

Overnight outings were usually some kind of fun event.

I remember waking up early on the morning of a forest school or school trip for the entire school year, or a family trip or a visit to my grandparents' house, because they were scheduled weeks in advance.

And yet, Akiharu Hino was at the very bottom of his state of mind as he approached the overnight event.

I have been worried about this kind of event ever since I transferred to Hakuryo.
(alt:Or rather, ever since I was transferred to the White Mausoleum, I have always felt uneasy about this kind of event.) It should be more exciting and fun, shouldn't it? Since there was no one in the car who could answer such a question in his mind, Akiharu sighed as he completed himself without any choice.

I was like, "Oh, it's so gloomy. It is the cause of the bad mood, so you should at least try to brighten it up a little.

A harsh voice came from diagonally across the street, which added insult to injury to the blue.

In the rear seats facing each other, which are spacious enough for six people, sit two classmates other than Akiharu.

The one in front of me, diagonally to my left, was Selnia Iori Flameheart, who was looking at me with an expression that was difficult to handle.

It was already getting quite cold, but what about a thin blouse and a mini-skirt that made me want to ask how many inches above the knees it was?

Although only the long dark brown boots were appropriate for the season, overall, the women were so lightly dressed that it was not surprising if they caught a cold.

What is surprising, however, is that after an hour of riding in the car that was waiting for us in front of the main gate after we left the Hakuryo mausoleum, he finally said a single word.

It is not like Selnia to be silent all the time and to close her mouth after opening it only for a single shot.

If it's not like that, the other passenger was the same.

Tomomi Saikei, aka Mr. Black-hearted Tomomi, who folded the jacket she was wearing before getting in the car and put it on her lap, has not said a word yet.

The two or three layers of innerwear and the medium-length skirt, with its emphasis on warmth, were just as usual, but there was a certain air of being somewhere else.

I was going to Tomomi's house.

The Beauty Festival

Tomomi's mother, Mikako Saikyo, whom I met unexpectedly at the time of the "Saikei Residence Visit Tour" on the middle day of a three-day weekend the week after next, at her invitation or order.

The event was decided to go ahead.

Not only Tomomi, her daughter, but also Selnia's boyfriend was with her, whether by chance or not.

Akiharu thought she could handle at least one more man, so she tried to break out of her situation of being the only male by inviting her roommate, Daichi, but unfortunately, he was going back to his parents' house for a legal matter over the holiday weekend.

I had no choice but to go to the event without a companion. I had no idea the atmosphere would be so grim.

(alt: Although I had no choice but to go without a companion... I didn't expect the atmosphere to be so oppressive.) I'm not sure how much longer I'm going to have to stay in this awkward position, Akiharu said, reaching for the safety pin in his right ear "It's about time," he said. We are almost there.

(alt: Akiharu, unsettled, stretched out his hand to the safety pin in his right ear, wondering how much longer he would have to be embarrassed.) Tomomi, who had remained silent until then, said this while looking out the window.

She suddenly started talking, which made my knees buckle, and I hid my embarrassment while asking her questions.

It took you quite a while, but where are you geographically?"

It was a long way from Hakuryo, but it was in Tokyo. It is a quiet residential area, with no particular tourist attractions.

The voice was flat, and I thought to myself, "Oh, really?"

I am tempted to just think, "I'm not going to do anything about it."

I was so impressed with the way she looked at me. But Akiharu, who knows Tomomi to a certain extent, could sense something different about her and looked into her clear profile.

(alt:But, Akiharu, who knew Tomomi quite a bit, sensed something else, and looked at her clear profile.) I don't know what that feeling is, but it's like you're in a bad mood?

I don't know what she's talking about when she's just going back to her parents' house.

It should be obvious from his personality that he would not behave like that because of Selnia's presence.

Rather, Tomomi is always happy to provoke and play with them.

While Akiharu was twisting his neck, wondering why he was in such a bad mood, the car slowly began to slow down.

When you come to a complete stop, look beyond the smoked window and you'll see "..... Oh!

Saikyo" at the gate

The house had the appearance of a luxury home, with a nameplate that read, "The house is for sale."

The elderly driver opened the door for me, and I followed Tomomi out and looked at it again. Yes, it is big after all.

(alt: The elderly driver opened the door for me, so I followed Tomomi outside and looked again.) With its modern architectural design and spacious yard that looks like it could accommodate a large dog, it seems to have the atmosphere of a house in an American TV drama.

On holidays, we barbecue as a family.

..... is not.

What's the matter with you, Akibei? What's the matter with you, Autumn Sun? You look so blurry.

What's more

Did you expect a more grandiose home?"

Tomomi's words made Akiharu nod in agreement.

The Sai Kyung family was treated like a very wealthy family in Hakuryo, so I assumed that the house would be a Western-style building or that it would take several minutes to walk from the gate to the house.

You may laugh at me for thinking so poorly, but if you get used to Hakuryo, you will experience firsthand that such a world exists for real, so the idea of a grand house as depicted in a painting is not an exaggerated dream.

So, while not quite a disappointment (.....), it is a bit discouraging.

When Akiharu looked at the neighbor, wondering what kind of reaction the drill would have since he thought so, Selnia, who was staring at the Saikei residence with her arms folded in a glare, said, "..... hmmm. It's not my taste, but it's a very tasteful house.

Is that how you feel? I was thinking more like this

You should take into account the housing situation in Tokyo, which is even smaller than the rest of the small island nation. Besides, I heard that there are mansions in the suburbs as well.

..... What? There's more than just here?"

Yes, I have something in the name of the company. We have a big house that is used only a few times a month for company business, and a condo in the city where my busy father-in-law stays. It's not my personal property, so it's the only place I can call home.

..... I thought I was used to talking about rich people, but I guess I was still a little in the dark.

No, but what does it mean to have two or three houses?

I don't understand what you mean by "company use", and it seems to be used for different purposes than a vacation home. There are many limits to the imagination of the average person, aren't there?

It's as if my imagination is not up to par.

As Akiharu was once again experiencing the difference between the worlds, the gate in front of him began to open automatically to the left and right.

The moment he realized who it was, his back naturally straightened.

The first time I went to the store, I was in the middle of the night, and I was in the middle of the night, and I was in the middle of the night, and I was in the middle of the night, and I was in the middle of the night, and I was in the middle of the night, and I was in the middle of the night. I was in the middle of the night, and I was in the middle of the night, and I was in the middle of the night, and I was in the middle of the night.

(alt: I get restless and uneasy, wondering if it's okay to wear a black blouson and slightly faded jeans... I feel like a middle school student who ran into a yankee or a police officer on his way home from a convenience store late at night.) While Akiharu was telling himself to calm down, Tomomi's mother, who was hundreds of times scarier than a delinquent or the state authorities, was right around the corner.

Mikako Saikei, who is definitely the boss in the game, looked at me with a smile on her face and said, "Thank you all for coming. I can't offer you much hospitality, but please take your time and enjoy your stay.

Ah... WATCH: Yes.

Thank you for inviting us. It is an honor for me personally and as a daughter of the Flamehart family to be invited to the main residence of Ms. Takumi Aikyo, who has grown so rapidly and taken control of the group at such a young age. I was actually planning to bring a souvenir for her, but

I'm sure it's because Tomo-chan refused, right? I'm the one who invited her, so I deserve to be treated with hospitality.

Unlike my own confused and uninteresting response, Selnia was very polite in returning the courtesy.

I feel that the difference in experience was evident in this area.

I mean, we don't have that idea of a souvenir.

And as for the daughter, who was invited, or rather returned, silently staring at her mother's face.

Although she is not staring at me, I can't sense a friendly atmosphere, and Akiharu, who is just standing by, is more nervous than I am.

..... or rather, since Tomomi is the only one who can have a friendly conversation with the boss here, please give us a more sophisticated and light-hearted talk that can lead us to the right place.

Even in Selnia, there seems to be no room for anything more than a formal greeting, and I am out of the question because I am too drunk to talk about anything else.

Despite Akiharu's wish, his childhood friend, the one person he can count on, has made no comment, and Mikako is not going to go into it either.

Parents and children should be more like, "Long time no see, how are you?"

"Oh, my God, what a mother. We met just the other day."

I would have liked to have had a conversation with them to lighten the mood.

Let's go inside quickly. I have prepared some tea for you in anticipation of your arrival.

"Let's see,, so I'll take your word for it.?"

Mikako's mouth breaks into a smile when Akiharu says something like that because she can't think of the right words to say.

It was a little embarrassing, like a response to seeing a small child growing taller.

As Akiharu scratched the back of his head, Mikako turned on her heel and walked toward her house.

Selnia followed suit, before stepping out to herself.

"..... Hey, what's going on?"

I became curious, so I quietly spoke to Tomomi in a whisper.

Then, looking at Akiharu with a defiant stare, the hungry black man said, "..... It's nothing. Let's go, Akiharu.

I give a reply that is not much of an answer, and stroll off after the mothers.

As she left him behind and quickly walked away, Akiharu asked, "What is it about
.....?"

I could not find an answer that made sense to me, and while tilting my head slightly, I followed the trail at a somewhat fast pace.

What the hell is going on here?

When his mother told him she was going to prepare tea, he immediately said, "I'll help too.

Tomomi raised her hand and went to the kitchen with her mother.

I wanted to ask them right away, but I thought that they might overhear me in the hallway, so I held back until I entered the living room with the kitchen and closed the door, so it should not be surprising that my voice became raspy.

"Oh, what is it? It's not like you to ask questions that don't get to the point, is it?"

In response to the way she says things without hiding her unhappiness, Mikako, the mother, maintains an expression of such joy that one might expect her to start humming a tune.

Tomomi's mood worsened as she felt that she had seen through her daughter's words and actions.

I know my mother is better than me.

However, whether or not to be satisfied with the situation is another story.

So Tomomi decided to ask her mother the specific questions she wanted as she began to boil water with an electric kettle.

How many phone calls and e-mails do you think I've made between the end of the Reibi Festival and today? And if you're ignoring all of them and pretending not to care, mom, do you think I'm just starting to lose my mind and forget about it?"

When I included words related to their age, which they hate the most, they became somewhat displeased.

I think it's a good mood.

The fact that we are losing in terms of age means that we have the advantage of youth, and we cannot afford not to take full advantage of it.

..... is just harassment, though.

While I was waiting to see how the person who had sworn at me would react, the mother who had brought the tray with the tea set near me glared at me and said, "You are such a naughty child, aren't you? I was only teasing you a little.

"Did you just tease me at"?"

"Most of you probably thought you would ask me about the true reason why I called Akiharu and Flameheart, didn't you? That's why I just gave them a silent reply saying that I was looking forward to it until the day of the event."

..... Really, my parents are bad"! Tomomi took a small, deep breath, holding back the urge to bite her back teeth.

If you get on the other team's pace, you have lost at that point.

Although it is my home, it is now a favorable place for the other party.

For me, it was like being away from home.

If I didn't calmly read through my mother's intentions, I was bound to get an uninteresting turn of events.

I will never let you do that.! Tomomi made a firm resolution and, at the same time, tried to speak in the flattest possible voice to her mother, who was pouring boiling water into the teapot.

(alt: I will never let you do that...! At the same time as Tomomi made up her mind, she turned her back to her mother, who was pouring boiling water into the teapot, and tried to speak as calmly as possible.) I don't care what your mother is up to, but it's not nice to have her stirring up things that are making me uncomfortable. Can you please stop acting like an old woman?"

..... You use such a nasty word again, "old woman's mind". It's an unfortunate word to use for me, a person who is often mistaken for a twenty-something.

(alt: "...Old woman's mind, you use a nasty word again. It's a completely unsuitable kanji for someone like me, who is often mistaken for being in my twenties.") I think you should be more self-aware now that you are in your forties. Isn't that what the young assistant said to you at the hospital?"

They don't say that. I am often told, 'You are really young, doctor! I am often told that.

But my mother, whose expression turned slightly sulky, glanced at her daughter and said, "I just wanted to have a little chat with the two people you keep talking about, Especially Akiharu, the last time I saw him was Wow, eight years ago? I wanted to see how much that timid and gentle boy had grown over that long time.

That wish came true at the Reibi Festival, didn't it?

Oh, you can't tell much from just standing around talking. Besides, you know... ..

(alt: "Oh, you can't understand a big deal just by standing and talking like that. Besides... fufu...") Tomomi couldn't help but frown and hold her tongue as her mother burst out laughing in the middle of her words.

I was alarmed by the fact that he was definitely thinking of something bad, and I wondered what he was going to say. "I told you before, if you see a boy you like, bring him to me."

"....."

(alt: 「 」) (alt: 「 」) (alt: 「 」) (alt: 「 」) But you didn't bring him to me at all, so I called him over here."

As I expected, he said something outrageous.

"Hey, Mom! What, that's... that's... that's just a selfish!"

"Oh, is that my premature assumption?"

Yes! It's not that kind of thing with Akiharu.

I'm not sure that's true. I thought it would have reached the level of 'curious' in my opinion, but?"

"....., that's... that's... that's... that's... .."

(alt: "... uh, what is it...") First she tried to deny it, then her mouth twisted in frustration.

I want to curse my mother.

That's what you like, right?"

And, "You don't have to fool around, you know."

If she had said something like, "I don't care," I could have denied it outright and then laid out my mother's blindness.

(alt: If I had been told something like that, I would have been able to clearly deny it and then line up about my mother's inability to see... "I'm curious.") If it's as bad as that, you're right to be concerned about it, so don't press hard:! The deceptive tactic was too clever to be used.

For my mother, it's "Reibi Matsuri.

The scene where Akiharu and Selnia are talking with each other is seen at the time of the "K". It's unclear how much we can infer from that, but we can't rule out the possibility that he was listening and timing his exit at the time.

In addition, he must have heard that I had taken Akiharu to the meeting.

And yet, "I don't care at all."

It is like offering your body to your opponent and asking him to poke you.

At the very least, if I were told such a thing, I would attack with glee.

..... I'm frustrated, but I have no choice but to pull out.

After biting her lower lip lightly, Tomomi turned to her mother's happy profile as she prepared her tea and said, "..... Don't get too excited, okay? My patience has its limits.

It's okay, you don't have to put up with anything. I like your obnoxious and energetic Tomo-chan better than the clear-cut, princess-like Tomo-chan.

Then, you must have a lot of problems. He's a student at Hakuryo, and so is his father-in-law."

If Mr. Takumi is that small of a man, you can rest assured I'll be divorcing him soon.

He is happy to hear such a bombshell statement.

Tomomi sighed loudly, thinking that her own parents had done a terrible thing.

Although it was only for a few minutes, being away from home alone with just the two of them in someone else's house was very uncomfortable, Akiharu realized.

In the reception room, there were two sofas facing each other that could seat up to four people, and Akiharu and Selnia were sitting side by side on them.

Well, I guess that's fair enough.

It is natural for two parents and their children to sit side by side, and it is also natural for the guests themselves to sit on the same sofa.

..... But being left alone with her, it felt strange and a little tense.

"....."

"....."

I wondered if I should say something, but Akiharu couldn't say anything.

It is even more difficult to open one's mouth because of the similar atmosphere coming from Selnia, the neighbor.

To begin with, when I think about it, it's not often that I get to talk to Selnia in a calm and relaxed manner.

They said that they had nothing better to do, that they were being harassed, and that even though they were classmates, they did not talk to each other every day.

So, when it comes to conversations like this, just to fill in the gaps, what the heck are you "Oh, by the way, you..."

..... Oh? What?"

When he was almost at his wits' end when he was spoken to, Akiharu was relieved and at the same time a little surprised.

I feel like I understand how a father feels when he is facing his daughter at her age for the first time in a while.

I'm glad to be able to talk about it, but I feel as if I've been caught off-guard, and I'm very nervous.

I was careful not to let it show on my face as I looked up, and there was a slightly different, more mature or tense profile than usual.

With her eyes fixed on the glass table between the sofas, Selnia says, "You are acquainted with Tomomi's mother, Saikei Mikako, aren't you?"

Ah,, well, yes. I've only met him a few times when I was a kid.

(alt: "Ah... Well, that's right. Even though I met him a few times when I was little...") But I was strongly impressed by the fact that Tomomi's mother and "..... What's the matter? Suddenly, she looked as if she was tormented by the guilt of stealing.

You don't look like that! No, it's about Mikako.

"..... What's going on?"

It was quite natural that Selnia asked suspiciously, so Akiharu decided that he had no choice but to accept the situation.

I was like, "What's the point of having one or two more embarrassments now, you son of a bitch?"

I was taken to him once when I had a cavity. He didn't give me anesthesia, and I still have a faint memory of how painful it was.

Oh, by the way,, you used to be a dentist."

Selnia, seemingly convinced, tries to explain the situation in more detail and says, "Well, I haven't quit my dental practice yet, have I?"

Just then, just as the parlor door opened, a voice came in.

Reflexively, I look to see Mikako holding a tray with a tea set and Tomomi behind her holding a plate of chiffon cake.

Just like last time, what kind of timing does this guy have?

Is there a surveillance camera somewhere, watching on a monitor while waiting for them to come out? As Akiharu was imagining this, Mikako put the tea set on the table and smiled meaningfully at him.

We don't use anesthesia for children who are undergoing cavity treatment for the first time. Otherwise, they won't understand the importance of brushing their teeth, right?"

I'm sure might be the case.

(alt: "Certainly... it might be so.") I told her, "If you don't want to have such a painful experience, you should brush your teeth properly," and after she nodded her head, the treatment was finally completed. You did the same with Akiharu-kun, didn't you?

"..... Yes, that's right."

(alt: "... Yes, that's right.") Akiharu also remembered that time.

After a few days of crying and pleading with the dentist, he smiled through his mask and said, "No matter how much I apologize, I won't stop you, so just give yourself up.

I had a nightmare of Mikako whispering happily to me, "I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry.

I'd rather forget about it, but I think I'll probably remember it even when I become an old man.

Sinking into the sofa with a slight yawn,..... but Akiharu soon found himself leaning forward somewhat to get up.

After all, as Mikako poured tea into her tea cup, she said, "Oh yes, I remember the first time I met Takumi, we talked about the same thing.

"What? That person is, I think,"

It's your father-in-law.

Tomomi's answer was corroborated by her mother, who looked at her with a slightly lukewarm gaze.

Well, it might be embarrassing for my daughter to talk about her relatives.

On the other hand, even if I wanted her to stop, Mikako is not the kind of person who would listen to me, so there is no point in saying so.

But it is of some interest to Akiharu.

It's a little different from the Cinderella story (.....), but it's odd that you don't care what it takes to turn a reputable female dentist into the wife of a wealthy man.

Naturally, Selnia, another upper secondary student with a penchant for gossip, shared this opinion and looked at Mikako with expectant eyes.

Was Takumi Saikei at the dentist's office where you worked?

Yes. I was so busy with work that I had noticed I had a cavity, but I neglected it, and when it became unbearably painful, I finally decided to see a dentist. I was appalled at the severity of the cavity, but more than that, he asked me, 'Can you please give me treatment as quickly as possible? I have work to do after this,' he said. He also said, 'I'm on a long-distance trip, so I can't come here, so please make a copy of my medical record. It was a terrible thing to say.

I thought she was very passionate about her work, but Mikako seemed to have a different opinion, "So after I treated her without anesthesia and without listening to her whining, I told her, 'I'm not going to let you do this. After I gave you the treatment without anesthesia and without listening to your whining, I told her, "I have done the treatment for now, but for someone like you who cannot even take care of her own teeth, I will teach you how to brush your teeth. If you can't do that, I'll pull out all your teeth and put in full dentures.

"....."
"....."

Not only Akiharu but also Selnia was absolutely stunned by this line.
However, I think Selnia and myself would have different impressions.

Although it was a long time ago, as someone who knew Mikako at the time, I can say, "Oh,, she's going to say that, or at least that much."

I was surprised to see the "I'm sorry" mixed in with the "I'm sorry".
(alt: It's a mixture of convincing.) She was beautiful and soft-spoken, yet among children she was a symbol of awe.

So, um,, Mr. Takumi, you didn't get mad?"

When I finally decided what to call her, Mikako smiled happily and said her name.

But he was so surprised that he left without even talking to me. But the next week he came back to my house and said, 'Well, I'd like you to do the same thing as last time, but without the full dentures.' I burst out laughing."

..... Why did Takumi decide to come back?

Of course, it's because you're in love with me, isn't it?"

The way he confidently asserts it is nothing short of quintessential.

Selnia is known for spreading her confidence around unnecessarily, and I think the fact that she only cracks her big eyes open when Mikako says something proves how great it is that she said it.

"If I get all my dental work done, won't I have no reason to come back? That's why he confessed to me on the last day. That was so funny, wasn't it?"

"Mother, you talk a little too much. Why don't you consider your father-in-law's situation?

It's okay, that's all right. When I proposed to her, I told her that I wasn't going to accommodate her, but if that was okay with her, then I would do it. If it makes me look bad, it's just because she was blind.

He is a man who makes such outrageous statements without hesitation. Even so, Akiharu sighed in admiration, not disgust, because he knew at least a little bit about this kind of person.

(alt:This person makes outrageous remarks without hesitation.....But the reason why Akiharu let out a sigh of admiration instead of being dumbfounded is because he knew more than a little about this kind of person.) It's not that he was discovered by a wealthy man and grew up, or that he was stalked by the upper class.

He has been like this since he was a neighborhood dentist.

Or should I say, a queenly disposition? And Tomomi's father-in-law has become a very bad image even before I met him, but is he really okay?

I think it's not good for the world that the head of a world-renowned conglomerate is at his wife's beck and call from the start.

Akiharu was always making a subtle face, but Tomomi's face was even more subtle.

If the story of my parents turns out like this, even she can no longer play the role of an honor student.

As I was thinking about how difficult it is to have a strong mother, I was eating the chiffon cake and thinking, "Oh, by the way, do you remember when Akiharu came to visit us for the first time?

The topic of conversation turned this way so that the fire would spread.

At the same time, her memories of the past are also thawed, and Akiharu bitterly drinks down the milk tea that is supposed to be sweet.

Here's the part where you say, "I don't remember, what are you talking about?"

If you can handle the situation in a cheerful and flirtatious manner, you may be able to make it into a funny story., but that is impossible.

(alt: If you can respond cheerfully like that, you might be able to take it to a funny story... but that's impossible.) "Ah, yes, I remember. I remember falling in the park and scraping my elbow.

.....

(alt: "Ah, yes, I remember that.) "Yes, you were bleeding, weren't you? And was she crying?

Thank you for the supplement.

It is better to have accurate information. It's nothing to be ashamed of, you haven't been in elementary school yet.

As Mikako says with a nostalgic look in her eyes, she should have been a kindergartener at that time.

But just because they are kindergartners does not mean that they are not ashamed of such an abomination as a man crying because a woman is chasing him around.

Moreover, I was taken to someone else's house still crying, and the stares of the mothers in the neighborhood who had been witnessing the event for a while were warm. "I was running away desperately from a chase and fell down, you know. Hah! You took the responsibility and brought her home, you know?"

..... because I don't remember as much as the two of us.

(alt: "...because I don't remember them as well as they do.") The answer was that he was so afraid that he would happily chase after us that he sometimes fell down because his feet were not under him.

I mean, that "don't say unnecessary things" aura.

I guess he remembers everything from his memory.

In the end, there was nothing to do but to watch, and when Akiharu looked away, scratching his finger on his neck, he said, ".....?"

Unusually, the Selnia guy looked subtle with a lowered eyebrow.

It's like she's forcing herself to cover up something she doesn't find interesting.? It is quite rare that Selnia, who is surprisingly sociable, makes a face like this.

Perhaps you remember feeling excluded because you are the only one who has no connection to the conversation? It's like listening to your classmates excitedly talking about the field trip you missed because you were absent.

No, but Selnia herself said before that at a party or something, you can't be bothered to listen to other people's bragging about themselves, and there's another reason: "Oh, by the way, you three are in the same class, aren't you? I heard that Flameheart has been attending Hakuryo since kindergarten, but I wonder how the atmosphere in the class is now that it's mixed sexes under the new system?"

I think it's a good idea. Basically, the upper education department members talk with each other, and the lower education department members talk with the upper education department members.

(alt: "Uh... yes, that's right. Basically, the people in the higher education department often talk to each other in the secondary education department, so...") As Akiharu was considering other possibilities, Mikako turned the conversation to Selnia.

Perhaps they sensed Drill's isolation and changed the subject.

I may have a mean-spirited side that I play with people, but I am an adult.

Well, that's why the look on Selnia's face tells me she has another reason to be concerned. But that's a minor problem.

It's important to note that Selnia, who doesn't seem to be getting any firmer, is finally joining in the conversation and her facial expressions are becoming clearer.

In that sense, it's a good thing that Akiharu is here, because if we keep talking like that, we never know when we'll end up talking about the embarrassing experiences we've seen and heard about in the past. "..... Also, since some commoner came in, there have been a lot of strange disputes, and that's a good thing for us, since it's not good for them.

"Oh, is this trouble involving you, Akiharu? Well, I also heard that the daughter of the Hadim family was taken in hand, and that the princess of the Sfor Kingdom has a slave.

..... It was as if I had drifted into an unhelpful story.

No, wait! What kind of criminal and low-life am I being treated like out there?

"It's okay, isn't it? More than half of it is true."

There are too many untruths, and even if you give credit where credit is due, there are too many problems with the wording!"

Also, based on testimony that he's been sneaking around with Mikuni Sakurazawa, the chancellor, and the middle school esteem students, he's been called an unprincipled, lousy pedophile, right?

Two of the names are older than me, and I'm only a year older than Pina, and I haven't done anything to warrant being called a control freak! Who's this guy who's making all these self-serving predictions based on facts?, Drill, you just turned away! You know something, don't you?

I wish you would stop making rude accusations! And you, you must have insulted my noble and sophisticated hairstyle again!

Selnia is yelling at me with a bright red face, but I should be the one who should be angry. And then her gaze wandered subtly, and I'm pretty sure she's guilty, this excavator speaker.

Mikako is smiling happily and Tomomi's eyes are turning into those of someone who has found a reasonable prey. What is this situation?

What does it mean to be in the middle of a whirlwind of sudden developments when you were just relieved that the topic had changed?

In the parlor, where there was no longer any room for reminiscing or status reports, Akiharu, who had become the subject of unreasonable rumors, glared at his neighbor, trying to somehow fight back, "You know, I'm always involved in these things, but I didn't do them voluntarily, right!

And if you're talking about trouble, then the dispute between you and Tomomi is the problem! What is wrong with me? There is not a single thing that I can be blamed for, as I have always been fair and honest in every situation!

I rather wonder how you can be such a big talker, but there are so many things you can be guilty of, you know! Last week you were yelling and screaming in the cafeteria, and for some reason I was the one who got yelled at.

"Well, that's because you, the waiter, didn't butt in and rebuke me!"

I was retrieving a fork that fell out of the ground because you were acting out of control, and the person who framed me for peeping and then knocked me over says that is more impressive than you can possibly imagine on Daichi's scale!

I don't know, but I don't think that's a compliment, do you?

"No, you should have known that right away! And you're too close, you're dangerously close, so get out of the way!

Unfortunately, Selnia, who is leaning forward as if she is about to attack at any moment, does not realize the cause of the heat on Akiharu's face.

In fact, his eyesight is becoming sharper and sharper.

It makes me want to scream at them to think a little more about their appearance and their distance from the opposite sex.

I looked at Saikei and his son, bending over for help, and one of them was smiling as if he was watching a funny scene, while the other was looking at? Despite the pressing situation, Akiharu couldn't help but notice Tomomi's expression.

Why does he look so grumpy? It's a usual pattern, or rather, considering Tomomi's character, just like her mother next to her, "Well, how can I play with this to make it more interesting?"

It is not surprising that they have a very troublesome expression on their faces.

At the very least, he should not be able to enjoy this situation as a third party.

..... Like Selnia and Tomomi earlier, there's something strange about today's situation - "You've got some nerve to ignore me after all!

What? No, this is wrong"

No questions asked.

Just as I was about to get into serious thought, a close-up of Selnia's face came into view, and she almost grabbed me by the bosom and said, "..... Oh my God!

In the spur of the moment when he tried to escape, he fell off the sofa, leaving Akiharu in a rather awkward position.

When Tomomi sat back down on the sofa, embarrassed at her disgrace and scratching her head, she mused in a sulky mood. The only thing Akiharu could do was to accept Selnia's angry words without any unnecessary rebellion, and he sighed in resignation.

(alt: Embarrassed by her disgrace, she scratched her head and sat back down on the sofa, but Tomomi became even more displeased... and if there was anything that the refreshing autumn weather could do, it wouldn't be an unnecessary rebellion. All I could do was accept Selnia's

angry words, and let out a sigh of resignation.) It has probably been about an hour since I was shown into the parlor.

"Well, why don't you take a look at the album?"

We had finished eating the cake, the tea that had been kept warm in the tea cozy was completely gone, and our conversation had somehow calmed down, when Mikako made a suggestion.

"The album is fine, but?"

I don't mind.

Yeah, me too.

When Akiharu readily agreed to the proposal since the two had already nodded their heads and there was no particular reason to reject it, Mikako gave an innocent smile that belied her age.

..... experience has taught me to be wary of that smile.

When my daughter has that kind of smile on her face, she usually gets involved in some crazy shit.

As Akiharu was trying to regain his composure, he said, "Well, I think it would be better to go to Tomo-chan's room rather than bringing the album to I have a lot of albums, and it's too much trouble to put them away. And, Mr. Flameheart."

Yes? What is it?"

I'm thinking of making a fresh pot of tea, but I was wondering if you would be willing to help me?

"Oh, I can do that kind of work for you at"

This is the time to work as an obedience student, so Akiharu stands up for himself, but Mikako simply shakes her head.

I appreciate the sentiment, but I would like you to start by choosing a tea set. I'm sure you've learned a lot, but you still can't compete with Flameheart who was born in the real world, can you?"

That's for sure.

"Hmph, even if you studied for ten years, you would not be able to match my knowledge and taste!"

Selnia's happy voice annoys me a little, but I can't say anything back because it's probably true.

I am left with a part of me that can't quite understand this comment from an Atami-born driller who was born in the home town and loves hot springs.

Anyway, Mikako heard her voice filled with motivation and gently clasped her hands together in front of her chest and said, "Good, you're going to help me, aren't you?"

Yes, of course. I will do my utmost to keep the good name of England and the Flameheart family intact.

That's very reassuring. Then, Tomo and Akiharu, who are free, go to your rooms first.

"..... Yes, I understand."

(alt: ".....Yes, I understand.") Tomomi looked at her mother's face and responded after a small movement of her lips.

..... It's one thing for my roommate Daichi, but Akiharu can't pull off such a stunt as lip-reading.

So I'm not at all sure, but Tomomi's guy said in his mouth, "That's what I mean."
I'm not sure if it's a like the one he was tweeting about. Even if I am right, I have no idea what it means.

(alt: I was muttering something like...? Even if it hits, it doesn't make sense at all.) It is impossible unless you can give us some more hints or give us subtitles superimposed on the replay of the previous scene.

Deciding that there was no point in worrying about it, Akiharu got up from the sofa.

Tomomi stood up at the same time and led the way to the door, then glanced at me and said, "Well then, shall we go ahead of you?"

Tomomi, who as usual changes her attitude to an honor student mode, lightly says to Akiharu, "Got it.

I replied, "I'll go with you.

On the way out of the parlor and up the stairs to the second floor, I thought to myself, "Wouldn't it have been better if I had at least carried the tea set and plates I was using into the kitchen?"

But it's too late for that.

If I went back now, I would probably be thought of as having caused unnecessary trouble.

"....., you're gonna have to be a little more attentive, man."

(alt: "... I need to be a little more considerate...") What, all of a sudden? If you're tired of dealing with your mother, I understand.

"That's the thing, I'm always dealing with someone and have a lot of patience.

The first time I saw her, I was so surprised that she reacted to my unintentionally uttered words, so I replied lightly, and then Akiharu looked up at Tomomi in front of her with a start.

I accidentally said it because it caught me off guard, but this is a pattern that will be countered three times over: Moreover, it was a gaffe on a staircase, an unstable and dangerous place where one wrong move could lead to serious injury...! What a mistake! Akiharu thinks that the only thing he can do in this dangerous area is to apologize first and foremost to Tomomi, who will be looking back at him: "..... Oh?

Tomomi continued to walk up the stairs and did not pay any attention to Akiharu, even though she was expecting him to look down at her with a fearless smile.

It shouldn't be that you didn't hear yourself speak.

If you heard that mumbling before, it's not there.

They'll say, "What you do to me, I'll do back three times."

Tomomi is well-known for her spirit, so it is a matter of course for her to be concerned.

While wondering what was going on, she finished climbing the stairs and followed Tomomi into a room at the end of a hallway that turned right.

I had been taken to Tomomi's room in the past, but that was before I got remarried and when I was a commoner.

Now that we've upgraded to a world-class, upscale home,, it's pretty, well, simple.

I expected to see a piano and a canopy bed in accordance with the image of a young lady, but instead I found only ordinary furniture and a mini-computer.

The beds are semi-doubles, which is a modest luxury, but that's about it.

The warm-toned wallpaper and the stuffed animals next to the mirror and on some of the bookshelves are "girl's room."

I feel like I'm in a room with a lot of money, but it's not at all what I imagine a rich person's daughter's room to be like.

I don't think about inviting anyone, so that's what I'm going to do. I myself have been living in the dormitory at Hakuryo for a long time. I've been living in the dorms at Hakuryo for a long time now.

No, in that sense, it's more than enough.

(alt: "No, in that sense it's more than enough...") "That's okay, don't look too closely at me. Here, use that cushion over there."

Pointing to a cushion in the corner of the room, Tomomi pulled several cases from the bookshelf.

One of them looked familiar, and Akiharu raised an eyebrow as he sat down and wondered when he'd seen it..... It was relatively easy to remember.

I believe that was the album Tomomi brought when we stayed at Selnia's house for the summer schooling test.

It's so rare that you'll want to throw it into the mantle layer, full of abominations you don't want to remember.

Even though she thought it would never happen, she couldn't help but say something.

"..... Hey, can I take that picture of me that you've got there?"

Oh? I can burn it for you.

Tomomi says as she carefully pulls the album out of its case, but her mouth is smiling.

I could tell that they knew exactly what we were thinking, and yet they were so mean-spirited.

So I said, "I'm not asking you to be evil anymore."

Or, "You're going to regret this attitude."

I wish I had the personality to say, "I'm sorry, but I understand my own character very well.

(alt: It would have been nice if I had the personality to say something like that, but I understand my unfortunate personality very well.) So, in almost no time at all, Akiharu said, "I think you will be happy if you burn or cut all the negatives. Mainly me, or maybe someone else. So, please, do me a favor!

..... When you're suddenly prepared to get down on your knees, it's hard to know what to do.

(alt: "... If you suddenly get ready to dogeza, you won't know what to do...") Tomomi's voice is a mixture of exasperation and disgust, but since this is a style for living wisely in the new era, I win if I can no longer play with her.

Well, I don't feel that I have lost everything that is important to me as a human being in return.

I'll give you the pictures you want after I check them out one by one. I won't give you the negatives, but might be a good compromise."

"We're not going to overcook it unnecessarily, are we?"

You're a skeptic. I'll give you my word. I will not use it in a way that will disadvantage your position, even if I personally grill you more.

(alt: "I'm skeptical...it can't be helped, I'll promise you. Even if I'll make it more personal, I won't use it in a way that puts Akiharu at a disadvantage.") Oh"

Miraculously, negotiations were successful.

It may seem strange that they could be threatened by an old photo, but this should be a valuable victory.

When I was shown the album in Atami in the summer, I wanted to get away from reality so badly that I thought of leaving on a boat at night, and I am very thankful that I will not have that opportunity.

"For example,, look, how about this?"

Hmm? Which one is it? Show me.

With a feeling of relief as if the construction work in the neighborhood that had been plagued by noise for more than half a year had been completed, Akiharu looked at the album Tomomi had opened from the side.

The person wearing a rabbit costume was laughing, "What? Confiscated, confiscated, confiscated!

"Uh, why? It's a pretty picture, isn't it?"

"Now that I'm in my mid-teens, it's my own personal psychic attack item! Just that thing next to you!"

Next to a picture of myself as a child wearing a costume that I had to wear for an arts and crafts show or something, a picture that would require about ten years of experience to see correctly, was a lethal, poisonous picture of me playing with dolls in the sandbox with a girl friend.

And if you flip through the pages, you'll find not only those two pages, but also a few other pages with embarrassing material on them, and you'll think, "Oh, and this! I mean, why do you have so many photos that don't show you?"

Because I was the one who took it. It's part of the memorial, isn't it?"

"If you're going to make a memorial, make it even more beautiful! Why do you keep all this stuff in a corner of your memory that you should be happy with?"

The camera was having fun at the time, so there should be no problem. Oh, look, this one is quite nice, too.

Oh, my God, that's really bad.

When he saw the photos he had pulled out of the album, Akiharu's blood rushed to his head and he felt as if he were about to suffer an anemia.

That, and only that, will be the end if others see it.

When did you take this picture of me as an unknowing child wearing my mother's underwear by mistake due to a series of little accidents? Your sweet words were not a miraculous outpouring of kindness, but a definitive establishment of a superior-subordinate relationship.

There is a theory that he is just being teased, but either way, if anyone from Hakuryo sees a bomb photo like that, it will be the end.

And since Selnia is here too, if she sees you by mistake, you could die, and it could seriously be the news of the end of your life.! Tomomi's guy is smiling as he puts the photo to his mouth happily, but I can't sit back and discuss things with him any longer.

(alt: Moreover, Selnia is here too, so if you make a mistake and someone sees you, you'll die. Tomomi's guy was happily holding the photo up to his mouth and smiling, but he couldn't sit back and negotiate anymore.) Akiharu, who had lifted his back off the cushion, slowly extended his hand toward the photo, as if he were a scientist having a second close encounter with an alien, and said, "..... Okay, I understand. I greatly admire your talent to capture memories of the past with such pinpoint accuracy. So give it to me."

I don't know what I'm going to do. What do you think I should get in exchange?"

It's a nasty thing for a black-hearted person to ask us that. But for once, that attitude with plenty of room to spare is a fatal blow.

(alt: Asking me about it is wickedly disgusting, but... this time, that relaxed attitude is fatal.)
In any case, we are prepared to cut off our backs as well as our stomachs.

It seems that even Tomomi, who is a quintessential Tomomi, could not understand the line that a man would never retreat from.

If it were the other way around, they would be coming at us with a force that would almost make us die of rage.

If she missed that carelessness here, it could be a lifetime of embarrassment, Akiharu decided, and jumped at Tomomi, who was trying to keep the photo away from her outstretched hand.

"Yeah,, what the heck?"

Tomomi, surprised by this surprise attack, falls back, and Akiharu, leaning on top of her, reaches for the target photo, but comes up short.

The surprisingly delicate feel of the pinch delayed my action, although I could have removed it if I had moved immediately.

Tomomi looked at me with crackling eyes as she put her arms across her head as if to say Hail Mary while she was still down.



"It's a little sunny in autumn. If you take such a hard line, I'll cancel the promise we made earlier.

"Shut up, I don't care what you say, I'm not leaving this room! I don't have the nerve to live peacefully with such photos and negatives.

Oh, God,!

Tomomi tries to escape somehow, but it is impossible in this position.

Because of the difference in body size between men and women, and the fact that the waist area is covered with a firm hold, it should be impossible to even raise the body.

The reach is longer on our side, so it's only a matter of time before we take it away.

He blushed and scowled at me, but his victory was not yet won.

I will not have any more blunders like the one I just had.

Akiharu smiles and carefully takes the photo from Tomomi's hand, squeezes it in his hand, and puts it away in his pocket.

We will burn it carefully and erase it from the world later. We still have other things to do now.

(alt: Assuming that this will be carefully incinerated and erased from the world later... For now, I still have other things to do.) Now, the next one is negatives. Give me the negatives.

(alt: "... Now, next is the negatives. You should send the negatives.") "Oh, for heaven's sake, cheeky! Do you really think I'm going to give it to you quietly after all this?"

If you don't give it to me, I have my own ideas. I'll keep tickling you until you shake your head and want to mysteriously submit the negative!"

".....?"

(alt: 「 ? 」) I can't help but think she's an idiot for saying it, but it seems to have been effective as Tomomi's resistance to the combination increased.

In the past, when gently tracing her back with her finger became a popular activity in class, Tomomi's reaction was quite excessive, so I thought, "Perhaps she is not good at tickling?"

But it seems we hit the jackpot.

Now is the time to overthrow him, Akiharu said, smiling at his childhood friend, who was looking impatiently at him, "Kuku kuku, now is the time to give it to him, right?"

While saying that, I gently stroked her flank with my fingertips.

Yes, the response was more than expected.

The upper body bounced up and down as if to turn my back, nearly knocking me off balance.

Tomomi glared at me with tears in her eyes in frustration at the slightest hint of a blow, but I couldn't be intimidated by that.

Tomomi has never once been this superior to me.

It was a memorable day of revolution.

I know that if I make a mistake, I will be in danger of falling to the level of a pinhead, but I can't help but laugh so hard.

Maybe this is what the pleasure of catharsis is all about.

And, although the black-hearted man does not want to change his bullish attitude, I feel no threat from the way he looks up at me with a blush on his cheeks.

She was no match for the weak high school girl who was constantly being squeezed by the maid teacher.

I wonder how long I can resist. I wonder how long I can resist. Shouldn't I give up soon?

Who is to make such threats? I mean, Akiharu is acting like a crazy character.!

Your dignity as a human being is at stake! Now, if you don't promise to give me the negatives and tell me where you're keeping them, in a few minutes you'll be in my room, and Selnia will see the ugliness of your life. Is that what you want?

Sir, I'd rather you not take the risk of being seen.

Certainly, we would be in trouble if we were to be seized at this scene by a runaway queen who misunderstood the situation.

Akiharu, impatient to get to grips with the situation as soon as possible, threatens to crawl his finger near his side and appeal again with his eyes.

The image is of a knife or a gun barrel lightly poking the back of the neck.

In reality, the picture may look rather silly, but the effect is real, and the body being held down bounces a little.

Tomomi, on the defensive, bites her lip and says, "..... Oh my god, I can't help it!

Finally, he looked at me in frustration, as if he was about to give up, and then I heard a knock on the door.

..... Oh no, Selnia and her friends are coming earlier than expected.

I could ask about the location of the negatives, but then I'd have to mention the embarrassment of the photos.

But if we miss this chance, there will be no more chances.

What should we do, should we take a hard line or should we use this situation as a weakness to negotiate with Tomomi again?

Looking back toward the entrance impatiently, Akiharu said, ".....?"

(alt: "... Huh?") I watched the door slowly open and was stunned to see the door open.

The sound of the door knob turning could not be heard.

The sound may have been faint, but it was so intense and nerve-wracking that I don't think I would have missed it.

No way. - Did you not close the door properly when you entered the room? And then the door opened as a reaction to the knocking? Without anyone being able to answer whether this was the correct answer or not, the door continued to open, revealing the person on the other side, the one who had knocked.

And there she was, of course, "Hi! Tomomi, it's been a while."

Not Selnia.

A man I've never seen before.

An older man in his thirties, wearing a double suit, was standing there.

..... No really, who is this guy? He is an old man with black full-length hair, reasonably tall and long limbs, and a fairly well-developed face, but he gives the impression of being somewhat unremarkable.

What does it mean that such a person calls Tomomi, who seems to be a few years older than him, by her nickname "Chan", and then looks at us and gets all frozen up? While Akiharu was putting a question mark in his mind, a voice from below him said something surprising.

"Oh, father-in-law?

What? This thin person?"

Hearing Tomomi's voice filled with surprise, Akiharu could not believe his ears.

Is this the Takumi Saikei of rumors:? If you ask me, the first thing that should come to mind is the possibility of a remarried father-in-law, but he's so unimpressive that I'd naturally exclude that as an option. I'm sure Mikako, the head of one of the world's most prestigious groups, would have been more than willing to remarry, but I'm not sure she'd be willing to do so.

For someone who thought he was going to do something, it is hard to believe, but at any rate, he has decided what he must do now.

"I'm sorry to bother you, and I'm sorry to bother you, but I'm in the middle of something, so you'll have to wait outside."

(alt: "-- I'm sorry to disturb you, and I'm busy, so please wait outside.") What? What do you mean, you're grabbing from? And are you going to continue?

The reticence in his voice made me want to cluck my tongue.

I was in the middle of a potentially life-threatening battle, and this old man was just trying to get me to go through with it.

I wish they would have just read the air, closed the door quietly, and walked away.! "..... I'm going to settle up right away. So, I'm sorry.

(alt: It would be nice if you could read the atmosphere, quickly close the door and leave...! "... I'll finish it soon. That's why I'm sorry.") No, no, but because this situation should I, as an understanding parent, overlook it? I mean, who is he to begin with?"

The old man who is still frozen and mumbling doesn't look like a great manager in any way, but I wish he would hurry up and get out of here.

Since he cannot waste even a second and is in a situation with zero margin, Akiharu looks up at the older man in the suit, almost as if he is glaring at him.

Yes, you'd better hurry or you'll get in trouble.

Tomomi seems to be confused, perhaps because of all the unexpected things that have happened.

If this nimble guy were calm, he would have already tried to escape by screaming or asking for help.

If we let them calm down, we will be at a disadvantage.

Even so, if you spend too much time on, you'll get a "Oh? Mr. Takumi, what are you doing here?

Yes, yes, I heard a voice saying that the time is over, my dear.

From Akiharu's position, he could not see them, but it seemed that Selnia and Mikako had already arrived in the hallway.

With only a few minutes of lost time left, it is almost impossible to find out the location of the negative from Tomomi and retrieve it.

It is beyond shameful to end with such a curtain when one was prepared to take a risk and launch a counterattack.

But Takumi Saikei was looking toward the hallway, not this way, and said, "Oh, Mikako! That's, that's, that's the problem!

Sir, calm down. You're embarrassing me. Weren't you in Sapporo this afternoon?

I heard that Tomomi is coming back, so I immediately cut off the inspection, but that's not the point, there was an assailant in Tomomi's room! Some kind of yankee-like thug from a half-developed provincial city!"

..... You are pouring fuel on the fire with your very accurate expressions.

I'm not going to get upset over a guy or two in my daughter's room at her age. You are a parent who needs to be judged on your parental standards.

"Yeah, what? Is that how it's supposed to be? But, I mean, my precious daughter is about to be poisoned.

"Poison fangs." You're overreacting again.

I'm not overreacting! I mean, I've been pushed down"

What the hell?

The last voice was not that of the couple, but of someone they had heard before.

The sound of slamming, unladylike stomping down the hallway comes closer to us.

Excuse me.

"What the"?

Then, pushing Takumi Saikei away from the door, Selnia appears, her face tinged with anger, as you might expect, but she stops moving when she sees us.

The reason is that Akiharu had already moved out of Tomomi's way.

There was no point in holding them back if we couldn't get the negatives, and from the point of view of Selnia and Mikako, who had no idea what they were doing, there was no way they could be misunderstood, so we moved quickly while my father-in-law's old man was out of sight.

Selnia, who couldn't hold the scene due to her seat, looked like she didn't know what to say, which in itself is funny, but it doesn't solve the underlying problem. "Ha I can't stop, can I?

....., that's my line.

(alt: "... that's my line.") A somewhat grumpy voice could be heard beside Akiharu, who sighed unintentionally.

Akiharu turns around with the feeling that he has been sentenced to death, wondering if the demon that has turned him into a demon has been sanctioned.

Surprisingly, although her lips were pouting with dissatisfaction, she did not look as frightened as I had expected.

I'm usually a pushover, but only at times like this.

(alt: "... Really, I usually have a weak push, but only at times like this...") I have a, well, what can I say, a man's got to have his moments"

..... Okay, I may have overstepped my bounds a bit this time. I'll give you the negatives later.

(alt: "... okay, this time I've gone a little overboard with the bad stuff. I'll give you the negatives later.") Hearing these words, Akiharu's eyes twinkled as if he was experiencing a miracle for the second time today.

The first time I arrived at the terrible result, but they didn't seem to be making fun of me, so it looks like they're really going to pay me back this time.

In front of a stunned Akiharu, who was wondering what in the world had happened, Tomomi dropped her gaze to her knees and said, "..... Oh, God, I hate it when people get on me and make me do things. It makes me so nervous, it's so out of character.

(alt: In front of Akiharu who was dumbfounded as to what had just happened, Tomomi lowered her gaze to her knees and said, "Ah, this is why I don't want to be put on a ride... It makes my heart beat faster than it should be...") The childhood friend began muttering in a voice that was difficult to understand, and I was convinced that this was finally becoming a strange situation.

The situation has been strange since this morning, and I wonder what in the world is going on.

..... Well, before we turn our thoughts to that.

Akiharu slowly raised his head and made eye contact with Selnia, who had been standing in front of him for some time.

It's funny, I was supposed to be making a cup of tea, but I was empty-handed, and my fists were clenched in a defensive posture.

Where is the need to be so full of murderous intent, as if we were dealing with a famously ferocious tiger cub, when we are sitting there almost defenseless? Then Akiharu asked a question in a rather casual manner.

"Why are you so angry at?"

I am not angry. I just want to ask you a few questions. to your body."

Wow, a bold statement was made.

If this turns out to be sexy, the world is not so bad, but if it does, the only thing that will happen is red blood, and that's the reality.

Although we were able to successfully cover up the crime scene, it does not mean that we were able to hide everything.

And when the other party is a driller who is always in line once he gets his mind made up, well, you can't blame them for being like this.

I'm not sure what to say.

(alt: — — and so on.) "Hey, I don't have any specific questions for you, but I'd like to, so, you know, be gentle with me if you can."

While she knew it was impossible, it was the best she could do.

I was in a terrible situation.

After that, Takumi's father-in-law was taken away by Mikako without even exchanging a few words, and Tomomi joined them in the adjoining guest room.

Since Selnia was asking for an explanation of the situation to Akiharu as if she was threatening him, he would be fine without going back for a few minutes.

Sitting with her back against the locked door, Tomomi sighs loudly.

I took my mother up on her offer, but it didn't work out, as I should have known.

The reason for this may be that they were unwilling to take any proactive action or make any strategy.

However, I also think that the results do not have to be so disastrous.

My mother talks a lot of nonsense.

He would talk about how he and his father-in-law had gotten together and how powerful they were, implying, "If they say hard things to you or do things to you, it's because they like you.

They must have thought they were saying that.

It is a very unnecessary intervention.

Still, I don't want to go back to, you know,

The thought of going back to her room was so depressing that Tomomi sat on her knees as if she were sitting on a gym chair.

I am sure that Akiharu is still quarreling with Selnia.

I am a person who hides my true self, and I could never get involved in a relationship like that.

..... No, even if they were to go straight at each other, the atmosphere would not be as enjoyable.

Tomomi fully understands that people are not suited for each other and that there is a certain chemistry between them.

If I push too hard, I may be able to create something close to that atmosphere, but I feel that at best I will end up with a feeling of discomfort for both myself and Akiharu.

But that can't be helped.

In that sense, it is an even game, since Selnia cannot create the air that spins between herself and Akiharu.

But that's not the main reason I don't want to go back to, oh, God, I'm so nervous

Tomomi didn't have the confidence to look at her childhood friend's face right now and act calm.

It is an unintentional mistake.

She didn't expect to be pushed down, but she thought she could handle that much happening.

In reality, however, the fact that Akiharu's face, hands, thighs, and various parts of my body were in close contact with the face of Akiharu that appeared in front of me made my mind go blank. After that, I remained dizzy and impatient, unable to do any proper thinking at all.

(alt: However, in reality, Akiharu's face appeared in front of me, and the fact that various parts of his body, such as his hands and thighs, were in close contact with each other, made me go blank... and even after that, I was dizzy and just panicked. I couldn't even think straight.) If that had been a different situation, if Akiharu had given off a little more of an air, I would have said, "..... Oh my God, what happened to you, you bastard"!

It is truly unlike me to get so hot just thinking about it that I can't help it.

I wish I could have had an hour to cool off.

However, I can't say such a thing when I think about the fact that Akiharu and Selnia are all alone together.

Tomomi sighed again.

I'm Damn, that stings.

Rubbing his arms, which were tingling as soon as they were immersed in the hot water, Akiharu sighed loudly.

How strong of a grip does he have to inflict this much damage on Selnia?

Like the Shikikagami sisters and Hou, being born and raised in an upper class environment may have the effect of increasing one's aggressiveness.

But after Tomomi left the room and came back, the three of us had a good time together.

We looked at albums and talked about the previous year's gymnastics and art festivals, and I think we got along pretty well.

It may be a historic accomplishment that the two or more hours they spent talking did not turn into an argument.

Then we had dinner prepared by a housemaid, and for some reason she led us to the bath first, so we complied and are now relaxing in the spacious bathtub, "..... They're not fighting again, are they?"

I am always worried about that kind of thing.

Tomomi and Selnia are too much of a bad match, or perhaps too much of a good match, because as soon as they take their eyes off each other, they start bickering.

..... No, well, it doesn't matter if I'm monitoring them, I'll fight with them.

It's the first bath of the day, but you can't take a leisurely bath if you've left the seeds of your worries unattended.

The next person will be there, so why don't you just warm up and get out of here.? Is that sound coming from

Akiharu raised his eyebrows when he heard a door open from the other side of the glass door.

Looking through the frosted glass, I heard a slight noise.

As in most homes, the bathroom is adjacent to the washroom, so someone may have come to wash their hands or put towels or something in the washing machine.

As you can see, he was not able to get out of the bathtub until the person went out of the bathroom, so he was somewhat restless, but he soaked himself deeply in the bathtub again and froze as it was.

If you can see a figure behind the frosted glass, there is nothing special about it, but if the silhouette of the figure looks like it is in the process of taking off its clothes, it is a totally different story.

Who is that, and who the hell is in there?!

Everyone should know that I am in there, and no one comes in by accident except the Shikikagami sisters.

Does this mean that Tomomi is the likely candidate for the purpose of teasing?

..... No, it's not out of the realm of possibility that Selnia will be taken in by Tomomi, and Mikako could be the big winner:! While her heart was pounding painfully, the glass door that Akiharu couldn't take her eyes off finally opened and she entered the bathroom, naked as expected.

Tomomi's father-in-law, Takumi Saikei.

..... Wow, someone who was not only a big deal but also a no-show came in.

And naked, too.

I am not happy about it.

Her slim, flab-free body is hard to believe that she is in her thirties, but that doesn't matter at all.

I want to tell them to give me back the time when I was so excited.

The feeling of powerlessness that had left Akihare in a daze soon caught her by surprise.

Takumi comes in, but shows no sign of leaving.

He took one look at and started to wash himself.

Well, what the heck is this all about? We had introduced ourselves at the dinner table, but Takumi and I had barely spoken to each other, and yet here I was, suddenly feeling distant from! I have no idea how this happened, but I think I should get out of the bath first.

I can't bear to be in this awkward situation.

Deciding to make a strategic retreat, Akiharu gulped, then said, "Hino Akiharu-kun, right? "Aaaaah! Yes, that's right, but"

I'm going to lift my hips and say, 'Well, I'm going to go ahead and go up first.

I was about to say, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry," when he suddenly spoke to me.

(alt: Just when I was about to say that, someone suddenly started talking to me, and although I hurriedly answered, I missed the timing to get out of the bathroom.) Meanwhile, Takumi

rinses off the lather from his body in the shower, stands up and says, "Excuse me, I have to go in.

You should have said that when you came into the bathroom.

It's too late.

However, it wasn't as if he was going to butt in. Akiharu nodded half-heartedly and opened his mouth, determined not to let this chance pass him by.

Well, I think it's time...

I was like, "Well, well, that's not bad yet. Our baths are spacious, aren't they? We had the bathrooms designed to be large enough for a family of three, or even four. When I think of a happy family reunion, I think it should be at mealtimes and bathing time.

"..... huh."

(alt: "..... Huh") To be honest, I am at a loss to hear such a thing out of the blue.

It is true that the bathtub can accommodate three people at the same time, but whether or not two men want to go in together is another matter.

For older people who don't know much about them, it's like a little game of punishment, and it's not supposed to warm their hearts, let alone their bodies.

I don't know what their intentions are, and just makes me feel awkward.

(alt: I don't understand the other party's intentions... it's just awkward.) Even if you sneak a peek at them, their eyes are looking straight ahead and not at us.

Really, what kind of a man is this?

As Akiharu was wondering why this was happening, he said, "By the way, I heard that you and Tomomi are childhood friends, right?"

What?" Uh, yes. In a manner of speaking, we have such a relationship.

"So there's nothing more to the relationship than that?"

"..... Yes?"

When the meaningless question suddenly leaps out at him, Akiharu frowns, turns to Takumi and swallows the words he was about to say.

Before I knew it, they were looking at me.

Or perhaps it would be more appropriate to say that they are watching, or perhaps they are observing intently.

Tomomi is a really cute girl. She looks like Mikako, ah, not only in appearance, but also in character. That's why I think it's natural that she is liked by all kinds of people.

"No,, I'm not sure what you mean by"

(alt: "No... no matter what you say...") What is this development? How did this happen? If this were Serunia's father, I would just laugh it off and answer appropriately, but unlike her easy-going noble father, Takumi Saikei's eyes are too serious.

The first thing to do is to answer in a sincere and safe manner, and Akiharu forced an affectionate smile while saying, "We are just childhood friends and classmates. It's a perfectly normal friendship, nothing like what your father-in-law is thinking.

"..... Father-in-law?"

Is that what they are reacting to as well?

What a tiresome old man.! It's not the kind of special relationship you're thinking of. There's nothing to worry about.

(alt: What a troublesome old man...! "It's not the kind of special relationship that Ojisan thinks. There's nothing to worry about...") Then how do you explain that you were pushing Tomomi down in her room?

..... Well, you were seen. I'd been so busy that I'd forgotten about it, but in a sense, I'd witnessed the decisive moment.

(alt: Oh, did you see me? was.) Oh, so that's why they're doing these crash reports:! "Hey, let's see... .., that's"

While panicking at this unfortunate turn of events, Akiharu tries to come up with a good excuse, but Takumi quickly pulls his face towards him and asks, "What was that? What's going on?"

I was just playing a little bit of a shamanistic game, or"

"I think you said you were in the middle of something? Let's hear exactly what you've been working on and what you've been working on at"

No, that's why.

Mikako told me not to ask unnecessary questions because it's not important, but this is important, very important, isn't it?"

No, I mean, you know...

"We have a lot of time, so let's see if you can talk about this in a way that makes sense to me."

"..... No, actually, I'm already pretty upset."

(alt: "... No, actually, I'm already quite furious.") Humans are surprisingly strong. It's all right.

Behind his fresh smile, he said, "I'll never let you get away with this."

I saw her eyes shining with a smile.

Akiharu quietly realized that he might not be served until the water was boiled.

◇ ◇ "..... fu"

Her own sighs rang in her ears, and she closed her eyes, resting her head on the edge of the tub.

I knew it was going to be a difficult day, but I didn't expect it to go this far.

Although it is not a hostile environment, it is not an ideal place to spend a leisurely time.

Aikyo Tomomi's family was her sworn enemy, and she did not have the nerve to stay in her parents' house, and the second time she faced Aikyo Mikako, she was not a simple opponent.

They are amiable, conversational, and easily accessible.

I thought I was used to socializing, but all I got was the impression that I was played for a fool by a girl who didn't know any better.

But more than anything else, I was most tired probably because I spent so much time alone with Tomomi.

The long bath in the clear autumn sky caused me to have a very awkward time.

I only remember about half of what we talked about.

I know this is supposed to be a memory from middle school, but I didn't want to relive those exhausting hours if I could help it.

Since I was finally alone and able to soak in the somewhat warm water, I could not help but feel relaxed.

Probably, he will just go to bed without any further problems.

The long day is almost over.

The combination of comfort and tiredness in the body and mind causes a rush of drowsiness.

Somehow resisting, Selnia ran her hand through her hair, which she had pulled up with an elastic band, and drew another long, deep breath, — her moment of peace was interrupted by an unexpected intruder.

I know you're enjoying yourself, but I'm going to have to interrupt."

"なっ..... Tomomi, Ms.?"

Tomomi opened the glass door and came in, startling Selnia so much that she almost got up, and then rushed to adjust her posture in the bathtub.

Tomomi saw this and smiled pleasantly, "What's the matter, you look so surprised. We've seen you naked in pool class and this summer, so it's not a new thing for you.

That's not what this is about. Why are you coming in here, anyway?

My mother was very strict about finishing early. My mother was very strict and wanted me to finish my work quickly.

..... I have no choice.

(alt: "Uh... it can't be helped...") I was surprised at the suddenness of the situation, but it was certainly a little too late to be looking at my skin.

I am confident in my style, and I don't want to be timid when they are not ashamed of theirs.

However, the fact remains that the peaceful time was interrupted, and there is nothing we can do to stop musing about it.

And even though they must have noticed our attitude, they sat happily at the sink, seemingly unconcerned, which made me feel even more angry.

I just heard from my mother that my father-in-law also visited the place where Akiharu-kun is staying.

..... I see that the world-renowned Takumi Akayo has gone quite drunken again.

(alt: "... The world-famous Takumi Saikyo is doing something really crazy again.") She has a childish nature.

Tomomi laughed, but Selnia was distracted by something else.

The one who is still with Takumi, Akiharu, is the one who is in the room with Takumi.

I don't know what to say, but I'm not sure how she could be so easy to get along with.

(alt: — — Seriously, that commoner... he doesn't have a palliative personality to get along with people.) Yet, in less than a year since transferring to the Education Department and coming to Hakuryo, he has built up a tremendous network of contacts.

Mina Sakurazawa, who was rumored to have no close friends, was the daughter of the Hadim family who stood out from the rest.

In addition, it would be lucky if I could have a relationship with any one of the princesses of the Sfor Kingdom, who were said to be problem children, but Akiharu is probably the one who is closest to all three of them among the students.

The narcissistic man at Kazamatsuri seems to be concerned about it, and the president is not bad at all.

And on top of that, he gets to know the real head of Saikei. He probably doesn't understand how great that is at all.

(alt: On top of that, to be on friendly terms with Saikyo's practically the top... just how amazing that is, since it's about that man, I don't think he understands even the slightest bit of it.) It is not so much ignorance as a misalignment with the world in which we live.

I think it's because Tomomi is spoiling Akiharu, and that's what's wrong with her. She never behaves like an obedience student, and she always pesters the other students of the upper secondary school. What a bunch of idiots!

(alt: This and that, ``-- Originally, it's bad that Tomomi-san is spoiling Akiharu. From then on, he started messing around with the students in the higher education department... Seriously, those commoners...!") As they talk, Selnia gets more and more annoyed and taps the surface of the water.

Tomomi smiled and said, "I'm not spoiling you in any way," even though we glared at her strongly. It's always been that she's been stubborn, even though she's easily influenced, and it's strange for me to nag her about it when she's not actively trying to correct it, so I'm just letting it go.

"Hey, what brings you all the way out here? It's a big bathtub, why don't you go further over there?

Please, don't worry about it.

..... really gets on my nerves every time.! I've been like this since I was in middle school, so I'm not going to get riled up like this anymore.

(alt: Really, each and every one of them caresses my nerves.....! It's been like this since I was in middle school, so I won't get angry at this level anymore.) However, I still get angry.

"What is it about that you always, always, always enjoy irritating me so much?"

So, Selnia speaks out her true feelings in a sarcastic manner and looks at her partner's reaction with a sideways glance.

Tomomi looks at me from behind a curtain of steam and smiles in a way that even I, a homosexual, would be sucked into, "Yes, it's fun.

".....,"

I had not expected such a clear affirmative response.

While Selnia was stunned, Tomomi smiled without the slightest hint of apology and said, "Unlike the others, you don't have to be shy. That's why she is so easy and fun to deal with.

Why am I the only one?

If you are not strong enough to fight back, it will be like bullying the weak. Besides, it's a matter of compatibility.

Do you have any idea how ridiculous you sound,?

Yes, of course.

Tomomi brushes her bangs to the side, where they stick to her forehead.

The words were so incredulous that Selnia was stunned, but for the first time, she felt as if she understood the woman.

Somewhere along the way, Akiharu pointed to Tomomi Saikei and called her "extremely evil. And "black-hearted."

I had been saying that I had been thinking about my childhood friend, but now it finally became clear to me that it was because I had understood her correctly.

It made sense, but doesn't make it any less horrible.

He said that he was not afraid to attack them because he thought it was okay to do so.

They are seen as different from the other elegant and graceful students at Hakuryo who could only grow up in a greenhouse.

I must say that this is a very one-sided and violent perception.

It's

In other words, "equal."

It's insane that I'm even remotely pleased that I was shown that I was recognized as a "good person"! For some reason, Selnia bit her lower lip in frustration, and said, "Hey, Miss Selnia. There's a good reason I went to the trouble of telling you this, isn't there?"

"..... What now?"

Tomomi looked up at the ceiling rather than at me with a resentful look in her eyes and said, "This whole mess has been disturbing my pace, but thanks to you, I've realized two things clearly.

".....?"

Selnia frowns at this roundabout, rather than circular, explanation.

At the same time, however, he understood one thing.

She came all the way to the bathroom with me, not because her parents told her to, but to tell me what she was going to say.

One thing is that it is more fun to stand on a different shore from Selnia's."

"....."

(alt: 「.....」) I enjoy both teaming up with Akiharu-kun and fighting with him. But with Selnia, no matter how close we get, I never have anything against her, but I enjoy being with her as a partner in battle. It's worth competing with her.

This was probably what Selnia had in mind as well.

No matter how dependable or excellent Tomomi Saikyo was - or rather, because she was - she wanted to be in a position to compete with her, somewhere deep in her heart.

It is only that since Akiharu came to Hakuryo, he has had more opportunities to fight, but even before that, he had always felt the same way.

Whether or not you can respect them and whether or not you like them as a human being are completely different issues.

We compete, we contend, even if we lose and become frustrated to the point of burning ourselves.

It is the kind of opponent that makes you want to compete with him head-on, on equal footing.

And, of course, the last one: "..... Hmmm. It's fine if you think so, but then you'll have to live your life shedding tears of defeat behind me, won't you?"

Well, you have a great confidence. I always win. I'm sure the beauty pageant will count as one of my victories, too, right?

I won the gymnastic festival the year before!

Oh, by the way, there was a time when that happened.

Tomomi's clear face is hateful, but Selnia only sniffs and doesn't say anything back.

I am sure that deep down inside, he must have been so frustrated that he couldn't help it. Therefore, we should approach this situation with a winner's margin of victory.

..... And that's not what I'm worried about, but rather, "So what's the other thing?"

Oh, I almost forgot.

Whether this is true or not is obvious when you look at the side of his face as he smiles. I know it's a small thing, but I don't like to be taken for a ride by someone else.

".....?"

This time, the content made no sense at all.

Tomomi, who has been making a lot of misleading comments to Selnia, who is blinking her eyes, smiles wryly and says, "I thought I was good at ad-libbing, but this time I understood it better. It seems that if I can't pace myself, I won't be able to do well.

"..... all in one, why not?"

So, you see...

Tomomi Saikei then breaks off her speech and smiles fearlessly at Selnia, who still does not understand what she is talking about.



When I have something I absolutely cannot give up, I will make the first move. No games, no playing around, no playing around, no playing around, no playing around, no playing around.
"..... it is..."

(alt: "..... that is,") The words I wanted to say stuck in my throat and wouldn't come out.

I don't even understand half of what was said.

Still, the message was certainly conveyed.

This is a declaration of war.

She was so happy at the sports festival.

There is no doubt that they were fighting seriously in the relay and in the cavalry battle.

But this is a declaration that we are not only going to enjoy the game, but we are going to win it without any pretense.

I don't know what that means.

(alt: I don't know what that refers to.) It may be that it has not yet been decided.

He was convinced that Selnia would be the one he would be fighting.

I don't understand the general framework.

But if the essentials are known, there is only one thing that Selnia should say.

I love it.

There is no one in the Flameheart family who would back out of a match offered to them by an opponent they consider their sworn enemy.

Whatever it is, we will take it on with dignity and confidence.

That's all Selnia needs to do.

By the way, Ms. Selnia. By the way, Ms. Selnia, there's something I've been wanting to ask you for a long time.

(alt: "By the way, Mr. Selnia.) Please do whatever you have to do. I will not run, hide, or give a false answer!

Tomomi pulls back her smile and turns serious, leaning in closer to further close the distance between them, "..... Are those breasts your own?"

I was not expecting such a question, as if I had flown in from the outside of the galaxy.

"..... or, no?"

Because it's so big and unnaturally shaped, could it have silicone or something in it?"

Ha, I'm not in there! It's all natural, bred from flesh and blood, and hard work!"

"....."

(alt: 「.....」) What are you looking at me like that for? If you're talking about the size, Shikikagami is the same size.

So, it's the shape. why doesn't it droop at that size. but I'm sure it will in the future.

.....

(alt: "That's why it's shaped...why doesn't it droop at that size...but I'm sure in the future...")
Didn't I just say something horrible?

Let me just touch it for now. That way we will know if it is natural or artificial.!

(alt: "For the time being, let me touch it. Then I can tell if it's natural or man-made...!") His eyes were more serious than they had been during the previous conversation, and his nemesis' hands were wagging.

Selnia tried to escape from Tomomi's clutches and fell back while still seated, but even though the bathtub was spacious, her back immediately hit the edge of the bathtub, adding another memory of shame that she wanted to erase.

◇ ◇ "..... Oh?"

I was in the middle of the night, and I was in the middle of the night.

The memory of the event was so cut off that it could only be described as such, and Akiharu woke up with sleepwalking eyes.

I don't even remember why I was sleeping on the couch.

..... Last night, as I recall, Tomomi's father-in-law barged into the bathroom and grabbed her into his study, where he continued with his idiotic boasts and persistent questions and then, which I don't recall.

Although they were tired, they should not have been that exhausted.

When Akiharu tilted his head and wondered what was going on, he said, "Hey, hey, good morning. Did you have a good night's sleep?"

"Good morning to you, too, sir.?"

It was Takumi, who was supposed to be with us last night, who called out to us: Well, that's okay.

This is his room, so it's not surprising.

But why does Takumi keep a subtle distance and his smile so hard? The owner of the house is hiding behind the half-opened door, looking at us, making Akiharu want to tilt her head back again.

After such a forceful interrogation yesterday, what could be the change of heart?

I don't know, but Takumi must know something about last night that I don't remember.

(alt: I don't know, but for the time being, Takumi should know about what happened last night.)
Um,, about yesterday.

What? Oh, no, yeah, I'm sorry about yesterday! I was also, you know, excited for the first time in a while, you know. So, I reached for the alcohol and that's when it happened.

Huh.?"

So, well, uh, drinking is scary.

(alt: "That's why, well, um.... alcohol is scary...") I don't care if you say that to a minor.

Moreover, they seem to disappear as if they were running away without answering our questions.

I have no choice but to deduce in gibberish from that you've had a lot to drink and you're sorry for it. I didn't look like I had a hangover, but is that what this is about? Since there was no one who could answer whether his guess was correct or not, Akiharu gave up trying to remember and got up.

By the time I looked at the clock, it was already past nine o'clock.

While reflecting on the fact that he had slept too much, Akiharu left the study and headed for the living room, assuming that the others would also be awake at this time.

Tomomi and Selnia are seated at the table with only empty plates in front of them.

Apparently, breakfast was already over.

Good morning, Akiharu-kun. You are going very slowly, aren't you?"

It's true. We are going back to Hakuryo in an hour, but we are too lazy.

..... I've never heard of it.

(alt: "... No, it's the first time I've heard of that.") I have an appointment with Feng and her friends in the afternoon. There is no way I can be late!

So I've never heard of, which is good because I've been getting calls from Pina too, but?"

As Akiharu was returning Selnia's attitude, he suddenly noticed something that made him frown.

Tomomi is smiling as she observes this exchange.

He has his usual honor student smile.

And Selnia, as usual, is full of confidence and looks as if she is over-prepared as usual.

Were they not more mature yesterday?? I'm not so much a borrowed cat, but I was still a little hardened, but after one night, it was completely gone.

What happened?

And does Takumi's awkwardness with his old man have anything to do with it? Akiharu silently nodded his head, afraid to speak out about the question that had just popped into his head.

In this condition, it must be noisy on the way home, I thought, and headed for the bathroom to do something about my sleeping habit.