

The large, spacious Baili Ling Library is a Tudor-style building modeled after a famous museum in England, and its interior is decorated with soothing antiques.

It was still early in the lunch break, so there were hardly any students around.

So no one saw the very conspicuous sight of a small girl alone at a large table for eight, and as a result, the girl was able to concentrate on her work without being seen.

If the students had been there, I could have sworn they would have been paying attention to me and I would have had trouble concentrating.

....., but it wasn't until just now that I was able to concentrate.

Mimana Sakurazawa, a girl with the physique of an elementary school student, frowned when she encountered a difficult problem and stopped holding her pen.

On the table where you are sitting is a large envelope with several fan letters addressed in lovely letters, and a sheet of A4 paper.

The paper in front of you is from the editorial department of a magazine, and it contains some simple questions.

The tricky question was the fifth one from the top.

Where is your favorite place to visit, Mr. Sakurazawa?

If you ask me what my favorite place is, I'll tell you.

Is it on campus? Or does it include off-campus? Minna purses her lips as she tries to sort through her confused thoughts.

If you want to include off-campus users, I wonder where is.

I think I like the ocean.

But I also like rivers. In any case, I can't name specific places.

(alt: But I also like rivers ... I can't give you a specific place name either way.) A vague "like So, I'm a little annoyed when people go into details.

And if it's only on campus, that's even more of a problem.

There are many things I don't like.

But I can't think of anything in particular I like about it.

It's not like I like my room in the dormitory either.

I feel safe, but I don't like the fact that it makes me feel less secure than my parents' house.

"..... umm"

(alt: "..... Hmm") A small roar can be surprisingly resonant.

Startled by the sound of her own voice, Mina hurriedly looked around to make sure no one was around, and let out a sigh of relief.

And once again, the challenge is daunting.

My favorite place.

My favorite place.

Favorite place to live - No.

But if I had to pick one, I'd say Mimana looked up and looked at the window behind her.

Large windows that match the size of the building.

Beyond the curtain, which is half hidden so as not to damage the books, is a small garden-like space covered with tall bushes.

The lawn is covered with a large stone monument, which is a secret place frequented by everyone.

Whether you like it or not, it's calming.

No one can find you, no one can talk to you, no one can talk to you.

I'm not sure.

(alt: I feel like that.) It may be the most fun I've ever had in my life to sit there and unobtrusively spread out my sketchbook.

....., but I'll be honest and say that I've never been to the back of a library.

If I write anything like that, it won't be a place where I can be alone anymore.

If someone else steps on it, you'll have nowhere to go but, or

There must have been other people in that place before.

The man was a bit pushy, and I accidentally fainted because of him. I felt very, very embarrassed.

(alt: He was a bit forcible man, and he accidentally fainted because of that ... I felt very, very embarrassed.) In less than a month, I've become quite famous as a first-year student in the Department of Adolescence.

A rude, misunderstood man.

But I don't know, I don't feel so nervous when we're together.? "..... hmmm?"

I'm not sure, and I can't think of any reason why.

(alt: I'm not sure, and I can't think of a reason.) That's why it bothered me so much, and I groaned a little as I plopped down on the desk like a Hail Mary.

"Partner card?"

This was the first time he had ever heard that name, and Akiharu couldn't help but ask him back.

Tomomi, who was sitting across from me, seemed satisfied with my reaction, smiled, and said, "Yes, the partner card. This is the real thing.

He then slid a card across the table.

Akiharu held it in his hand and stared at it, unsure of what to do.

A business card-sized piece of cardboard with the Hakureiryo school emblem next to it.

It was also written in the text.

Underneath, in a slightly smaller font, is Tomomi Saikyo, a first-year student in the Education Department.

There is also the name of a childhood friend in front of me.

If you look on the back, you'll see that it says something in small letters: "So you need this to take the equivalency exam?"

Yes, that's right. If a student doesn't have it, he or she can't even take the test.

"Oh,, that's what this is?"

I'm sure you'll be able to figure out what's going on.

(alt: Muttering, Akiharu remembers the conversation he had just passed this morning with his roommate.) I was having breakfast with Kaoru Daichi, my roommate, in the cafeteria of the student dormitory of the Department of Social Work, when I heard, "Oh, by the way, it's about time.

This was the first time I learned that I needed to pass a certain exam for the training department.

According to Daichi, once a month, there is a practical exam for only the students of the education department.

Akiharu knew of its existence, but he didn't know that he needed a partner to participate in it.

It's only been a few months since a very prestigious former school for young ladies established a training department to train butlers and maids to become co-educators.

There are a lot of things we haven't done yet, and we're still experimenting, but the partner system seems to be one of them.

Neither Kaede, the clerk, nor Shinkan, the head teacher, had explained this to me.

It's hard to believe that the teachers are so lazy.

What would you do if you didn't know such an important thing before the day of the event?

I'm glad that I've been able to get to know Daichi in a certain way, Akiharu thought to himself.

It's only in the past week or so that I've been able to make small talk with Daichi, who is so unfriendly and never talks to me.

I've been sleeping in the same room for almost a month, so it should be quicker, but the other person is a cool, all-around good student who doesn't talk too much.

There was a possibility that I might not be taken seriously for six months or so, so I should say I did well.

For what it's worth, I've been intrigued since Daichi told me about the exam in the morning, so I invited Tomomi to join me during her lunch break. partner cards?

It's a harvest I didn't expect.

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

(alt: Akiharu put the card he was looking at on the table and asked Tomomi to drink tea with a lady-like style.) I understand that I can't take the test without it, but how do I get it?"

"..... We were given these just this morning. I'm sure it will be explained in class this afternoon?"

"No, the others know, right? If they do, I don't want to waste class time with unnecessary explanations, so if you could tell me, that would be great."

"Hmm, I'm vulnerable if you ask me so honestly.

Smiling shyly, Tomomi put the cup of tea back in its saucer.

..... To be honest, that smile is also "weak.

I want to tell you that your words do not match your black-hearted character at all.

But, well, it would be silly to offend them by saying that, and I'm afraid of what might happen after

If the pheasant does not crow, it will not be shot.

Tomomi traced the edge of the card with her finger and opened her mouth, while Akiharu tried not to show his conviction.

"If you want a partner, of course, you have to appeal to the students in the education department. The disadvantage for the department is that the exams take up a whole Sunday. The disadvantage for the department is that the exams take up a whole Sunday, and they don't want to partner with someone they don't know well or don't like. That's why your usual attitude and name recognition are important.

"I see. is difficult."

But, you know, girls love to pass the time. There are a lot of girls who are hungry for stimulation, so if you can get them to talk, it'll be easier than you think. The last time I took the test, I bet about half of my students were able to take it. There have been cases like Daichi-kun, who

offered to be my partner without me even saying a word. There was a lot of talk about how many cards we got and who we were going to partner up with."

As expected, Daichi was able to participate.

So I'm also concerned about the other boys.

"How did it go with Todoroki and the three families?"

I think the three families were able to participate. She's a cute girl, so there are a lot of girls who like her. Do you know Todoroki-kun's name without asking him at"

Well, most of them are at

When Akiharu crossed his fingers in front of his chest, Tomomi nodded with a wry smile.

I was trying my best to appeal to them. I was trying my best to appeal to them, but it had the opposite effect. It's okay to be desperate, but you can't do that to a bunch of girls. I'm not sure what to do. I'll just run away."

(alt: "Yeah, it was no good. I was trying my best to appeal, but ... Is that the opposite effect? It's good to be desperate, but it's no good if you do it to many girls. But it's just a problem. I'll run away unintentionally. ") "....., did you run away?"

I thought you would definitely see my skirt. I mean, I thought you would definitely see it.

Tomomi said crisply, with a serious look in her eyes.

Akiharu tried to make some kind of follow-up to that, but gave up.

Sorry, Roar, I can't.

When your usual sexual harassment goes over my head, I can't say anything.

Well, the problem isn't with those idiots, it's with their partners in the subject tests.

If you don't get the card somehow, you won't be able to take the test.

But how can I make it work when I'm still too scared to even make eye contact with the students in the education department?

There are few students whose faces match their names.

I'm thinking of Selnia.

I can talk to him and he won't scare me.

..... But it's selfish of you to ask me to do something like this after you've been calling his hair a drill for so long.

I'm not trying to put you down, but if that's how they see you, then so be it.

What about Selnia's friend, Feng Shuilan? I've never really talked to her, but if she called me her partner, I'd probably be turned off, right? And then there's Daikichi, the only male student in the upper education department.

I don't want to ask him to do something that he calls himself something like a stage name, and even though he looks like an idiot, he's got a good face, so he'll probably have to fight for it with the girls.

I don't think I can win by mixing with them.

But not being able to get out is a problem.

It seems that if the annual participation rate in the examinations is less than 30%, the student will be expelled without question.

In other words, it's okay if you can't participate once or twice, but you want to make sure you show up for the exam, even if you have to pay a penalty.

You'll be able to find a lot more information on the subject in the following paragraphs.

(alt: With his arms crossed, Akiharu thought about it with wrinkles between his eyebrows, and the partner card he had seen before slipped in front of him.) I reflexively suppressed it with my hand, and then looked at Tomomi across from me, who had just thrown it.

It looks as if it is smiling gently, but it also looks as if it is hiding something fearsome behind it. It's really scary.

(alt: It looks like she's smiling gently, or hiding an invincible thing behind her ... It's kind of scary.) That's why Akiharu was afraid to ask, "..... What is this?"

In response to the question, Tomomi's expression remained unchanged as she reached her slender fingers into her tea cup and said, "You can have that."

"Go to? Does that mean you can help me with my test?"

I don't know if that's how it ends up. If anything, I'm trying to be merciful and let them take the exam since they came all the way here.

(alt: "I wonder if that will happen as a result. If anything, I've been transferred so far, so I'll at least take the exam ... I'm benevolent.") "It's Well, okay. It's a nice offer, I'm sure."

(alt: "That is well, is it okay? It must be a thankful offer.") I'm going to go in there and say, "I'm done."

I don't know what to say.

(alt: It would be a thing if I was told.) In order to rescind it, they will probably have to get down on their knees.

Besides, the truth is, I've been a bit skeptical and scared, so I should take mercy.

..... Well, there's a good chance they're up to something, but I really appreciate it.

Since there's no other way to get a card, we should be grateful for the opportunity.

Akiharu stared at his childhood friend's face as she sipped her tea with grace and suspicion.

Although the cup hides her mouth, the expression on her face shows that she is just as relaxed as the other ladies, and I can't tell if she is really hungry or not.

You're looking forward to the exam, right?

"..... Oh, I sincerely hope it all ends well."

(alt: "... Oh, I sincerely hope that it will be completed safely.") In the meantime, Akiharu put his partner card in his pocket, smiling vaguely at the situation and not knowing whether to be happy or sigh.

In the afternoon, when the class was divided between the upper and lower education departments, Tomomi was told that the exam would be held this Sunday, just as she had expected.

Well, that's all well and good, but what about the fact that only talks about the outline and the conditions of participation, and doesn't tell you the contents of the exam until the day of the event?

You're not going to decide what to do based on your mood, are you?

..... but it's okay.

And Akiharu, who had a partner, could afford to be a little more relaxed.

As usual, the class was a hell of a weird physical workout, and I could have died, but I'm already qualified to take the exam, so I'm feeling a little more tolerant.

So I looked around at the other players who were collecting cards for reference for the next time, and I found out that the guy from Daichi had managed to get three cards on the first day alone.

It was a Saturday morning, and I had over a dozen cards on my desk to ponder, so this was no help at all.

The three families that seemed to be popular with the girls didn't get any cards on the first day, but they got one on the second day, another on the third day, and by Saturday they had four cards, so I think they were pretty good.

By the way, Todoroki is as good as his reputation.

Every lunch break and every class period, she would appear in front of the girls in the education department, only to be avoided or run away from, and never receive a single card.

Her eyes are bloodshot, she's begging with rage, she's saying things like confession on purpose or on the spur of the moment, and she's on her knees trying to peek inside her skirt with a low angle.

I'm sure they'll run away.

(alt: That's why you can escape.) The only thing I could feel was the desperation.

I'll have to work hard to find a partner next time, so this is the only time I can afford it.

I feel like I'll be in trouble if I don't reform my image by the next time.

At any rate, now that the exam was the next day, my mind was completely on the exam.

I don't know what it's about, so there's no way for me to prepare for it, but apparently the last time I was there, I had to accompany my partner, a young lady, shopping at a high-class department store in Tokyo.

(alt: I don't know what it is, so I can't prepare for it, but it seems that the last time I was shopping for a young lady who played the role of a partner at a certain luxury department store in Tokyo.) I don't know what part of it will be on the exam, so there is no way to prepare for it.

(alt: I have no idea where it will be the test, so I can't take any measures.) Well, for now.

Akiharu was heading back to the dormitory to get in shape for tomorrow, when he saw a familiar face in front of the dormitory.

Her blonde hair, tinged with red from the setting sun, was rolled vertically in a drill-like pattern, and even though she was allowed to wear casual clothes when not in class, Akiharu was the only person she knew who wore a dress on campus.

"..... Selnia?"

At the same time, the other side seemed to have found us and was approaching us at a brisk pace.

Apparently, it's not the target, it's me that needs it.

But Akiharu has no business with Cernea, and I'm sure he hasn't offended her in any way.

(alt: However, there is no use for Selnia in Akiharu, and it should not have made me angry.)

..... At least for today.

As I was wondering what this was all about, the red-dressed Selnia walked right up to me and gave me a meaningful, fearless smile.

"You still look like a fool, don't you? You have an exam tomorrow, don't you?"

"Yeah, I know, but"

I feel like I've been mocked from the very beginning. Something's wrong with me.

(alt: I feel like I was ridiculed from the beginning of the encounter, but ... something is strange.)

The fact that she was talking to me from the other side was one thing, but the way she looked so happy and excited, the slight blush on her cheeks and neck, it was different from the usual drill.

I'm not sure how you can afford to be so far behind the rest of the world as a mid-career transfer. Or are you just getting over it? Well, either way, if you can't attend, the exam is completely irrelevant.

"..... Ah, yes."

(alt: "..... Ah, it will be") This was the first time he had ever seen such a thing.

He knows we're in the same class, and he knows we've been going about our normal lives instead of scrambling to collect cards.

So that's it.

The day before the exam, you think it's not only Roar who hasn't gotten his card, but also you.

So, I thought, why not make a laughingstock out of it?

Well, the clothes look like they have a lot of energy.

He's always been a flamboyant guy who wears dresses outside of uniform, but now he's wearing an even more revealing white bare top dress, with accessories sparkling on his hands and neck.

And that ring, is that a sapphire? How much is the total cost of this guy's fashion?

It's a reflection of how you behave in your daily life. This is what happens when you don't have a sense of humility and make too many big claims. If you learn from this, you should learn the concept of modesty!

"....., yeah?"

"Yes, of course. Let my advice, which is worth more than an emerald mine and is equivalent to a miracle, sink into your tiny brain.

....."

Wow, this drill is really getting me going.

But he looks so happy.

I've never seen a drill with this much gusto.

I don't remember hating this guy enough to take this much joy in his misfortune, but should tell him that he's fundamentally mistaken.

Selnia, apparently oblivious to the subtle pity in our eyes, smiled broadly, even though she was outside, and said, "It's funny that you can't take the exam after being admitted to You must be so frustrated and itchy that you can't sleep at night, right? I don't know how much determination you had to jump into Hakuryoryo, but this is the reality!

"..... No, I mean..."

(alt: "..... No, that") But I don't want you to get desperate here. Even though it is the result of my daily actions and words, I do not like to be questioned about the integrity of the ladies who attend Hakurei. I'm sure you'll be happy to hear that. So..."

(alt: "But it's a problem to be desperate here. Even though the daily words and actions are the result of saying things, it's surprising that the ladies who go to Hakurei Ryo are suspected. I have never been able to give it an opportunity, so — ") I'm getting a card, okay?

"I apologize for everything I've done, and if you insist, I'll go to What?

As if the meaning of what she had said had sunk into her brain over time, Cernea reacted belatedly.

I'm not sure what to say, but I'm not sure what to do.

(alt: Even though she's a young lady, she opens her mouth and doesn't do anything.) "Look, it's right here. So you can take the test, okay?"

When Akiharu took out his partner card, which he had carefully stored in his student notebook, he said, "Na.....? That's, uh, that's from whom? When did this happen? I got it from Tomomi. Tomomi gave it to me at lunch on the day the cards were given out.

Fuck.

(alt: "Oh") The way her lips moved, it was like...

He wanted to say, "I'm sorry.

(alt: It seems that he wanted to say.) I'm just guessing, because I didn't hear her voice from the beginning.

A few seconds ago, her triumphant smile turned to astonishment, and then to stupefaction, as Selnia switched classes, "..... If it's, it's fine. Yes, then nothing."

He mumbled to himself and walked off in a jerky manner.

She fell to her knees and looked as if her pinwheels had broken or fallen off, but she staggered to her feet.

She could have turned around and stared at me in embarrassment, but instead she resumed her walk.

I'm not sure if you've seen this before, but I've seen it before. What do you mean, huh? I'm not sure what to do.

I tried to reach out to him at, but he ignored me.

Normally, she would turn red and get angry when I called her a drill, but she didn't budge.

It's a pretty terminal condition.

I don't know what the endgame is.

(alt: I don't know what the end is.) What the hell was that,?

I tilted my head, but I couldn't make sense of it.

Akiharu continued to ponder until he couldn't see Cernea's small back anymore, but he couldn't come up with an answer.

And then, "....., well, that's it. Tomorrow is the problem. Tomorrow."

The priority was the exam, so I decided to quickly forget about the drill lady's antics.

On Sunday, the day of the exam, eleven students from the education department gathered in the classroom at nine o'clock in the morning with their partner cards, including Daichi, Sanke, and, surprisingly, Shikigami.

My partner hadn't arrived yet because he had overslept. It was really unexpected.

(alt: The essential partner seems to be oversleeping and hasn't come yet ... but it's really surprising.) This guy is so famous for his screw-ups, I can't believe he's willing to be my partner.

Aside from Tomomi, the only other student I know who is a partner in this program is Daikichi, who is a narcissist at heart.

I was expecting to see her in her usual almost all-white outfit, but today she was wearing sequins.

The rose on the chest is also unusually yellow.

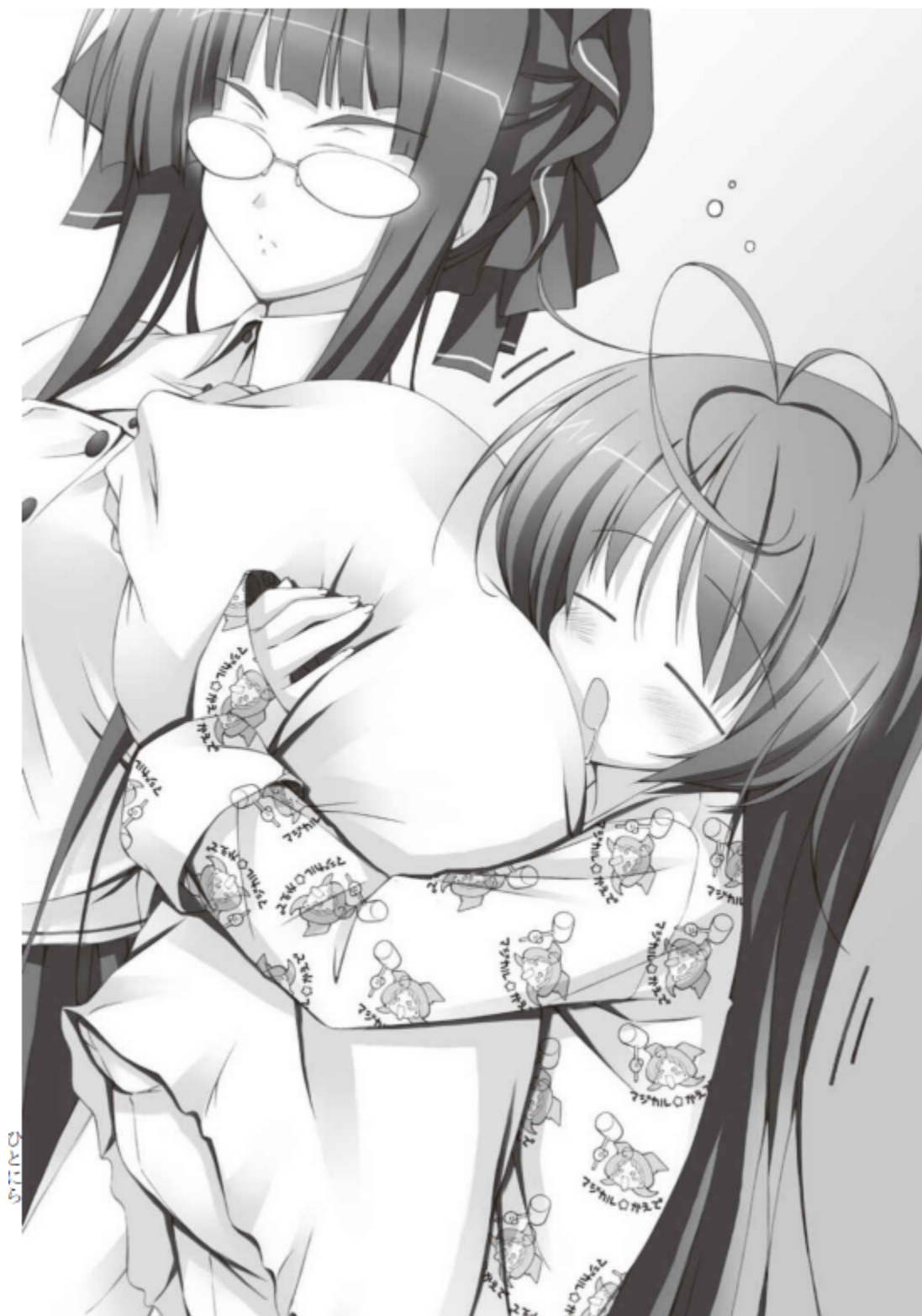
Well, I'm not surprised, since this guy is a rare species in itself.

Mikan stood at the podium in front of about 20 people, dressed in her usual maid's uniform, with the President standing next to her with a sleepy look in her eyes.

..... No, correction.

I'm half asleep, or rather sleepy-eyed.

The cartoon patterned clothes were probably pajamas.
It looks like he was forced to come here.



He glared at the slumping president and clerk with piercing, icicle-like eyes, and when it proved to be ineffective, he did not change his expression, but changed the mood to one of grimness and turned his gaze toward us.

I'm begging you, please stop hitting on your students and giving them that creepy frozen stare.

After intimidating the students for a few moments, he gently adjusted his glasses and said, "First of all, I would like to thank all the members of the Department of Higher Education for giving up their precious holidays for the examination of the Department of Higher Education. I would like to express my gratitude on behalf of the President. I would like to express my gratitude on behalf of the President.

(alt: For a while, intimidating the students, Fukaka quietly fixed the glasses he was wearing, and said, "First of all, everyone in the upper education department — Thank you for providing an important holiday for the secondary education examination. I would like to express my gratitude on behalf of the President On behalf of the President. ") I glanced at the President, who was staring blankly at me with his mouth moving in a mumbling motion beside me.

I'm sure you've heard of it.

(alt: Everyone seems to be surprised, stop rampaging, take a little breath and look up at me.)

(alt: Wipe the saliva, the chairman of the anime pattern there.) It's too much, no matter how much.

The two teachers are as usual, even though it's an exam, and Akiharu feels like he's about to lose his temper, but then he says, "Now, I'll announce the contents of the June examinations in the field of education.

..... With a single word, Shenzhen made the atmosphere tense.

It's time to go," Akiharu said, pumping his fists.

I don't know what they're going to say.

(alt: I don't know what to say from now on.) But I have decided that I will do the best I can, and that's all. You have until 5 p.m. to carry out your partner's orders."

His resolve crumbled with a resounding thud.

..... Wait.

What did you just say? "I will."

What? "Execute the order."

What? At the end of the class, you will receive a brief feedback and a five-point scale from your partner student. At five o'clock, I will ring the bell. I'll ring the bell at five o'clock.

While Akiharu was dumbfounded by the extremely strange content, Mikan dragged Kaede away by the scruff of the neck.

There is no one who will listen to my plea to withdraw before the dissolution.

In the suddenly buzzing classroom, Akiharu almost felt dizzy as the blood drained from his face.

I feel as if someone is whispering in my head that I should just collapse from anemia.

I don't even have to think about why.

I'm not sure what to say, but I'm going to say it.

(alt: Gigigi, and turn his neck like a rusty Buriki toy, and look at Tomomi's face standing beside him.) I don't want to see it, but I'm afraid to leave it unseen, so I peeked fearfully.

"..... This is turning out to be more interesting than I expected."

(alt: "... It was more interesting than I expected.") There was a demon smiling at me.

"Well, what do you want me to do? Shall I just have them do ten laps of the school grounds for nothing? Or maybe I'll just have them pick up girls on campus at random? Oh, sexual harassment by Mikan-sensei is also a high point, isn't it?

Tomomi was walking along, looking more excited than ever, as if she was about to start skipping.

I'm sure you'll be able to figure out what's going on," he said.

(alt: Akiharu had an unpleasant sweat on his spine in the words muttered from his mouth.) I wonder what kind of punishment this is.

You've been picking and choosing and listening to Tomomi's orders? And that for almost a quarter of a day? No, you'll be a cripple before the exam is over.

It's not funny at all, because I can imagine myself turning white and burning up.

I'm already regretting how I ended up at

If we don't, they'll kill us.

You will be mentally treated like a piece of garbage.

In the event that you're not sure what you're looking for, you'll be able to find out more about it here.

(alt: Before that happened, Akiharu called out to Tomomi, who was floating and walking beside him, trying to take the initiative and restrain him.) "..... Hey, don't give me any crazy orders, okay?

"Huh? But don't you think you're better than Kazamatsuri-kun?"

I'm sure you have to praise him endlessly, right? That narcissistic bastard's pretty out of it. There must be something wrong with his brain. with someone else.

"Compared to that, running naked through the girls' dormitory would be more like it."

"I'll get down on my knees as much as you want, so please give me a break, I beg you!

When I pleaded with her, almost shouting, Tomomi only smiled more and more cheerfully.

What the hell is this?

Is this what a bad day looks like? No, I'm completely out of gas, even though I'm supposed to be pumped up for the exam.

For now, let's make plans for the future at the café.

I followed Tomomi's lead and walked, but my steps were heavy.

That's right, when I was in elementary school, I accidentally referred to my teacher as "Mom" at the homecoming party.

I'm as depressed as the day after I said it.

..... Oh, I don't know what to do with myself now.

(alt: Ah, if this happens, I can't help it.) If it's not the shame of a naked class, I'm willing to take it.

The only time I cry is when I go back to my room in the dorm.

Akiharu walked half-heartedly down the wide brick-paved street, keeping an eye on Tomomi's back.

It was nice to see no one other than myself and Tomomi on the path leading to the auditorium and multi-purpose hall.

I don't want to be seen as a slave to a black-hearted woman if I can help it.

"..... Hmm?"

I'm sure you'll be able to figure out what's going on.

(alt: Akiharu unintentionally let out his voice when he found a figure walking from the other side where he was thinking about such a thing.) No, it's normal for students to be walking around on campus, but what is that height? Elementary school? He's short for a middle schooler, and it's more likely that he's a stray coming to see his family.

It's a good idea to have a good idea of what you're looking for.

(alt: Mysteriously, I squinted at the approaching figure ... After a while, Akiharu realized that she was familiar to her.) Her short, cottony-soft hair and plump cheeks.

The eyes are large, reminiscent of a deformed doll.

I'm sure I've seen it at close range.

(alt: You must have seen it at close range.) The day I came to Hakuryoryo as a student, I met a kid in the back of the library.

And yet, he has the shocking fact that he's older than me, and I believe his name is "Oh?

Mr. Sakurazawa, good morning."

Tomomi bowed politely in greeting as the distance between them drew closer and they became aware of her presence.

Yes, her name is Mimana Sakurazawa.

It should be fine.

Mimana, carrying a large sketchbook and a small handbag, shakes her shoulders at the mere greeting, and says, "Good morning,"

He said this hesitantly, without making more than a glance at me.

This is a rather unusual reaction.

I've heard that Tomomi is rather popular in Hakuryoryo because she wears a cat suit and acts like an honor student.

And yet, the way he's behaving,, could it be that he's aware of the true nature he's hiding?

If so, it makes sense.

Feeling a sense of camaraderie, Akiharu raised his hand lightly in a friendly greeting.

"Hello. Long time no see."

"What? Oh,"

I greeted him in a friendly manner, but for some reason he was upset.

Just when I thought I was blushing, she hid the bottom half of her face with her sketchbook in a panicked manner, and her eyes were scurrying around like a squirrel. I've gotten used to it, but I guess I'm still a fierce animal.

(alt: When I thought I was blushing, I hid the lower half of my face with a sketchbook in a hurry, and moved my eyes like a squirrel without being busy.) Akiharu, you're being rude to your seniors.

"Oh,, yeah, sorry. I just don't feel like a senior."

When I honestly said this, Mimana raised her eyebrows in obvious annoyance.

I've heard that was a misstatement as well.

He may have been concerned about his young appearance.

While Akiharu was feeling the difficulty of communication, Mimana, holding her sketchbook close to her chest, approached him with her lips tightly pressed together.

And then, right in front of you, he stops so far away that the tips of his shoes almost hit you, and he looks up at you and says, "..... Ugh."

I grunt a little and take a half step back.

I guess I misjudged the distance.

"You are nineteen years old now, Mimana. If you don't treat me with respect for my age and courtesy towards ladies, I'm going to Oh, I'll get angry."

(alt: "You're nineteen years old. You have to treat me with respect for your elders and courtesy for the lady Well Oh, I'm angry.") Towards the end, he seemed to run out of fuel and started staring up at me as if this was all he could do.

..... I'm supposed to be staring at you, aren't I? It looks like she's trying to hold back tears, but she's probably glaring at you, right? I'm not sure what to do, but I'm sure I'll be able to do it.

So, Akiharu stroked Mina's head as if to deceive her.

Well, I'm sorry, aren't I?

"..... has no remorse whatsoever.!"

(alt: "... I haven't reflected on it at all ...!") I even apologized, but apparently it had the opposite effect.

Mimana's face turned red and her eyes welled up as if she was going to cry this time.

Mmm, that's a tough one.

I know I'm not bad at caring for children, but I'm older now.

I don't know what to do.

(alt: I wonder why.) When I looked at Tomomi beside me to ask for help, she had a strange look on her face.

"..... Well, that's one way to do it.? It's a bit of a waste.

In addition, he was mumbling to himself while looking at me.

What are you planning to do again, you black-hearted bastard?

I'm not sure what you mean by that, but I'm sure you'll understand. The fact that it's not unsettling makes Akiharu frown, and then suddenly Tomomi says, "..... Okay."

(alt: No, there is no shadow for that, or there is no unpleasant atmosphere, but ... what do you mean? It wasn't disturbing, but rather anxious, and when Akiharu frowned, Tomomi suddenly said, "... OK.") I nodded.

Before you know it, Tomomi smiled and put her hand on Akiharu's shoulder.

And then, "I've decided. Akiharu-kun, please serve as Mr. Sakurazawa's partner for the rest of the day.

He said something abrupt and unintelligible.

"..... or?"

".....,? I'm talking about"

Of course, the person being told this is confused.

It's true, I don't know about myself, but I'm sure this senior who doesn't know anything about the exam will have an even harder time grasping the situation.

(alt: That's right, aside from myself, this senior who doesn't know about the exam shouldn't be able to grasp the situation any more.) I'm not sure if this is a good idea, but it's a good idea.

(alt: Rather, it's a development that doesn't make sense even for me, who understands the situation.) I want to ask him what kind of prank he came up with. I want to ask him what kind of prank he's come up with. I'm at a loss for words, because I don't think he's smiling behind his eyes like he usually does.

(alt: This hungry, smiling sideways, I hate it, but ... what are you thinking? I would like to ask what kind of mischief I came up with ... but unlike usual, I feel that the back of my eyes is not laughing, and I get lost in words.) Moreover,, I'll take care of Mr. Sakurazawa for you.

Tomomi's words, whispered softly in my ear to poke holes in my rigid decision-making process, deepened my confusion.

Maybe it was because I felt that the voice that only I could hear was strangely gentle.

When I came back to my senses, Tomomi had already turned around, distanced herself, and waved at me with a smile on her face.

I'll be back to see you when the exam is over. Good luck, okay?"

I'll do my best. Hey, Tomomi!

(alt: "I'll do my best Oh, Tomomi !?") Um, this is What? What do you mean?

I called out to her in a panic, but she didn't stop her leisurely walk or look back.

He didn't respond to the voices of the seniors involved.

If you chase after them, you can catch up with them quickly. But when you see them walking away from you without hurrying or running, you feel as if it's wrong to chase them, and you can't move your legs.

(alt: If I chase after it, I'll catch up quickly ... But I don't hurry, I walk openly and walk far away When I look at my back, I feel like it's a mistake to chase, and my legs don't move.) And I don't know what Tomomi's guy was thinking, but he gave me orders.

(alt: Besides, I don't know what Tomomi's guy is thinking, but he was ordered.) If he's for real, the moment I try to get him to withdraw, I might get a failing grade and end the exam.

In the end, while he was wondering what to do, Tomomi's figure disappeared beyond the huge multipurpose hall, and Akiharu had to let out a sigh.

..... I'm in trouble.

I don't know what to do about this situation.

(alt: What should I do, this situation.) He looked down at everyone else who must also be in trouble.

The other side was just looking up at me, and our gazes meshed perfectly.

In an instant, his cheeks turned red, and the little senior looked away and said, "Yo, I don't know, but goodbye.

(alt: The cheeks turned red in an instant, and the little senior suddenly turned his eyes away and said, "Yeah ... I don't know, but goodbye —".) No, wait, wait, wait, wait.

I'm not sure if you've seen this before, but I'm sure you've seen it before.

(alt: As he tried to turn around and walk in a hurry, Akiharu swiftly grabbed everyone's shoulders and urged him to stop.) But still, it's a small shoulder.

I feel like if I put a little pressure on it, it might break or come off, so I can only try to wrap it around a little bird or something. But they still can't shake it off.

(alt: I feel like it will break or come off if I put a little force on it, so I can only wrap it around a little bird or something, but ... I can't seem to shake it off.) It's more powerless than it looks.

It seems that he is still desperate and shakes his head.

"I have an errand to run! From now on, Mimana will go to the mountains to mow the lawn to draw pictures, and to the river to hunt deer with Grandma!

"Calm down, senior. I have no idea what you're trying to do. Also, who's the old lady?

"No, no, no, no, no, no..."

"Okay, okay,, hey?

As requested, he let go of her shoulder and she lost her balance and almost fell down.
I'm sure you've heard of it.



You can't let go all of a sudden!

It's like I understand, so just listen to me for now."

When I told them, or rather coddled them, Mimana's gaze wandered as if she was lost.

Apparently, this is the point of attack.

Akiharu bent down a little to make eye contact and began to speak as slowly as possible.

I'm in the middle of a test for the Department of Secondary Education. I'm in the middle of an exam for the education department, and the exam is about listening to your master's orders, and to make matters worse, my master's partner is Tomomi Saikyo, who is an honor student, not the black-hearted one who just disappeared. So he's right, I have to deal with the older students.

"....., but that's none of your business."

(alt: "... But it has nothing to do with everyone ...") I know, I know. But I need your help. I'll make it up to you next time, if you're willing to go out with me."

"..... Ugh."

(alt: "..... Uh ~") I'm sure you're not the only one who's been through it.

(alt: All of you are pre-pubertal children, but if you say that now, you're sure to be offended and refused.) He seems to be concerned about it, and I think it's best not to do anything about it.

I'm not sure what to do, but I'm going to do it.

(alt: Akiharu seems to be taking it into consideration, but Akiharu is not good at it.) Of course, I don't interfere with my seniors. If you have something to do, you can give it priority at If you don't want to interfere, you can help. If you cause trouble, you can end it there. How about then?"

"Uh-oh. Wow, okay."

He nodded his head slightly, but only slightly.

Negotiation is complete.

It was good, it was good, it was good.

If I had been dealing with a black-hearted childhood friend or a drill sergeant who didn't listen to me, things would never have worked out the way they did.

I was really grateful for their honesty.

It's a good idea to have a good idea of what you're looking for.

(alt: Akiharu stretches his hips and stands upright, then smiles to appeal harmlessness.) I had to be careful not to smile as scary as the yakuza-ya, which made me feel too empty, but I reached out my hand to Mimana.

We'll just have to move. Oh, do we have time?"

"Oh,? Yeah, there is, but"

"Well, let's have a strategy meeting at the cafe. I'll bring my sketchbook and bag.

Or you can go to the cafe, but you can't have this.

(alt: "Or, it's nice to go to a cafe, but I can't have this ...!") I'm not sure if it's a good idea, but I think it's a good idea.

(alt: Speaking of which, the basics are overseas.) (alt: I wonder if I was wary, hugging the sketchbook tightly, "OK OK") He raised his hand to signify that he understood.

Now I can finally start the exam in the true sense of the word.

He was happy to find himself in a much more comfortable situation than when he had been following Tomomi, and he began to walk slowly toward the café, following along beside Mina.

..... Okay, we're good to go.

Tomomi let out a small mutter, followed by a sigh of relief.

I hid in the shadows of a large multipurpose hall that could hold several times the total number of students, but apparently my sneaking around didn't go unnoticed.

I knew that Akiharu would do well, but I still felt uneasy.

The other party is "Um..."

Mina Sakurazawa.

She's different from the other girls in that she's not a straightforward person.

That's why I have high hopes for my childhood friend.

I hope that you will do your best here, since you have abandoned an interesting opportunity.

"..... So, did they go to the cafe? Follow, follow.

Although there are many buildings and stone statues and monuments, there are few places to hide because the view is too good.

If you don't put it on well, it will be easy to find.

So Tomomi waited until they had completely disappeared and then waited another minute before she finally started to move.

She steps out of the shadows of the hall and onto the pavement, towards the auditorium where the café is located. What are you doing?

"What? Hey,, Mr. Flamehart?

In the event that you've got a lot of time, you'll be able to take a look at the most effective way to get the most out of your time.

(alt: Suddenly, a voice was heard from behind, and when I turned around with surprise that my heart seemed to stop, there was a figure of Selnia = Iori = Flame Heart with a suspicious eyebrow.) Tomomi put her hand on her chest to stop her heart from beating uncomfortably and said, "I am the Mr. Flamehart, what brings you here on a Sunday morning?

I tried to keep my composure as best I could, but failed, and asked questions in an attempt to make up for it.

Then Selnia, unexpectedly flustered, began fumbling with the ends of her vertical roll.

"Hey, I'm for, not, but"

Tomomi suddenly felt uncomfortable when she saw that he was even more flustered than she was.

So, I stared at it from top to bottom.

She was wearing a satin dress, which was rather plain and unsuitable for her, and for some reason she was also wearing sunglasses.

This one looks great, but it's strange to wear sunglasses for a walk.

When I realized this, my cold head started to spin at high speed.

Cernea was now walking from the side of the school building.

It's a different direction from the dorm.

In addition, this strange outfit is Perhaps, just perhaps, it's a disguise.

It took her less than five seconds to come up with a possibility, and Tomomi was already smiling as usual.

So that's what it is.

I'm in the middle of a test for the obedience department. I'm in the middle of an exam for the Department of Education, and I've given some orders to Akiharu-kun, so I thought I'd keep an eye on him.

"..... orders? You mean watch over"

Yes, it is.

Selnia tilted her head slightly, seemingly unable to grasp the point.

It's just as well, because I said it that way on purpose, or maybe I should say it's a matter of calculation.

Tomomi smiled wryly at the unexpected opportunity that had presented itself, and made an enticing offer.

I'm sure you've heard of it. If it's just me, I'm afraid I'll give Akiharu a lenient grade."

(alt: "Yes, if you don't mind, would you like Flame Heart to go out with you? I'm the only one who would give Akiharu a sweet score.") Tomomi couldn't help but notice that her eyebrows shot up.

It was Sunday and not even ten o'clock yet, so there were no students at all on the cafeteria.

I can't help but feel that we are wasting our labor costs when I see the site in a state of disarray.

I think Mikan had mentioned that students from the education department would be taking this class in the second year, so Akiharu was no stranger to this.

I don't know how much time I'm going to have left.

(alt: How much time do you have to spare?) Since there was no one else in the room, Akiharu took a seat nearby.

I placed my order with the maid in her twenties who brought me the menu, took a sip of the iced lemon tea that was brought to me, and finally felt comfortable.

Mimana is still a bit stiff and cautious, sipping her fresh orange juice with a sense of urgency that is far from relaxing.

So, what should I do now?

I can't think of any, so that's a problem.

For now, "I know I'm a little late in the game, but let me introduce myself. As you can see, I'm Akiharu Hino, a first-year student in the Education Department.

Well, I don't have to go to the trouble of telling you that all students in the Education Department are required to take one year, but there are exceptions to this rule, so just in case.

And the little senior in front of me, the exception, took her mouth away from the straw and said, "..... Mimana Sakurazawa, sophomore in the Senior High School Education Department. She's still nineteen, so you have to treat her like an older person.

"Ah, I understand. I'll call you "senpai" properly.

I nodded reflexively to and said, "No, wait.

Akiharu continued, "Is it better to use honorifics? It's not like I'm talking to my seniors on a casual basis.

It's hard to believe that he's that old, but it seems to be true, and since I'm having to deal with all of this, I'm going to take some care of him.

I'm not very good at honorifics, but I can't afford to say that to someone who is in the middle of an exam and has a duty to me.

It was easy for Mimana, who has repeatedly appealed to her older age with her small body, to simply say, "Of course.

But for some reason, he shook his small shoulders and made a hesitant gesture.

"Just go to You don't have to use honorifics.

Are you sure? No, it would be great for us.

"In return, you have to show respect, okay? It's not like I'm saying it's okay to treat you like crap.

I was asked to use honorific language, which is more difficult than normal.

Children are sometimes reckless, but this senior is generally reckless.

Well, I'm going to make an effort.

I don't want to take it lightly, so let's give it a rest.

At any rate, the exam is due in the evening.

They have plenty of time, and they don't want to spend it awkwardly with each other.

"..... Oh, by the way..."

(alt: "..... Well, by the way,") Akiharu remembered that there was one thing he needed to check, so he asked Mina, who was chewing on a straw.

You said you were going somewhere. Do you have any plans?

I don't have any plans or errands. I was just going to draw a picture somewhere.

"Really? Does that mean you're in the art club?

..... No, I'm not. I'm not in the art department.

(alt: "..... No. I'm not in the art club.") She puffed out her cheeks in a grumpy manner and looked down into her glass.

I'm not sure what to say, but I'm sure you'll understand.

(alt: Akiharu sneaks out, judging that he doesn't want to be touched by club activities.) Since I don't have any information about the person I'm talking to, I have no idea what I can safely talk about.

No, normally, you don't need such a thing, but this senior seems to be a very moody person, so you shouldn't say anything rash.

I don't mind being angry, but I don't like it when people cry.

I'm in a lot of trouble.

So I'd like to change the subject, but it's hard to ask about my age, which is my biggest concern.

I'm quite interested in it, but I'm sure they have their own reasons.

(alt: I'm quite interested in it, but I wonder if there are any circumstances.) I feel like I'm in the middle of a minefield.

But if we exclude them, what do we do?

In such cases, please contact and ask, "What are your hobbies?

And, then it's a blind date.

In addition, I don't think that the young lady who attends this school and myself, as an ordinary person, would share the same interests, and I would have a hard time spreading the word.

"Music."

In other words, these people never mention classical music, koto music, opera, or any other songs or names that appear in karaoke rankings.

"Travel."

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

It wasn't just nearby places like Korea or Taiwan, but the Mediterranean Sea, the Caribbean Sea, and Miami Beach, where they seemed to enjoy cruising and marine sports to the point that I wanted to ask them if they liked the ocean so much.

I don't want to hear about it, but I've started training early in the morning to catch up with the rest of the class, so I spend my breaks lying on my desk trying to regain some of my strength, and I can't help but hear the yellow voices screaming in class.

In addition, if you work as a waiter during the lunch break, there will always be a bragging match going on at one of the tables.

Akiharu crossed his arms, thought about it so much that smoke came out of his brain and he wanted to growl, and then he said, "..... Well, do you like cats?"

"Huh? I like it, but"

"Well, is fine. is fine."

(alt: "Well ... then it's okay ...") Conversation terminated.

It was a boring ending to a Guinness World Record.

No, I can't catch a word of it.

What the hell is a cat?

If you're going to do animal stories, you should at least have the knowledge to spread them, you know.

Oh, my God, after all this time, I'm still thinking, "I love the feel of paw pads, don't you?"

Or, "The serval cat looks like a cartoon character that's been forced to have eight heads, and it's beautiful, but there's something weird about it."

The topic came up again and again.

It's already too late.

If you say something like that after you've been quiet for a while, you'll definitely end up confused.

I'm sure of it.

(alt: There is no doubt about it.) In this awkward atmosphere, Akiharu felt suffocated and put his hand to his neck.

But a shirt with a stand-up collar is not suitable for sticking your fingers in, and then there is the tie to unbutton.

The most important thing is to be patient, because you never know what kind of hell you'll go through in silence if you show your disgusting sloppy appearance during the exam.

Just being stared at is mentally demanding, and it will push you to your physical limits.

Akiharu sipped on his iced tea, unable to change his mood, while everyone else kept their straws in their mouths, occasionally glancing up at each other and then lowering their eyes.

In the event that you've got a lot of money, you may be able to get a lot more.

(alt: Maybe it's time to tap or give up ... and when Akiharu was vaguely considering the defeat declaration, "Oh ... Sakurazawa-san!") What? Are you sure?

When Akiharu heard such a voice, he turned his head to find the three girls diagonally behind him.

I don't know if he was a high school student or a middle school student because he was wearing plain clothes, but he was wearing rather simple clothes, and he had a tripod and art supplies in his hands.

(alt: I don't know if it's a high school student or a middle school student because it's plain clothes, but I wore relatively simple clothes and had a tripod and painting tools in my hand.) I was wondering if these guys were in the art department, when the three of them started talking in secret.

There's a table over there, look.

"Really!, but the gentlemen from the Department of Obedience in attendance are?"

It's the transfer student. He's a very, very scary pervert.

(alt: "I'm a transfer student of the example. I'm a very, very scary metamorphosis owner ...")

"What kind of? Then Mr. Sakurazawa's life is in danger."

You're a pedophile. I've never seen anyone my age before.

I've heard rumors that they were trying to poison first year students Flameheart and Kagami.

"Well,, that's pretty tolerable"

"....., and by any chance, that Mr. Earth is also"

(alt: "... Maybe that earth-san ...") "..... She has a beautiful face, and she's apparently my roommate. It's possible.!"

(alt: "... That beautiful face makes me look like a roommate ... I can ...!") "Oh, my God,? I've been told something incredibly awful.

It was a shock, and Akiharu could only pretend not to hear.

I knew it was coming, but the rumors of a full-blown terminal condition are circulating.

What do you mean there are suspicions of homosexuality that you don't even know about?

And from now on, I will be treated as a pedophile?

I wonder what will happen next, will I be told that I put my hands on the lady in charge of cooking?

So it seems that she can handle everything from young girls to mature women.

I can't wait to die.

In the event that you've got a lot of money, you'll be able to use it for a lot of things.

(alt: In such a situation, instead of staying in the dormitory, I really want to hang my neck, so I'll send everyone the SOS line of sight to see if Akiharu could somehow follow me.) The senior who was supposed to be sitting across from me, crunching on a straw, kept his head down and didn't move for some reason.

It seems a little unnatural that he would be aware of their presence.

"..... Seniors?"

I called out to him, but he stubbornly refused to look up.

He refused to even glance at me.

It seems like he's trying very hard to get noticed, but Akiharu has no idea why he's doing that.

I looked again at the trio to see if there was anything going on, and saw one guy who was blatantly looking away.

And it's faintly

I think I heard it.

..... Well, yeah, no offense, but you know what? But that doesn't mean you can't do some serious damage to us. Oh, that's so funny.

I can't help but laugh, or rather, I'd rather cry.

If I don't keep a smile on my face even when I'm crying inside, I'll never be able to recover.

....., but apparently such a painstaking smile was not to their liking.

The three of them, with their expressions tense enough to be clearly understood, picked up their luggage in a hurried manner and said, "Let's go quickly.!"

(alt: The three people, whose facial expressions were so strong that they could clearly understand, picked up their luggage in a hurry, and said, "Let's go fast ...!") "Yes, I think that would be a good idea.

(alt: "That's right, I think it's okay.") "Yes, yes. Let's hurry.

Um, Mr. Sakurazawa! I'm rooting for you, so please do your best!

I'm looking forward to your new work!

Me too. - Have a good day.

The three of them hurried away, saying this to each other.

It was as if the person in question had overheard me talking behind his back during a closed-door meeting.

Feeling a little better, Akiharu straightened up and sat back in his chair.

I felt like I could relax my shoulders, and this would be a good way to start a conversation.

It's okay if it's a casual conversation.

Do you know those guys from back there?

When I asked her what she was interested in, she just shook her head.

I don't know, it still seems to be hardened.

(alt: It seems that they are still stiff.) I'm sure you'll figure it out soon enough, Akiharu thought, so he decided to talk to her without worrying.

(alt: Well, Akiharu decided to talk to him without worrying about it.) "You mean they know you? You're a popular guy, aren't you?

..... That's not true.

(alt: "..... That's not true") "Really? Aren't the underclassmen supposed to like you because you're small and pretty?

"..... It's not true."

(alt: "..... That 's not the case.") Then she stood up, jumped out of her chair, and picked up her bag and sketchbook that she had left on the empty chair.

Hmm, are we moving?

You don't have to come with me. I just want to be alone.

I'm sure you'll have a lot of fun.

(alt: Akiharu says "Fumu" in words that seem to push it away.) I muttered.

If you really want to be alone, I won't stand in your way.

Exams are for our convenience, and it would be selfish of me to ruin your private time.

But if there's a part of you that's just plain evil, that's a different story.

While I was thinking about this, Mina was already walking away.

He was moving his arms and legs, which were short for a high school student, as if he wanted to get out of here as soon as possible, and he didn't seem to have time to think about it.

Well, even though he looks like that, he's nineteen and in high school, so there's no need to worry about him. " No, I'm worried about him.

(alt: Well, even with that appearance, I'm a high school student at the age of nineteen, so I don't have to worry about that much " No, I'm worried, after all") I'm sure you've heard of it, but I'm not sure if you have.

(alt: Muttering, Akiharu stands up with a breath of the remaining iced tea.) For just a moment, they all turned and looked at me.

I've got a good reason to go after it.

If you're overly concerned about it, go to Well, that's the time.

"Hey, senpai. Be careful, you'll fall if you rush too fast.

"I'm not a child, so I won't fall!"

When I call out to the little backs that are gradually closing in on me with every stride, I get a cheerful response.

Somewhat relieved, Akiharu picked up the pace to catch up with the others.

I don't know where the princess is going, but for the time being, I'm not sure where she's going. There's a church over there, and then there's the library."

(alt: I don't know where the princess is going, but for the time being, what's ahead is — — — · · · · · Is ... a library, isn't it? ")

There are two things that stand out.

Tomomi's judgment was that it was more likely to be the library.

On the other hand, his partner's opinion was, "I don't really care about that."



I received a rather harsh and yet curt reply.

I'm sure you're not the only one who's trying to figure out what's going on," she said.

(alt: Well, when I was observing such lines from the shadow with myself, it was totally unreliable, so Tomomi smiled and looked at Selnia on the top of the Buddha.) I don't care what you think. I don't want to be rude to Mr. Sakurazawa."

"Isn't that just your way of imposing things? And what makes you think the common people won't be rude?"

"Oh, I see. Flameheart understands Akiharu-kun very well.

"Who would understand that savage man?"

Even though she was about to shout, she knew that she had to keep her voice down so that the two people following her would not notice.

Tomomi can't help but be amused by such behavior, but she doesn't show it on her face.

If Selnia knew that she was being observed as well as the two people she was tracking, she would probably get angry and leave, so she couldn't show her tail so easily.

At any rate, it was a pleasant situation.

When I ran into Selnia, I thought it would be interesting to tell her about the test and the instructions I had given her.

I'm sure he thought he was doing a good job of deceiving people, but his specialty was "deception.

(alt: I suppose he wasn't supposed to be a good deceiver, but his special skill is "to deceive people.") I had a hard time convincing myself that I could do it, and in fact, I had a hard time laughing.

And once she became interested in the bait, I told her, "No, it would be a big problem if anything happened to Mr. Sakurazawa, who is the treasure of the Japanese art world.

I was able to catch it easily enough.

I'm sure you're aware of the fact that I'm the one who gave the order, and you didn't even notice.

(alt: I put it on the shelf that I was the one who gave the order, but I didn't realize it at all.) In the event you're not sure what you're looking for, you'll be able to find out more about it on the web.

(alt: At this point, Tomomi was able to safely capture the two people on a date, following the momentum of Selnia, and observing the cafe terrace from behind the bench alongside her. It was a considerable achievement.) And even though she's trying to hide it, Selnia knows that she can't help but be curious about where they're going, and it's so much fun to watch.

It's wonderful that you can make fun of me.

I wish it was always like this," Tomomi thought absentmindedly as she entered the library.

I'm sure you'll be able to figure out what's going on.

(alt: Selnia murmured and Tomomi confirmed in a hurry.) The only glimpse I had of them was their backs as they dove through the archway to the library.

The bushes form a hedge, so we can't see any further, but this seems to be our destination.

However, there is something wrong with

What's so funny? There's nothing strange about entering a library with a sketchbook.

Yes, but did you open the door to the library?

"..... Oh, yeah,"

Selnia thought about it.

The bushes were in the way and I couldn't see them clearly.

Of course, you can't see the door open or close.

However, the library doors, which are vintage doors imported directly from England, make a distinctive, heavy sound when opened and closed, as anyone who has used them knows.

Even though it's a bit far away, the sound should not be inaudible in a quiet space on a Sunday.

Even more so, since he was paying attention to what they were doing.

Then where did they disappear to? Tomomi and Selnia looked at each other and decided to go inside the library for now, leaving each other with questions.

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(alt: ◆ ◇ ◇ A place of memories — I wonder if it should be said, Akiharu thought for a moment I stopped.) I don't think I'd bother to flash back the memories of my distraction.

The place where I first met Mina Sakurazawa, a small senior student, was still the same scenery, as I walked around the back through the narrow path between the library and the hedge.

There is a large stone monument in the middle of a green lawn surrounded by bushes.

As usual, I don't know what the purpose of the place is, but I feel comfortable there.
(alt: It's still a place where I don't know what it's for, but it's strangely cozy.) This sensation was familiar to Akiharu, and he smiled with his mouth hanging open.

It's a secret base.

"Yes, it is. This is a secret place for everyone.

She nodded and sat down on the base of the monument.

Akiharu was at a loss for the next words to say to her.

I was half joking when I said it, but they affirmed it, which was a surprise to me.

No, it's true that my impression is of a secret base, but I don't think she has any memories of building one.

It's more like a closet or attic.

It's like a place where you can be alone and feel safe.

"Hey,, I'm allowed to be here too, right?"

When I asked her while sitting on the pedestal, she took out her pencil case from her bag and said, "I've already found Besides, it's not good to monopolize."

It's obvious that you're not happy with the way he's talking.

"No, I don't! You're an adult, you're not so narrow-minded!"

"Oh, I see. That's great."

I'm sure you've heard of it, but I'm not sure if you've seen it.

(alt: With a small senior on his side, Akiharu put his back on a stone monument and folded his hands behind his head.) Now, what do I do from here?

The two of us were alone in a secret place, not yet having gotten to know each other very well.

It would be impossible to expect anyone to show up, and even if someone did happen to show up here, then I have a feeling that Mimana would move somewhere else.

I've come here to escape, so maybe next time I'll be in my room in the dorm.

If that happens, you're out.

"....., has anyone besides me ever been in here or shown around?"

I told you it was a secret. You have to keep it a secret, too, okay?"

Okay, boss.

I'm sure you'll be able to understand what I'm talking about.

(alt: I gave Frank an understanding, but apparently it didn't work, and everyone tilted his neck.) I'm a small but upper class person. I guess I'm incapable of understanding this kind of talk.

When Akiharu decided to remain silent because there is nothing worse than explaining a joke, Mimana exhaled as if she had given up and took a pencil out of her bag.

When I saw her holding the pencil with her index finger, I knew she was going to draw.

I don't know what I would draw in such a closed place.

(alt: I don't know what to draw in such a closed place.) If you start drawing seriously, talking will become a distraction.

It's now or never, right?

After concluding that, Akiharu opened his mouth as if he was going to take on the real thing.

"If you're going to draw, you might as well join the art club. You'll be in a group, but it'll be more fun."

"..... is not fun. It's much better to draw by yourself.

Is that so? I think it's fun to make noise with your friends and discuss your impressions of the pictures. Besides, you'll probably get better if you learn from your advisor.

When I said this in a jab, Mimana turned to me with a rather mysterious look on her face.

"You really don't know anything about me, do you?"

..... I don't really know what that means. Well, I guess you don't know.

(alt: "... I don't really understand what that means. Well, but you don't know.") This is only the second time we've met.

And the last time it happened, it was like an accident.

I have a lot of questions I want to ask. I don't know if it's okay to ask them.

(alt: There are many things I want to ask, but ... I wonder what it is, is it okay to ask?) In particular, the age of the girl, the reaction of the girls earlier, and why she is so small. But I feel like I'm going too far, and it's not "I can tell you.

(alt: Especially the age, the reaction of the female students, and why it's so small ... But I feel like I'm stepping too far into the stone, and I can avoid it ... "— You can tell me. world")

When Akiharu was lost in thought, Mimana unexpectedly came up with the idea.

Are you sure? No, I'd like to hear it.

"Yeah,, everyone else knows that.

Saying, "Sigh.

The childish appearance and tired gestures don't suit her very well.

Mimana smiled sarcastically, like a pessimistic person who also doesn't fit in.

"I was born with a heart defect. I was in and out of the hospital every time I had a seizure or got sick because they couldn't operate on me until I was older.

(alt: "Since I was born, I had a defect in my heart. I couldn't operate until I got bigger, so I was repeatedly hospitalized and discharged every time I had a seizure or got sick ...") I'm not sure if this is a good idea, but I think it's a good idea.

(alt: Then everyone turned to me, and Akiharu nodded a little with a serious face.) But secretly, I'm a little intimidated by the sudden deep talk.

The only time I can rely on my bad face is when I'm like this.

With the exception of Tomomi and Fukasato, ordinary people would never be able to recognize her.

Trying to calm down, Akiharu secretly paid attention to her breathing.

In the meantime, Mimana's story continued to unfold.

That's why when I was alone at home or in the hospital, I was bored and drew pictures all the time. I drew pictures of the view from the window, or the scenery I saw in photographs or on TV. I would draw illustrations based on my imagination of the world in the books I was reading.

..... I did this and before I knew it, I was good at it."

Like, is kind of vague, isn't it?

I didn't even notice it myself. I don't really look at my old drawings, and once I learned to draw them exactly as I imagined them, it became more fun to play with them instead of just looking at them. I was also embarrassed, so I only showed them to my mom and dad and the nurses I was close to. I was happy because everyone praised my work, but I never compared myself to anyone else.

(alt: "I didn't notice it myself. I don't see many pictures I drew in the past, and after I became able to draw as I imagined, it became fun to draw with play instead of just looking at it ...

Because I was embarrassed, I only showed it to my dad, mom, and a good nurse. I was happy because everyone praised me for being good, but I have never compared it to other people. ")
"Oh, I see."

That makes sense.

I just drew whatever I wanted, so I didn't really care if I was good or not compared to others.

But three years ago, I was finally able to have the surgery. But three years ago, I was finally able to have the surgery, and to celebrate, a lot of people who knew my dad came to visit me, and when they saw your painting, they were so surprised that they wanted me to enter it in a contest, or put it in a magazine, or sell it to them at a reasonable price."

"..... You didn't like the attention, did you?"

"..... I was just happy for a minute. Just a little, huh?"

When I saw Mimana shaking her shoulders as if she was uncomfortable, I said, "Hey.

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

(alt: I don't know what made me happy, but ... well, because he said that, Akiharu decided to keep quiet.) The first thing you need to do is to look at the corner of your eye.

I don't like it when people expect a lot from me, and I don't like it when strangers tell me what they want me to draw or what awards they want me to win. Besides, I had to have several surgeries, and when I was finally cured two years ago and could go to school normally, though I was a few years behind everyone else, even the school teachers wanted me to draw pictures and work hard for the school. I didn't like that, so I transferred to Hakuryoryo. That's why I transferred to Hakuryoryo.

(alt: "... But I don't like the fact that my uncle, who I don't know, asks me what kind of drawing I want to draw or what kind of prize I want to aim for. And I had surgery many times, and finally two years ago. I've been cured of my illness and I've been a few years behind everyone, but when I can go to school normally, I want the school teacher to draw a picture, and I'll do my best for the school ... I didn't like it, so I transferred to Hakurei Ryo. ") Are you sure you're okay here?

Yes, the press is not allowed in here. We get a permit once or twice a year, but it's monitored. Dorm life isn't much fun, but it's much better than when I was outside.

"..... I see."

(alt: "..... I see.") I could imagine how disgusted she was by the look on her face and the sound of her voice as she spoke with a sigh.

And, you know, it's still expected of us here.

The attitude of the ladies in the art club was, in hindsight, similar to that of an idol.

It's a way of dealing with people your own age who are different from you, who are on the other side of the world, with whom you will never cross paths.

I understand that, but I'm still going to ask.

"Aside from the art club, do you have any classmates or dorm room neighbors that you get along with?"

"..... Not much."

(alt: "..... not really") Maybe you're isolated in class?

"..... That's not true. Everyone at treats me with respect."

(alt: "U ... That's not true. Everyone ... They treat me politely.") I'm not sure if I'm being treated as a guest or a celebrity.

(alt: After all, is it treated as a category called guest or entertainer?) Akiharu has no idea how good this little senior is at drawing.

I know that you are still talking and running your pencil lightly, and that you are trying to draw a horse that doesn't belong here, and that it is very beautiful, but I can't give you an expert opinion, and I can't compare you to famous painters.

But from what I've heard, I don't think I'm at a level where I can teach an art club advisor. At the same time, it would be difficult to teach others.

In addition, he said that there were no other students his age because he was still in school. Maybe it's because I spent so much time in the hospital, but I don't seem to be very social.

I'm sure you'll get along just fine. Tomomi? She's not really that evil, so I think she'll do well.

Tomomi is a good friend of, but is not.

I can't hear what he's saying in his mouth, but apparently it's not working.

It's a little surprising that it's even Tomomi. — I see, that's why.

(alt: Even Tomomi is a little surprising, but ... — I see, that's why.) So it's nice to meet you.

I don't know what he said, but he did.

(alt: What did he say?) I'm sure you'll be happy to know that I'm not the only one who's not afraid to ask questions.

(alt: Recalling her childhood friend's smile that seemed to see through everything, Akiharu lifted her mouth slightly.) I'm sure it's going to play out just as the black-hearted man had envisioned.

(alt: It seems that Domo will develop as the hungry black drew.) Well, I guess I don't have a choice.

And that's what I want.

I don't mean to sound judgmental, but this is not a bad thing.

So Akiharu put his hand lightly on Minna's head, whose face had a sullen expression after complaining.

He looked up at me with a blatantly scared reaction, which I returned with a smile and said, "Don't worry about what other people say. Do whatever you want."

"Oh, and?"

The puzzled, wide-eyed, gibbering Mimana looked like a small animal, which was undoubtedly amusing, and much better than the sullen expression on her face earlier.

But a smile looks much better than that.

I'm sure you've heard of it, but I'm not sure if you have.

(alt: With that in mind, Akiharu stroked his head as if to stir his hair.) I'm saying that I don't care about talent or what people expect of me. If you want to draw, draw it and show it to people. But if you don't want to draw, don't draw. It's the responsibility of adults to push a young child to the limit.

"I'm not a child. I'm not a child.

If you don't want to do it, just say so. So, if you don't want to do it, all you have to do is say so. It's not like studying or finding a job, but painting. It's not like you're a professional, so how can you complain about something you're doing as a hobby?

I'm sure the adults would have a hell of a lot to complain about, but we're the only ones here, so it's all good.

(alt: I think it's a word that would make a ridiculous amount of complaints when the adults hear it, but it's okay because we're the only ones here.) "....., but"

(alt: "..... And, but") In this situation where there is no one else to look at, Mimana's expression became clouded with anxiety.

After all that complaining, she has this look on her face, like she's a good girl.

I wonder what it is.

That's why I want to support them properly.

I can't leave a healthy senior like her alone.

I'm sure that there are many people who send in their expectations, who genuinely want to support you and see your drawings. However, regardless of the number of people or the purity of their feelings, it doesn't change the fact that they are being selfish. And if you are criticized for responding with "I don't want to draw it," that's just violence. It's not worth listening to."

(alt: "— There are many people who want to support the voices of their expectations and want to see the pictures drawn by their seniors. However, the quality of their thoughts is high. It's pure, but it's still my word. And if I'm blamed for "I don't want to draw", it's just violence. It's not even worth listening to. What? ") "..... Yes, maybe. Butor is it"

I don't know. So, if they make too much noise, tell them, "If you expect me to do something, just shut up and I'll show you my drawings when I feel like it. "So, if he's bothering you, tell him, 'If you expect me to do something, just shut up, and I'll show you my drawings when I feel like it.

(alt: "Oh. So if you're noisy, say it. If you're expecting it, shut up, and if you feel like it, I'll show you the picture you drew.") "Yeah, that's a little rough, don't you think?"

"So don't worry about it. "So don't worry about it. Isn't it annoying when people interfere with what you love to do?"

In response to the question, Mimana opened her mouth reflexively, but her lips twisted into a mumble as if to keep her mouth shut, and after a long pause, she said,

"..... Yeah.

He nodded with a small voice.

In order to reward him for his honesty, Akiharu patted his head roughly again and smiled out of the corner of his eye.

"Do what you want, senior. If the people around you say you're annoying, I'll act as a bug repellent like before.

"..... Are you sure? Are you sure you can help me?

"Yeah, I got it. After all, I'm a butler. I'm going to be a butler because I want to help people. Well, the tuition and dormitory fee waiver is a big deal, too.

(alt: "Oh, leave it to me. After all, I'm a subordinate department? I'm aiming for a suspicious profession like a butler because I want to help someone Well, the tuition and dormitory exemption is big.") The last thing she added was a small smile, as if she couldn't take it anymore.

When I finally see a child's smile, it gives me a sense of accomplishment.

Also, I sometimes think that being a nursery school teacher or an elementary school teacher is too good to be true, but if I'm caught thinking like that, I'm sure I'll get pissed off again.

(alt: Also, I think it's hard to throw away nursery teachers and elementary school teachers, but when I think about that, I'm likely to get sick again.) As Akiharu was biting back a laugh, Mimana suddenly thrust her hand in front of him, holding a pencil.

When I was wondering what was going on, she looked at me restlessly, then looked away, her cheeks reddening slightly, and said, "Well, you know, if you want to, but you know.

"Oh,?"

Let's see,, the picture model, can you do that for me?"

"Oh,, that's fine. Now?"

"Yes, yes. Just stay where you are."

Mimana stood up, still holding her sketchbook and pencil, and slowly stepped back to sit down on the grass.



"You know, you can move around if you want. I don't want you to be too violent, but you can do whatever you want, okay?"

Copy that. Keep as quiet as you can.

In response, Akiharu turned his gaze away from Mimana.

It may be embarrassing to be seen while drawing, and even if it is not, it is embarrassing to be the one being drawn.

Tēm... Tēm...

(alt: 「―――」)"

It suddenly becomes quiet, and you can hear distant noises and voices on the wind.

In the background, there was the faint scraping sound of a pencil on paper.

The sun was shining brightly and it was humid and hot, just like the rainy season, and I was sweating in my long-sleeved morning coat.

Even so, there was an air of peace and tranquility in the back of the library that made me feel like time was moving slowly.

It's not bad to spend time like this, Akiharu thought, trying not to pay attention to the stares pouring down on him, and leaning his back against the monument in preparation for the long battle.

When the test ends at 5:00 p.m.

Akiharu was carrying Mina on his back as he headed for the girls' dormitory.

After filling up several sketchbooks, she fell asleep as if she was satisfied with her work, because she had been working with her pencil without resting or drinking water.

I had planned to wait until I woke up, but as the sun turned west, the clouds started to fade and the air turned rainy.

So Akiharu decided to carry Mimana on his back to the girls' dormitory.

"....." and "....."

(alt: "Uh Hmm, uh") Mimana, who occasionally muttered something behind her back, was surprisingly light.

I've always thought that high school students and nineteen-year-olds are lies, and that they're actually in elementary school.

Compared to carrying bales of rice or an antique chest of drawers on my back, I have a lot more room.

Anyway, Akiharu walked with the small senior at her back until she reached the girls' dormitory in the upper education department.

I was overwhelmed by the huge women's dormitory and wondered what I should do now.

There are three women's dormitories, so if you don't know which building the seniors live in, you can't leave them there.

I could have just asked someone, but I don't want to start any strange rumors and get you all in trouble, and I'm a little nervous about going into the girls' dormitory, so I don't want to.

..... No, troubled is the correct answer.

I saw a familiar face in front of a Western-style castle.

The other side seems to have noticed us, and has been looking at us ever since.

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

(alt: Akiharu nodded a little to his childhood friend who said that he was mischievous.) (alt: When I got close to him, Tomomi finally lifted her heavy hips and approached me, looking into the faces of all of her bearers ... smiling.) It looks like you did a good job, huh?

At those words, Akiharu said, "I knew it.

I was about to say, "I'm sorry," but then I stopped at

(alt: I tried to say ... I stopped.) I have many things to say and many questions to ask.

However, this is not the right situation to talk to Tomomi, the root of all evil.

Tomomi seemed to think so too, and whispered softly, "....., can you hang out with me for a while?

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

After leaving her with Tomomi to carry her into the dormitory, and then having the matron carry her to her room, the process was complete.

Akiharu followed Tomomi about three steps behind her to the fountain in the center of the garden, where he had once conducted a nighttime stakeout on alert.

I told her what had happened during our time together, so by the time Tomomi sat down on the bench and asked me to sit down as well, I had the general gist of what was going on.

So, Akiharu decided to ask the important part of the question frankly.

"You were expecting me to say something irresponsible, weren't you?"

Yeah, that's right.

Tomomi then continued, "I couldn't do it myself, so I left it to Akiharu. I'm still grateful to you, you know?"

"You don't look so good. And why can't you?

She's a shady, black-hearted, scheming woman, but she's also a caring, meddlesome woman.

It was my impression that Akiharu would never leave Mimana alone, but I don't understand why he can't.

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(alt: When I was skeptical about my eyebrows, Tomomi smiled as if she had given up.) I know Mr. Sakurazawa's paintings. That's why I can't."

"What's? What does that mean?"

I'm one of those people who expect a lot from you. Of course, I understood the anxiety and pressure he was under, so I rarely said anything about it. But I couldn't say that I didn't want him to draw it, even if I thought about him... ..

(alt: "I'm one of the people I'm looking forward to. Of course, I didn't say that I rarely said that because I understood the anxiety and pressure that he had, but ... but I don't have to draw it. I can't say even if I'm thinking about the other person ... ") "It's"

Even if it's a lie, even if it's a comfort, I can't tell you why.

When Akiharu imagined this, he was stunned.

I thought he was a great artist because he said so himself, but is he really that great? Someone like Tomomi, who can look at someone without labeling them, or someone who sometimes does things to her own disadvantage, but to the point where she can't move? At least, Akiharu has never seen such an influential art.

So I don't really feel it at all.

I didn't even look at my drawing in my sketchbook because I didn't think it would be polite to look at it when everyone was asleep.

So all I knew was a picture of a pony that I drew for comfort.

Is Mimana's painting really that great? It's amazing, really. There is an anecdote that the former president of the board of directors personally went there to appeal for protection.

Suddenly, Tomomi said, as if she could see right through me.

This witch must have sensed what we were thinking from the expression on our faces. It's not something to be underestimated, and it's not something to be taken lightly.

But it's "direct protection."

He said.

What kind of natural monument is this?

No, in this case, a living national treasure? That's a bit ostentatious, don't you think?

"So you used me because you hadn't seen the picture and didn't know my previous information?"

That's what I meant. Akiharu was the type of person who was liked by animals and younger children, wasn't he? He was the type of person who was liked by animals and younger children, right?

"..... You're still the same old schemer, aren't you? You're still the same old schemer, and your cat-calling has gone up a notch.

Thank you very much for the compliment.

No, it's not a compliment.

That's not a compliment at all.

This is not a compliment in the slightest.

Tomomi's smile never faltered, despite the fact that I could tell that she was thinking with all her might.

See it and understand it.

In his own way, he's really grateful.

I can't complain anymore, now that I know.

This is not fair.

I'm not sure what to do.

(alt: Akiharu stood up from the bench, sighing because he couldn't help it.) I could hear the bell ringing in the distance, and that was the end of the test.

"Well,, I'm going back to class. What are you going to do?"

I think I'll go back to the dorm after I submit my report. I want to see how Mr. Sakurazawa is doing.

Okay, good work. Oh, and make sure you don't tail me too much. And don't get the drill involved.

(alt: "Then, I'm tired Ah, and the tail should be moderate. It's also possible to involve the drill.") "Oh, they knew, didn't they? Hmmm... If you're not alone, they'll know.

Tomomi stood up, saying something that showed no sign of remorse.

She stretches lightly and then softly flips her skirt, and that's all it takes to change her impression from a frank childhood friend to a classy, honorable student who can compete with the ladies of genuine culture.

It's such a beautiful change that a stranger might think you've been transformed by a fox.

Tomomi, who had changed the atmosphere of the room into a bit of an illusion, bowed respectfully and said, "Thank you very much for your hard work today. Please look forward to your exam results, okay?"

He smiled a smile so destructive that a stranger might fall in love with him at first sight.

"Well, take care of it."

Akiharu responded brusquely and quickly turned his back and walked away.

I wanted to leave this place as soon as possible.
Specifically, I want to get some distance from Tomomi.

..... Oh, shit. Oh, shit.

(alt: Ah, shit, crap.) I almost fell in love with him, even though I know his true nature well enough.

I'm not sure if I've learned enough yet, or if I've just been reminded that men are simple.
Feeling the anguish in his chest like a coiled coil, Akiharu picked up the pace and started running to make it go away.

(alt: It's said that there isn't enough training yet, or that the man is reminded that it's simple ... I started running.) Two weeks later.

As a result, or perhaps as a matter of course, I got a good grade in the exam.

I don't know how much this will lead to in the future, but for now, having good grades is not a bad feeling.

(alt: I don't know how much it will lead to the future, but for the time being, it feels good to have good grades.) Well, that's just the way it is.

The questions came up in unexpected ways throughout the exam.

"This is It's amazing."

In the cafeteria during lunch break, Tomomi's voice, which was barely audible, was already painful to my ears.

A magazine that will be released today is spread out on a table facing each other.

In a monthly art magazine, there was a special issue on "Mimana Sakurazawa.

In the Q&A section of the book, the answers to some of the questions were really amazing.

Where is your favorite place to visit, Mr. Sakurazawa?

I'll go anywhere as long as there's a boy next to me I can count on.

..... The result of a child's innocence. Incidentally, there is another reason why Akiharu wants to hold his head in his hands.

(alt: The result of the innocence of the child, or what is it By the way, there is another reason why Akiharu wants to hold his head.) For two weeks now, a certain drill head lady has been broadcasting, "That Mimi Sakurazawa was taken into the library by a new student in the education department, and then she just disappeared.

It was a rumor that could have become one of the seven wonders of Hakureiryo.

The spears were raining down on us, and the whispering was a little louder than usual.

In addition, out of the corner of my eye, a blonde drill with a tall Chinese phoenix is approaching with an aura of anger that would scare any demon away.

I don't know why he's so angry, but I think he must have misunderstood me in a big way.

(alt: I don't know why I'm angry, but it must have been magnificently misunderstood.) The thought of what was to come gave me a serious headache, and Akiharu let out a huge sigh and said, "..... Well, you know. Good luck with, okay?"

You've got to take some responsibility!

I'm sure you've heard of it, but I'm not sure if you have.

(alt: I screamed unintentionally at Tomomi, who screamed at me with sympathy.)