pinning her down, and threw vindictive words at Akiharu, who was not here.

I blame him for all this discomfort! I've got a sudden cold ..... feeling right now.  
.....?

There may be a slight difference in atmospheric pressure between underground and above ground. There may be a mood problem."

"Oh, yeah, right."

That certainly makes sense when you put it that way.

Even in the same air-conditioned building, it is hot in the underground competition area, both in terms of the intensity of the players and the density of the population.

Or rather, it is hot.

When she ascended the stairs to the first floor, the space was so exciting and dense with excitement that Akiharu couldn't help but stretch her legs.

It was still daytime during the summer vacation, and the fact that the event was so exciting was undoubtedly due to Tomomi's performance.

After the twenty-one players had gone through a raging wave and there was no one left to challenge them, Tomomi seemed to get bored and left her seat, deliberately losing to a computer opponent. .... It was a bit interesting to see the faces of the men on the floor.

(alt: Tomomi seemed to get tired of the fact that there was no other person to take on the challenge without being angry, so she intentionally lost to the computer partner and left her seat ... The faces of the men on the floor. When I saw it, it was a little fun. ) I'm sure that deep down inside he wanted so badly to talk to her.

(alt: That must have been something I wanted to talk to inwardly. ) If I had been standing there talking to someone, one or two of them might have seen the flow of the conversation and entered into it.

Tomomi is also quite beautiful and it's rare to find a woman who can play the game so well.

In fact, the number of women who play arcade games is quite small.

As she was thinking this while looking at her childhood friend with a clear expression on her face next to her, two men came down from the upper floor, and Akiharu avoided them by moving to the side so as not to get in their way.

I was listening to them talking in a strange and excited way at .....

"Amazing, isn't it! A beautiful, sexy gringo with a great body and a cosplayer dancing... was that some kind of ..... event?"

Maybe that's right. There was a collection, too. Well, 500 yen is a small price to pay for seeing such a great show, and if there's another one, I'd like to come again.

I mean, I'm sure they'll make some kind of announcement or something. .... But still, it's a nice sight to see."

(alt: "Hey, it's an announcement, isn't it ... Anyway, I could see good mon." ) The happy or rather excited couple disappeared out of the store.

After looking away, Akiharu shifted his gaze to the information board hanging on the wall.

They have sensory games and gun shooting on the second floor. Shall we go?"

You have a different goal in mind, don't you? I'm sorry, but I'm hungry, so it's time for dinner."

"..... I don't know what you're talking about, but I got it."

(alt: "... I don't know what it is, but I understand." ) The first time I saw her, I thought, "I'm not going to be able to do that," and then she said, "I'm not going to be able to do that.

I tried to keep my tone as casual as possible, but it was too obvious.



I could not control my desire to watch the show, which may have been the reason for my defeat.

Tomomi is not at all concerned about this man's adolescent mode of thinking, and she quickly leaves the store.

While being pulled back by the thrilling space that seemed to be unfolding on the second floor, Akiharu had no choice but to follow suit.

As soon as the automatic doors open, the hot, humid air clings to your skin and fills you with the desire to stay inside.

I'm glad I wasn't in the butler style of the school uniform.

If I had been dressed in long sleeves and long pants, I would have never wanted to leave the store again.

Akiharu narrowed his eyes and walked out of the store to ..... "What's the matter, Tomomi? Didn't you go out to eat?"

For some reason, Tomomi, who had left earlier, remained motionless in front of the arcade. And they weren't waiting for us, they were staring at something with great interest.

What in the world is going on?" When Akiharu looked in her direction, following her line of sight, she said, "..... Crane game?"

"....."

(alt: "....." ) While staring at one of the several crane game machines lined up under the eaves of the building, Tomomi's face suddenly became difficult as she asked, "I want that one. .... Akiharu, can you get it?"

"Is that that thing at .....? That penguin-looking thing?"

"Yes, that's it. It's called "Mr. Penn Army."

I don't know what to make of the name.

(alt: No, what about the naming? ) I'm not sure if I'm a good fit as an unattractive penguin in a military-issue outfit, but ..... Penn, Mr. Army, is a good fit.

(alt: It's a penguin wearing military uniform and has a bad eye, so if you say it's fitted, it's fitted, but ... Penguins. ) It looks kind of shabby, and I don't think I want this stuffed animal at all, but Tomomi seems to like it.

There was no choice, so Akiharu approached the chassis and said, "Well,..... it's not jammed tight, and it looks easy to remove, but the problem is the strength of the ..... arm.

"I'm not sure, but do you think you can get it?"

I don't know. I don't play crane games very often. I don't really play crane games, and I've only tried a little at a time, rather than for the prizes.

(alt: "I don't know. I don't play a lot of crane games. Rather than aiming for a prize, I've tried a little bit of it." ) He replies by taking some coins out of his wallet, which is tucked into his back pocket.

It's three plays for 500 yen, so if you're lucky, you'll get it.

At least it's easier to pick up than a big box of figurines or an assortment of candy.

Okay, let's try it.

"Yes, please. I don't care what color the uniform is."

Hearing his unusually auspicious words, Akiharu inserts a coin.

After a rather silly sound effect, slow music plays and the buttons begin to blink.

I'm not used to crane games, but when I tried ....., the arm didn't seem so weak and I was almost able to grab it in a subtle position.

Akiharu's eyes narrowed as he watched Crane wander back to the house with nothing in his hands.

This is possible.

Even if the operation is not so easy, it might be able to be done.

Aiming at the same spot as before, he presses the button again, this time a little more carefully, using his intuition to compensate for the error in response.

The crane slowly descends and closes its arm with a slow motion.

"Oh, shit, I got it."

This time, the penguin successfully grabs the penguin's torso, does not let go, and goes up.

"Are you going to go? I told you, what is this?"

"Yes, keep going. Please, keep going until the end. ....

(alt: "Yeah, just as it is. Please, as it is until the end ..... Ah !?" ) Tomomi screams a little when she sees the penguin wobble at the very last moment, just before it falls into the hole, but ..... it's okay.

As Akiharu gazes at the stuffed penguin with confidence, it safely falls into the hole.

Tomomi's small cheer when she saw this gave me a sense of accomplishment.

Here we go.

Although she failed the third time she tried, Akiharu was satisfied with her accomplishment and took out the stuffed animal and presented it to Tomomi.

When I see them in front of me, they are still very ugly and unfaithful.

Maybe he's taking bribes behind the scenes, this Penn Army guy.

Tomomi still happily accepted it and hugged it, pressing it against her chest.

"Okay, thanks. Is it okay if I call this a birthday present?"

"Go to? It's okay, but ....., or is that okay? So..."

No, this is good!"

Tomomi then lightly kissed the stuffed animal that was lifted up to her face level, and then she left a hint of a smile on her face and turned her cheeks to glare at me. If you are like that, you will never be a respectable butler.

The most important thing to remember is that the best way to get the most out of your own home is to be a good friend.

The cost was 500 yen, and the time required was a little over two minutes.

You can't understand a woman's mind that says, "I'm not a woman.

Also, I like Mr. Penn.

..... Well, if Tomomi is satisfied, that's fine.

There is no need to go out of our way to make waves, and if they are happy, we feel good about it.

It's a little embarrassing, but I'm sure it will fizzle out soon after being immersed in this hot, humid air, so I'll just have to put up with it for a little while.

(alt: It's a little shy, but it's a little patience because if you're immersed in this hot, over-steamed air, it'll soon disperse. ) Tomomi put the bag in her shoulder bag so that her face would be visible, and turned her bright smile towards me, "So, shall we go out for dinner again? Actually, I've already decided where we're going.

..... If you're that uptight, I'd say, "No, what's my opinion?"

There was no way I could say that.

Akiharu silently nodded his head and began to walk with his childhood friend who was in a good mood.

With her arms crossed and her fingers tapping on her arms, she stares down the stairs, bracing herself for the chaos and the curious stares.

Sanae, standing next to me, looked at the store with curiosity and exhaled with admiration, seeming to enjoy it much more than I did.

To be honest, I envy them for having such an attitude in a place that is clearly away from home.

Taken together, the two of them were found immediately after they realized that Akiharu Hino and Tomomi Saikei were not at the arcade.

..... but there was a slight problem with the restaurant they went to.

The nation's most famous hamburger stores are completely new territory for Selnia, who was born and raised in upper-class society.

The bustling restaurant is somehow unsettling.

So we waited anxiously for the scouting party to return, and after a very long time, just under two minutes, the suspicious man in black suit returned.

They were on the third floor. We'll wait upstairs.

It would be better if we were on the same floor, but that can't be helped."

We stand out, as you can see from our mere presence here.

Sanae's maid's outfit stands out in particular.

And just in case Selnia had any doubts, I told her that I didn't want to be seen in a conspicuous way.

I have no objection to the idea of waiting on the lower floor because I am aware of the fact that I am not a member of the company.

It is much better than waiting outside in the sweltering heat.

I'm not sure what to do with the money, but I'm sure it'll be worth it. What are you and Shiki going to eat?"

I don't really understand what you are talking about. If you have a set you recommend, that's fine.

I want that one. I like the set that comes with the little toy!

"You want to order a set for elementary school students? Is this a challenge to me, who will inevitably be in charge of ordering them, or is it just a story ....., whichever it is, let's take it .....,!

With Todoroki, who was beginning to get a fighting spirit, on the other side, Serunia suddenly looked up the stairs and said, "Then I'll leave the ordering to you. We'll take our seats upstairs.

Oh, yes. Let's do our best to occupy it!"

While inwardly smiling at Sanae who was clenching her fist in a tight fist, Selnia was about to go upstairs at ....., but then a voice arrived, telling her to wait.

"Okay, but don't do anything rash, okay? I don't want any more disturbances like the one we just had."

I know! And that was an ..... accident!

With her voice hushed and yelling, Selnia recalls the incident at the arcade.

Yes, it was just a bit of curiosity.

I was intrigued by a game called "gun shooting," where you use a toy in the shape of a gun to knock down monsters on a monitor, and I wanted to try it out.

Since I couldn't do it alone, I invited Sanae to join me, and together we were supposed to defeat the evil creature. .... Hence, the two of us were supposed to defeat the evil creature.

(alt: It's nothing to do alone, so I invite Sanae to defeat the evil monsters together ... I should have. ) Despite having seen how to play the game properly, Sanae's lack of shooting sense and the realistic and powerful images of the monster caused her to fall into a state of panic, and she was so panicked that she seemed not to heed the advice of Todoroki and herself.

Even Selnia was stunned.

I never thought it would come to that.

It is true that with Sanae's power, it would be more effective to hit her with the gun itself rather than with bullets that don't hit her.

However, because it was a game, the three of them were dragged to the office by a blue-collar worker, and Sanae felt sorry for them as she watched, but Selnia managed to get them to pay for the game they had broken. .... Indeed, it was a difficult time.

(alt: However, since it was a game, the clerk who turned blue took me to the office so that all three of them would be dragged, and Sanae looked down and bowed to the point of pity, and Selnia compensated for the broken game. I managed to forgive him in the form of ... But it was certainly difficult. ) If Todoroki had not called his driver, Sasaki, who was waiting nearby while he was suppressing the other party's anger by getting down on his knees, he probably would not have been released so easily.

Sanae, as one would expect from a girl who had so easily broken so many things during her junior high school days, was a master of the art of bending and tearing down equipment and works of art.

The largest of these collapsed a building, so I guess we should say that today's damage was not too bad.

I'm not going to let her out of my sight, so I turned to Sanae, who had gone quiet, as if I were playing a charm, and said in the flattest voice I could, "I'm not going to let her out of my sight, but I'm going to make sure she doesn't get hurt.

Here we go, Shikikagami. It's lunchtime and it seems to be crowded, so don't be lazy or you won't be able to sit down.

I'll do my best! I'll do my best!

(alt: "Hello. I'll do my best!" ) Sanae responds with a strong vow to redeem herself, but .... this only makes Selnia more anxious.

How many times have we been glad she was willing to do that?

"..... that, be as quiet as you can. We're in the middle of a covert operation.

With that, she moved up the stairs to the second floor.

Sanae comes along a couple of steps later, but when I see her slipping up against the .... wall with her back against it, I want to curse my own words.

With a sigh, I arrived at the second floor to find that it was crowded as expected.

I was just thinking, "If there is a place for two people, there is no place for three people, but if there is a place for four people, there is no place for three people.

She sees four people of the same age, who have just finished eating, leaving their seats with trays and chatting, and she immediately takes their place.

I am the one who is the best at what I do. I wish some commoner would learn from my luck and dexterity.

Selnia stands there, muttering to herself ..... in a good mood.

I looked around in wonder, but the clerk was nowhere to be found.

..... Why don't you show up to wipe the table when the guests have left?"

Mr. Hino once told me that some fast food restaurants don't have the custom of having their waitstaff wipe tables on a regular basis.

What does ..... mean? There might be some leftover food that the previous customer overflowed, and you just leave it there .....!

The fact that she was almost anemic was a head-spinning experience for Selnia.

Perhaps the reduced workforce is what keeps prices low, and the fast turnover of customers may not be enough to keep up with the cleaning work. ...., but that doesn't mean we can forgive them.

(alt: Perhaps the reduction in personnel is achieving low prices, and if the turnover of customers is fast, the cleaning work may not be able to keep up ... But that is not tolerable. ) To be honest, I think the chairs should be disinfected and wiped dry, and at least that is what is done at Hakuryo.

I would have been more reluctant to do this if there had been wet wipes on the table, but there aren't even any. ....! As Selnia's anger was rising at the local rules, which were so far removed from her own common sense, she said, "Excuse me, I'll wipe it up. I'll wipe it off. Just wait a minute!

(alt: That said, this is ... at least if the table is equipped with wet wipes, it's reluctant to deal with it, but it doesn't even happen ...! When Selnia was angry with local rules that were too far from her common sense, she said, "Oh, I'll wipe it off. Wait a minute!" ) She walked quickly to the restroom before I could stop her.

It was fortuitous that we didn't bump into any tables along the way. .... "Thank you for your patience.

(alt: The one who didn't hit any table on the way was 倅 倅 ..... "I'm sorry to have kept you waiting ~" ) Selnia was so disappointed to see him back that she thought it was a mistake to think that he would be able to do anything about it.

Sanae was holding a wet paper in one hand, and for some reason, her maid's clothes and hair were wet.

The uniform was so tight against her skin that even the same sex would be embarrassed to see the shape of her breasts in relief.

"Shikikagami-san! What happened to you?

I was in such a hurry that I spurted out the water ..... but it's okay, I didn't break the faucet or the handle today, and it will dry quickly in the summer!"

That's not what this is about. Wipe it off.

When I gave her the handkerchief from my handbag, Sanae happily said, "Thank you very much.

He thanked her and began wiping her hair.

I wanted to tell her to cover her breasts, but I couldn't bring myself to do so because it would draw unwanted attention to them, so I said, "..... If you finish wiping your hair, just put it on your chest. Or rather, hit it.

Selnia sighs at the defenseless classmate who is still staring at her when she speaks to her in a commanding tone, and wipes the table with the paper she has brought with her.

I don't know why I'm doing this ....., but it's much better than having a filthy lunch.

(alt: I wonder why I'm doing this ... but it's much better than having lunch while it's filthy. )

After wiping down, go to throw away the paper and then go to the restroom to wash your hands.

It's hard enough just to eat lunch.

When I returned to the table, Todoroki had just come up the stairs.

As he dexterously placed the two trays on the table, Todoroki's eyes flashed as he looked at Sanae from his seated position.

Hey, did it rain locally in the store?"

..... Please don't touch him. I don't like men who pry.

(alt: "... Don't touch me. I don't like the man who snoops." ) I told him I was warning him, but he didn't ask me anything more than that.

Todoroki's expression of understanding must have been based on the fact that he was talking to Sanae.

As for Sanae, her attention was completely focused on the tray.

With a twinkle in their eyes, they clasped their hands together as if impressed and said, "Wow, ....., this is junk food! I've never had it before!"

Me too. .... but I'm not sure that's the right way to call it."

(alt: "I am also .... But I wonder how to call it." ) The literal translation is 'cheap food,' right? If you're not good at it, you're treated like crap.

Selnia has no intention of shunning it, as it is an excellent culture in the sense that it is easy to eat.

The hamburger wrappers and chips, or french fries as they are called in Japan, that are lined up in front of you smell appetizing.

Be careful of the calories and oil content, though.

Seeing that Todoroki had finished placing the burgers and drinks in their convenient locations, Selnia gave a small cough and said, "I'll have some then. .... What's with your eyes? I'm going to sue you for sexual harassment.

When we pointed a finger at the habitual offender, who was looking at us with a rapt gaze, he reacted with an over-the-top shoulder drop.

Just by looking at it? Personally, I'd have liked her to say something like, "Where's the knife and fork? I personally wanted him to say something like, "Where's the knife and fork?" ..... but I guess he just grabs them by the hand."

Of course. "Of course, if they serve dishes, but it's a kind of sandwich, right? If you knew that it was made for a quick meal, you wouldn't say such a silly thing.

"Say, ....., what's with this broken-dream feeling ....."?"

Todoroki sighs, apparently having had his own personal fantasy crushed, but there is no way he can be comforted and motivated by the shock he has suffered from such a thing.

So Selnia sniffs a little, picks up a piece of chip, puts it in her mouth and ..... ..

"What the hell is this? Call the chef!

"What the hell is going on? What's wrong, young lady?

There is nothing wrong with you! Where is the chef here?

There is no such thing! Calm down, calm down. What the hell is going on?

When Todoroki holds out his hand to calm my anger, Selnia gives him a sharp look.  
I lifted the bag of chips upside down and dumped it on the tray to let this man know that I was still oblivious to his presence.

Pointing to a small pile of chips, he said, "Look, sir! Look at that! They've been frying for a long time and they're soft!

"..... sure looks like it, but .....

While admitting it, Todoroki's expression of reluctance to agree with the decision also irked Selnia.

It would be better to continue eating the hamburger while looking like Sanae.

The irritated Selnia, the harasser, who doesn't understand enough, says, "What the hell? He looked as if he wanted to say, "Yes, but many of these fast food restaurants make their food on the spot, so it can't be helped, can it?"

It's fried food. Who is going to pay money to eat chips that have a bad texture and are only kept at a certain temperature?

"It's like that, the guy who can order it when it's freshly fried wins the system, or a win-win situation. ....

(alt: "Is that a system that can be obtained by those who can order at the timing of fried food or a winning team?" ) I'll ask you this: You order a pasta dish, and you don't complain about the noodles being stretched out? You say that you don't complain when you order pasta and it comes out limp and mushy, while other people paying the same amount of money get pasta cooked to al dente?

As he tapped the table with a bang, Todoroki's face clearly showed signs of agitation, and he began to mumble something as his gaze wandered around the room.

That's ..... don't complain. .... that? Then why are fries .....

Please observe. You have every right to make a complaint.

I know, I know, but ..... I'm wondering why I feel like I have to be such a defender. ....?

..... Why ....."

Selnia seems to have understood and smiles a victorious smile.

Yes, it is the common people's perception that is wrong.

Why do I have to restrain myself?

At any rate, there is no one to stop Selnia now.

Now that the small, flimsy barriers have been removed, it's just a straight shot to the office.

If the chef is not available, we will just complain to the manager! Where is your office?

"Wait a minute, Miss Selnia, we're in the middle of monitoring a date... .. it's not a good idea to cause a scene!"

(alt: "Well, please wait, Mr. Selnia ..... Mogu ..... We are monitoring the date ..... Mogo ..... Mogu ..... Hmm, it's not good to make a fuss! " ) "Can you please tell me if you want to stop or eat?

But these fries are so soft and greasy and so delicious, don't you think?"

"Oh, my God, even your taste buds are off, aren't they?

Selnia resisted the urge to scratch her head and slammed the table down again on Sanae, who was making such a silly comment with a serious expression on her face.

I can't get anywhere.

(alt: I don't know where the office is, but if you go to the first floor, there will definitely be a clerk, so you can catch the appropriate one and ask. ) Once she's made up her mind to do so, Selnia looks back downstairs, frustrated and on the verge of exploding, and says, "Sir, may I have a word?"

A skinhead man around 30 years old in muscle armor with a smile that would make a child cry if it were him, trying to force down his uncontrollable anger bursts.

Todoroki, who seems to have been captured before I knew it, is scratching at the algae with his large, glove-like hands as he is being held in an iron claw.

Of course, it's not that he was in a hurry to make a smile and say sorry.

I am Selnia Iori Flameheart.

He stays like that for a few seconds, until his expression clouds and his eyes glaze over, perhaps from the pressure of the situation, and then he speaks with the dignity of a dominatrix.

"Yes, ....., no, I mean, I am ....."

The roar of the crowd, which had been held sloppily in his face by a hand that was perhaps straining under the strain of the tension, was now saying, "Ohhhhhhhhhhh!

(alt: He makes an unspeakable voice, but he seems to be unable to afford to react to it. ) Hun  
..... is just a commoner.

This is a terrible overestimation, but it is a normal reaction.

Like Tomomi Saikei, it is rare that someone like Tomomi Saikei can completely own a position that is supposed to be a borrowed one.

I don't care if you're in charge or not at this point.

Selnia looked at the pathetic waitress with sharpened eyes, as if to hit her with a strangely increased frustration.



They seem to understand the difference between the two so completely that they look away from each other.

He is the type of person who can live a long life.

"Sir, please follow the large clerk to the office. You were planning on it from the start, weren't you? Well, the contents will be quite different from what we planned.

"Oh, the customer ..... that .....

I do not need to talk. Go on.

"Hi! I'll show you the way!"

In no time at all, Selnia walks away, letting the tense clerk take the lead.

I headed for the office to fulfill my goal, away from the screams of some sexual harasser or the voices of my clumsy classmates calling out to me.

..... is there some kind of noise down there?

"Oh, yeah. "Yeah, there's a little boy running around, isn't there?"

"Ah, that happens sometimes, doesn't it? Maybe they get excited because it's rare.

As Akiharu looked at the floor while munching on the last of his leftover potato, the noisy downstairs suddenly became quiet.

A parent or clerk may have warned him or her.

But how do you feel about it? From the way you were talking, it's been quite a while since you've been in a place like this, hasn't it?"

I haven't been there in how many years. .... I think I've only been once since my mom remarried, so it's been about five years. So it's been a long time.

(alt: "How many years has it been ... I should have been there only once since my mother remarried, so I wonder if it will be about five years ago? It's been a long time since I thought so."

) After a few finger folds, Tomomi also took a bite of the fries.

It should have been getting cold by now, but when I put it in my mouth, my eyes relax with delight.

The taste has declined considerably compared to when it was freshly fried.

So it was a little disconcerting to see them make expressions like that that made it hard to believe they were eating the same thing.

Is this that, or is the nostalgia correction working?

I'm sure that just because you've become rich doesn't mean you've been living in luxury, but you've still got a taste for good food, don't you? So, doesn't that mean that the food doesn't taste as good as it used to?"

"Hmm, I don't think it has much to do with it. Or perhaps it is because I usually eat only high quality, delicately flavored food, so this rough, rich seasoning may be fresher and tastier. Akiharu has been eating at Hakuryo for months, but it tastes good here, too, doesn't it?

....., I guess you're right.

(alt: "... That's right if you ask me." ) Taste may vary from person to person, but it seems to me that our sense of taste is influenced by the foods we ate when we were little. It seems to be correctable. .... But even so, it's hard to dislike something that tasted so good in the past.

(alt: "Preferences for taste may be different for each person, but it seems that the taste is greatly influenced by what I ate when I was little. It seems that the correction works, but ... Still, the ones that I used to feel delicious I don't really hate it. " ) Is that what ..... is for?

Since Akiharu has no knowledge of this area, he could only nod his head in admiration.

I feel like I can understand her when she says so, but on the other hand, I also feel like I am being deceived by Tomomi's words, which sound reasonable and appropriate.

As I was drinking the remaining juice, Tomomi seemed to have finished hers and stuck her tongue out and licked her fingertips ..... and laughed a little, as if she was about to blow out her mouth for some reason.

What's up?"

I think that no matter how much you think you've mended your act and gotten used to it, it's little things like this that reveal your upbringing, don't you? You really can't act like a natural young lady forever.

".....? To me, it looks like she's wearing a catsuit so well that it's almost creepy.

You don't mean that as a compliment, do you, .....?"

They are smiling, but when I hear their voices, I get a chill in my lower abdomen.

..... You are definitely angry about this, yes.

If I were to guess so, I would say that Akiharu's attitude has already been decided.

Well, you're doing great, I guess. It's not that I have any other intention or anything, it's just that, you know, I'm just trying to ..... I'm sorry."

(alt: "Well, you're doing well, yeah. It's not that you have other intentions, like this, purely ..... Excuse me" ) I tried to cover it up with laughter and slick words, but the pressure was so strong that it was suffocating me, and I ended up bowing my head in misery.

No way, I can't beat this guy.

Tomomi was still silently pressuring him, but suddenly his eyes narrowed, his expression relaxed, and he nodded his head in an eagle-eyed manner.

Okay, I apologize and I forgive you.

..... Thank you."

"Yeah, yeah, it's good that you're being honest. We both want to refrain from making things worse at school, don't we?"

..... yes."

Unlike you, I have already reached the bottom of the barrel, but even if I thought about it, I would not say it out loud.

Because I'm scared.

Instead, Akiharu sighs deeply and ..... puts his elbows on the table and rests his chin on his hands, looking at Tomomi from a comfortable position.

"Well, actually, I think you're doing a good job. To be honest, I wouldn't have thought of joining Hakuryo in your position.

Normally, I would not do something like that, like stepping into the enemy's camp.

I don't do it even if they ask me to.

And yet she pulls it off, her cheeks puffing up a little as if she's upset, "You know ....., don't you? I hate to lose. I'm sure I'm probably the best or second best in Hakurei Ling, even more so than Akiharu.

"Well, isn't there a difference between hating to lose and going into enemy territory?"

The same was true in my case. I couldn't stand the idea that I was just a crude girl who had come into the world through my parents' remarriage, so I decided to act like a lady to get even with them. I was just being stubborn.

..... It's amazing that you can work that hard with just your willpower.  
(alt: "... It's amazing that you can make that much effort just by your will." ) At the very least, I would have given up at some point.

I am aware that I am susceptible to being influenced in a subtle way.

"It wasn't that easy to get into Hakuryo, was it?"

Yes. I decided to enter the school when I was 10 years old, so I had two years to prepare. I started learning piano, flute, and Japanese dance, with a focus on language and etiquette, and started watching foreign movies with subtitles and listening to Western music so that I could speak English..... Looking back, I remember how hard I worked back then. I feel like praising you.

I'm sure you'll be able to find out more at ..... No, seriously, that's amazing. And you got good grades on top of that, right?"

When they met again at Hakuryo, Tomomi's title was "Head of the class.

It is.

Even though the school is for young ladies and they are throwing away their deviation score, I heard that there are some who are studying with a clear vision for the future.

It may not have been that difficult for someone as smart as Tomomi to make it to the top, but that doesn't mean it should have been easy.

In front of Akiharu, who was thinking about this, Tomomi opened her mouth with her eyes somewhat distant.

When you learn different things, you realize that you have to learn them all. I'm good with my hands and athletics, but I'm not as good as those who have been trained and trained in these areas since before elementary school. I try to memorize a lot of things at the same time, so I end up with a lot of half-measures, and since I chose the minimum number of things, I can't reduce the number. However, if you study, the starting line is the same. Since we were so far ahead, we could only make up for what we lacked in other areas.

"Do I have to lead with .....?"

Of course! I'm not going to be satisfied with being in line with the other girls from the very beginning. I have no intention from the beginning to be satisfied just because I'm standing with other girls.

"..... You really hate to lose, don't you, .....?"

Being reminded of this once again, Akiharu mutters to himself.

I don't know whether to respect him or be appalled by his competitive spirit.

(alt: I don't know if I should be respected or amazed. ) But yeah, it's true, it's Tomomi, right?

I guess you have to be that persistent to get revenge on the neighborhood kid general for the past year, right?

Even if that's the case, how can you live as a young lady in Hakuryo for more than three years and not change your roots? After being soaked in such a luxurious lukewarm water, isn't it normal to forget about your first love and just enjoy the life in the academy?"

I prefer to talk about comic books than about impressionist paintings. I'm not saying there's anything wrong with classical music, but it's more fun to listen to modern Japanese or Western music than to go to a concert or opera.

Huh. ....?"

I guess the biggest obstacle is that we don't have the same interests. .... There are many wonderful things in culture, and luxury brand products have better design, durability, and comfort than cheap ¥1,000 items, but I'm not a collector, so as long as I have enough to wear, that's enough for me. Instead, I'd rather be playing games like I did earlier, eating casual meals, and chatting about random things.

(alt: "The biggest bottleneck is that my hobbies don't suit me .... Well, there are many wonderful cultures, and luxury brand products are better in design, durability, and comfort than cheap ones with a uniform price of 1,000 yen. However, I don't have a habit of collecting, and it's enough for me to have a number that I don't have trouble wearing. Teru' ) "..... and you won't leave Hakuryo?"

That's where you have to be mean. I don't want to bother your father-in-law.

The smile on his face is the kind of smile that would easily fool a man who knows nothing about him.

I know a lot of things about myself, but my heart rate is still going up by accident.

Whether or not she noticed Akiharu's state, Tomomi stood up straight and said, "So, as I told you yesterday, today I'm going to thoroughly relieve my sorrows! Next is window shopping, and after that karaoke, right?

He declares this in a voice that is loud enough not to disturb those around him.

I would like to say, "Please don't give me window shopping in this hot weather," but I would be threatened and tortured and eventually forced to obey them, so it would be better to be mature and nonresistant from the beginning.

I've been thinking constructively and have come to the conclusion that it's not about being bad ..... and making excuses for my white-eyed rebelliousness.

Akiharu returned to his tray, gathering trash on top of it.

"Yes, I understand. I will accompany you wherever you go."

Despite my intentionally sarcastic tone, Tomomi just nodded her head in satisfaction and didn't seem to care in the slightest.

The temperature is said to reach its peak at two o'clock in the afternoon during the hottest day of summer.

In the blazing sun, with the asphalt almost melting, Selnia, with sweat on her forehead and a victor's smile on her face, muttered to herself, "I'm going to win this race.

I'm the one who is the best at this. .... To capture a target you've lost twice in this crowd is nothing short of the luck of the chosen one. ....!

(alt: "Huh ... I'm the one who's crazy. In this crowd, I can only say that there is a heavenly luck for the chosen person to capture a target that has been lost twice ...!" ) It's just a coincidence, you know. And by chosen one, I mean an erotic high school girl dressed like a call girl, sneaking around in the shadows of telephone poles, you know?

Oh, and Todoroki-san got kicked in the back of the head and slammed his jaw into the wall. .... That's great, Selnia-san, teach me that technique later!

(alt: "Oh, Todoroki-san kicked the back of his head and hit his chin against the wall ... it's amazing. Selnia-san, please tell me after that technique!" ) On the asphalt, "Ow! And it's hot!

Ignoring the sexual harasser and the classmate with the bright eyes who is making a silly comment, Selnia observes them from afar while brushing her sweaty bangs to the side in a graceful gesture.

It seemed that Akiharu Hino and Tomomi Saikei were in front of a cell phone store.

The two of them stand side by side, pick up a cell phone, talk about something, put it back on the shelf, and then pick up the next phone.

Selnia, who has excellent eyesight, can naturally see their facial expressions and the color of their cell phones from a considerable distance away.

The two of them are standing on the eaves of a house in this heat, peering at a red cell phone that they have picked up together.

Tomomi Saikei, pointing at the monitor and saying something, looked brighter than her usual clear smile, and Akiharu Hino, who seemed to be slamming the table, listened to her conversation as if he didn't mind the distance between them.

"....."

She unconsciously clicks her tongue and puts her hand on her chest to calm herself down.

For the umpteenth time today, I was frustrated, but this was one of the biggest shocks that gutted my sense of normalcy.

The composition of the two of them side by side, the distance between them as if they are about to touch each other unprotected, and the atmosphere that separates them from their surroundings and the world around them ..... makes me want to destroy everything and anything that is not to my liking.

But at the same time, I felt a kind of loneliness at not being able to enter into that space.



"Miss Selnia? Um, are you two going somewhere?"  
"..... huh?"

Selnia came to her senses when a voice called out to her.

As Sanae said, Akiharu Hino and Tomomi Saikei were moving from in front of the cell phone store.

I exhaled deeply to expel the bad air from my lungs, wondering what was wrong with me.

Still, the itchy heaviness in my chest has not faded, nor has the nagging sensation.

"What's the matter, miss? "What's the matter, miss? I almost gave you a squeeze, but then I thought better of it.

"Oh, it's nothing! I was just trying to figure out why you were looking at your cell phone, you filthy ....."

Serunia, who had inflicted a blow that would normally take several hours to heal, easily recovered and made a sexually harassing comment to Todoroki, who hurriedly replied with a few appropriate words and began to follow them.

The answer came back to me as a surprise.

"Well, since Akki doesn't have a cell phone, maybe he's interested?"

..... Is that right? In this day and age, how can .....

I also said that it would be convenient, but I can't buy it because I have to have a parent or guardian to sign the contract. Akki wants one, too, but..."

I was wondering if you also do not have a cell phone. My sister and I don't have a cell phone either because we can't afford the basic fee.

"Oh? You took a cell phone, y'know. I saw you playing with it in the dorm lobby before, didn't I?"

It's my old cell phone, and I can't call or text on it. But sometimes it would make noises and shake even though I wasn't doing anything with it."

"....., are you sure you weren't setting it up to do that on a regular basis, or are you receiving some kind of psychic thing ....."

..... Let's leave aside for the moment those who, for some reason, have begun to engage in ghost stories.

The first time I saw her, I thought, "I've never seen her before," and then I saw her again, and then I saw her again.

We returned to Hakuryo just as the high summer sun was beginning to set, and by that time, Akiharu had grown weary.

Physically, I can still do well, but mentally, I'm pretty lazy.

Perhaps because it had been so long since I had been in town, the gorgeous yet relaxed atmosphere of Hakuryo seemed foreign to me, and I found it a bit interesting.

Yes, yes, this academy was a strange place.

In front of the fairytale-like main gate, Akiharu stretched widely as she once again became aware of the strangeness of her school.

I was tired to a certain extent, and my throat was sore after a long absence from karaoke. .... "It was a lot of fun.

(alt: I'm tired as it is, and my throat hurts after a long time of karaoke, but ... "It was a lot of fun."

) When I honestly told her how I felt about the day, Tomomi gave a small smile and said,

"Yes, it was a lot of fun. It may not be possible right away, but let's go again.

It seems that they were satisfied with the results, which is a relief to us at Akiharu.

When he is in a bad mood, it is usually me who suffers.

Well, even without such calculations, I am happy to know that the person I spent half a day with was able to enjoy the experience.

I was a little worried on the way home because I didn't pay much attention to them, but from the looks of things, it seems my fears were unfounded.

We were walking along without much conversation because of fatigue, but when we reached the crossroads leading to the dormitories of the upper and lower classes, Tomomi stopped and turned around with her hands behind her back to look at me.

..... Then, thank you for your hard work today. I'll see you next time, okay?"

"Ah, good job. I'll try my best to make the next confrontation a little better.

"Yeah, don't get your hopes up. I'll be waiting for you."

With a smile and a quick retort, Tomomi walked away with a light footstep.

I was so impressed that I thought he was a real superhuman.

..... Well, I'd better get the hell out of here and take a bath.

(alt: "... Well, do you want to go home and take a bath?" ) Muttering to himself, Akiharu also heads for the dormitory.

I feel a little uncomfortable because it was so hot and I sweated a lot, and I want to soak in the bathtub slowly so I won't be tired tomorrow when I go to the Café Terrace for service work.

Yes, I am a bit of an old man.

..... But still.

Tomomi's guy said that today is a date, but "after all, he wasn't aware of that at all.

It's like they were saying something like that at the beginning, but either got bored or forgot how to set it up.

I do feel a little, millimetre by millimetre, disappointed that I'm not being considered as the opposite sex. .... But that's okay.

(alt: I don't think I'm conscious of the opposite sex, and I think it's a little disappointing in millimeters, but ... well, is that okay? ) I was able to recognize once again that I am the most comfortable person in Hakuryo, including my roommate Daichi, who is of the same gender.

And yet, there is a kind of moisture that is a little different from hanging out with male friends.

However, it is also highly toxic.

Well, whatever... - "A great holiday, huh?"

Muttering a few words, Akiharu smiled slightly.

◆ ◇ "..... 失敗した あ....."

(alt: ◆ ◇ ◇ ◇ "..... I failed ....." ) Tomomi arrived at her room in the dormitory and fell on the big bed.

Failure.

It was a lot of fun, but more fun than I expected, but ..... that's why it was a huge failure.

I had intended to find out what kind of affection I was feeling on today's date, but I had completely lost track of it.

I had a lot of fun playing with them.

I feel like scolding myself for what the hell I am doing.

This mission should have been important for your future as a young lady.

What is the matter with you that you carelessly forget that and enjoy yourself?

Even if they were having fun, it would have been fine if they had something to be nervous or embarrassed about like girls of their age. .... It was just like hanging out with friends.



(alt: Even if I gave up a hundred steps and enjoyed it, it would have been okay if there was something that made me feel embarrassed and embarrassed like a girl around the age ... I felt like playing with my friends normally. ) "Does ..... mean that this is just a fraternity after all .....?"

The mumbled words, "But .....

I want to connect with the world.

Tomomi understands it well.

It was certainly fun, just like hanging out with a friend, but that doesn't change the fact that it was fun.

There was a little spice to it, or a difference like a hidden flavor. .... It's frustrating that I can't be more specific about myself, but I am certain that there was something extra.

(alt: It's frustrating that a little spice is working, or that there is a difference like a hidden taste ... I can't express myself concretely, but only that there was something in the plus alpha. Sure. ) And I said this without any calculation or planning.

I was so excited that I wanted to play again, and I was even cheating myself into thinking about what I would do next time.

"Uu~~~....., you're getting more and more confused. ....

(alt: "Uh ~~~ ... I don't know more and more ..." ) Tomomi rolled over on the bed ..... and got up.

Then, I pulled a stuffed Penn Army out of the bag I was carrying today, held it up, and brought it to eye level with me.

The prize from the crane game that Akiharu took for me.

A stuffed animal given to me as a birthday present.

The sight of a penguin in a military uniform with a slightly dodgy eye overlapped with the sight of his childhood friend. .... ah.....

(alt: A penguin in a military uniform with a slightly unsightly look overlaps with a childhood friend — "..... Aha ....." ) After gazing at the scene in a daze for a while.

Tomomi found her worries to be so ridiculous that she couldn't help but laugh.

Yes, we already had the answer we needed.

After all, no matter what kind of feelings he has, there is no doubt that he likes and loves Akiharu.

And I want to be in a relationship.

I want her to like me.

It's not that I think, "I'm a good person to be with," but simply, "I'm happy to be with you.

The only thing he understands is that "the world is not a place.

If that's the case, then we should just continue to go along with the relationship without worrying about it.

However, be a little more aggressive than before.

There is a possibility that the feelings you have may not be just a favor, so if Akiharu is not conscious of you as a woman at that time, you will not stand a chance.

It doesn't matter to whom.

I don't want to lose to anyone.

"If they like each other, it can't be helped."

I am not the kind of person who would say such an auspicious thing.

Therefore, we need to be prepared to move when the time comes.

I don't want to lose: .....

First, think of the most obvious and troublesome enemy in the world today.

Tomomi, now in battle mode, sat up in bed and began to make her first move.

◇ ◇ "..... What's this?"

After saying this, Akiharu thought it was a dumb question.

You can tell by looking at them.

I am not a time traveler from the past.

This is a cell phone.

A relatively new model, a wine red folding type.

The question is, why did they give you this ..... "It's a return gift for a birthday present."

Tomomi then held out a small box.

Akiharu's expression became tense as she reflexively received the message.

I said, "I can call and text you now, so if you set up an email address, please send it to my cell phone, okay? I've already entered my number and e-mail address for now. Also, in that box is a charger and an instruction manual.

"No, ....., I mean ....., why ....."

Yesterday, you said you wanted one but couldn't afford it. So I'm going to give you a little gift. Just don't sign up on any funny websites, okay?"

No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no!

Tomomi is making her statement smoothly and half one-sidedly, and Akiharu is trying to convey his point of view in a louder voice.

However, Tomomi, who takes things at her own pace, easily kicked me out of the room.

"Oh, you're sure that's the phone you liked?"

..... No, I liked this one a lot, but .....

(alt: "... No, I'm sure I really liked this, but ..." ) I was glad to hear that. I thought it was a sure thing since it was yesterday, but you never know what might happen.

Tomomi's eyes narrowed slightly as she smiled softly in relief and said, "If you don't want it, I'll cancel it, but I can't for a year because of the contract. I don't want to get hit with a penalty fee, so I'm sorry, but you'll have to keep it for a year. I'll give you the basic fee for the service.

(alt: With a soft laugh, Tomomi squinted a little and said, "I'll cancel if I don't need it, but I can't do it for a year under the contract. I don't want to get a penalty, so I'm sorry, but I'll keep it for a year. I'll give you the basic charge as a service. " ) That's not the point.

There is a bigger, bigger problem.

Instead, she is trying to convey this to Tomomi, but Tomomi refuses to listen to her at all. Instead, she is looking like a one-month-old kitten with an adorable smile that would make a professional wrestler want to run away with his bare feet, "You don't get my affection, do you?"

Tëm, I was not able to get a good look at him, but I was able to see his face.

Tomomi left, leaving the cell phone in Akiharu's hand.

..... Happened suddenly.

While I was having a free time on the café terrace, Tomomi arrived.

I thought you might have come for a cup of tea, but then I saw this: .....

There was no pretense at all.

What am I supposed to do with .....

Akiharu looks down at the phone in his hand and is enveloped in a feeling of despair.

A familiar red cell phone.

I remember saying that I liked it because it was the same type and color as the one in the cell phone store where I dropped by yesterday.

But that's not the only thing I remember.

"....., what am I supposed to do with this ....."

Muttering, Akiharu reached into the pocket of his uniform and pulled out another cell phone, exactly the same one.

About 30 minutes before Tomomi arrived.

Selnia suddenly appeared and spoke with great vigor, then handed the phone to Akiharu as if to force it upon him.

It was a surprise, that's all I can say.

I don't know why he did it.

(alt: I don't know why I did that. ) I don't even know how this happened.

The one thing I do know for sure is that you can't go back to ..... either. ....

(alt: However, the only thing I know clearly is — "..... Neither can be turned back, huh ..."

) For some reason, I could neither retreat nor move on, only to find myself trapped in a bottomless pit.