

*The irregular
at magic high school*

魔法科高校の少男少女20 南海騒擾編

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Chapter 1

Australia, the military base of Darwin. It is located on the site where, until the end of World War III, there was an international airport, which was subsequently closed due to the almost complete isolation of Australia from the rest of the world. Instead of the airport, under the auspices of Britain, a magic research center was built here. The policy of isolation didn't mean completely giving up interaction with other countries. Although international diplomatic contacts at the state level were blocked, limited communication with other countries was maintained in the form of private trade or disguised as interaction between civilians.

By itself, this "isolation" was not an official state policy, but the border crossing was severely restricted and accompanied by serious checks under the pretext of preventing the invasion of terrorists. In fact, entry and exit from the country became practically impossible. Therefore, if the government needed to let someone in, it was done in secret. Sending diplomats for talks was also classified.

Australia has made progress in turning its vast deserts into cultivable lands, and could provide itself with food and minerals. Enough resources for complete self-sufficiency.

What Australia really needed was military technology to protect the country. In particular, military magical technology that could resist invasions from the coastline detachments of the enemy with such success that losses among civil and private property were minimal. This country has always had friendly relations with Britain, which along with the USNA was considered a country with highly developed magical technologies.

On the Darwin Air Force base, a British hypersonic aircraft landed. This aircraft could fly in the upper layers of the stratosphere and reach a speed that exceeds speeds 6 times the speed of sound. The aircraft had a unique tiger coloring, which showed that his passenger was VIP for the British army.

This man was neither a high-ranking officer, nor an influential politician, but a civilian who was a key figure in the British defense forces, which made him a man of the highest importance.

"Sir William MacLeod. We were looking awaiting your arrival."

Commander Darwin personally met the British VIP.

It was William MacLeod, one of the magicians of a strategic class, the Thirteen Apostles. They were still called the Thirteen Apostles, because the Great Asian Alliance didn't formally recognize the death of Liu Yongde.

"Thank you for your courteous reception."

MacLeod is now 60 years old. He is a tall, thin, elderly gentleman with sleek gray hair. Looking at him, it's hard to imagine that this person is equal to the Prime Minister of Britain, or maybe even higher than him.

"Sir William, please follow me."

The assistant commander of the base opened the door of the waiting car, but didn't salute, but bowed politely. Elegantly bowing in response, MacLeod sat in a Rolls-Royce limousine.

The limousine was on its way to the bunker, located deep under the base, in which there was a research laboratory. Here, research was conducted on ways to improve the body of magicians, as well as the methods of creating magicians. Once already MacLeod had visited here to help the Australian military create a magician.

MacLeod's knowledge was also used to strengthen natural magicians. It is no exaggeration to say that he made a major contribution to the restoration of Australia's magical military forces after the war.

"I have not seen you for a long time, sir."

"Sir, it's an honor to see you again."

In a luxurious room, by which you cannot tell that it is underground, MacLeod was met by two people. A European looking girl, 12-13 years old, and a European-looking man aged just over 30.

"Jas, I'm glad to see you again. Captain Johnson, too, has not changed at all."

"Me too, sir."

"Thank you, sir."

"You two, make yourself comfortable." Sitting, MacLeod ordered the two people.

Neither the girl nor the captain moved, and stood quietly and evenly, with an army bearing.

"So, you already know the tasks?"

The girl and the captain answered in a chorus: "Yes, sir."

"I believe that for you guys this is a bad mission, but Japan has greatly shaken the world balance of power, so we have no choice. This mission is important not only for your country, but also for Britain."

With the reorganization of the world order after the Third World War, the British Commonwealth of Nations virtually ceased to exist. But despite the disappearance of the organization, communications remained. Secret cooperation continued so that the New British Commonwealth could begin at any suitable moment.

However, the New British Commonwealth was not the only option for Britain and Australia. Both countries definitely realized this, and also knew that they think the same.

"No, we have no objection to the order. We will do everything possible."

Answered the girl, who was called Jas. Her real name was Captain Jasmine Williams. She was from the "Williams family", which appeared from the direct participation of MacLeod. She looked only 12-13 years old, but in fact she was a qualified magician, and she turned 29 this year.

"I see." Satisfied, MacLeod nodded, and took out a memory card from his inner pocket.

"I think you need to listen to the details of the operation again."

"Yes, sir." Johnson said in response.

"Here the details of the operation are recorded. Names, as usual, are omitted."

As MacLeod said, this was common, so neither Jasmine nor Johnson showed any misunderstanding.

"The purpose of the attack is near the coast of the island of Kume, which is part of the Okinawa archipelago. It is an artificial island, created by Japan with the purpose of extracting minerals from the ocean floor." MacLeod began his explanation to the two waiting people.

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March 10, 2097, Sunday.

Ichijo Masaki, who attended First High during the terrorist search mission, went home to Kanazawa. After the event Tatsuya and Miyuki returned to the reception of the Kanto Branch of the Magical Association. There they were expected by the current head of the Yotsuba family, as well as their aunt, Yotsuba Maya.

"Haha-hue, did I keep you waiting?"

Tatsuya said "mother" (haha), and not "aunt" (both), since they were in a magical association, and not in a private house of Yotsuba.

"No, Tatsuya-san. I still have free time before the planned events."

She looked at her watch. But she knew that there was still time, even before she looked. However, the feeling that Maya had spent her time waiting made such excuses meaningless. Unlike Tatsuya, Miyuki saw something ominous in Maya's response.

"You two, take a seat."

The too softly toned, instead of the usually orderly, greeting alarmed the brother and sister. Or it would be better to say that they had a premonition that something unpleasant would happen. In any case, continuing to stand would be an unacceptable oversight. The first to sit was Tatsuya, and with a slight delay, Miyuki followed.

"Tatsuya-san, I'm sorry, I know that the incident with Gu Jie has just ended, but..." Tatsuya felt his heart sink. The word "ended" meant that the case with the terrorist from Dahan was "completed". However, it was impossible to say that the problem was solved. For example, the police are still investigating, and government officials are actively discussing "measures to prevent the recurrence of the incident."

Maya already said earlier that she forgives the fact that the terrorists' case was completed in an undesirable manner. However, her attitude can change at any moment. The room's intensity increased, and he could not blame it on his imagination.

"Now I want to entrust you another job."

"In that case, I'll visit you later at home." Tatsuya gently answered the smiling Maya.

"Do not worry. This place is also suitable."

Tatsuya didn't ask what task they want to entrust to him. The Yotsuba family were not hermits living on the street, but that village in the mountains was not self-sufficient. The whole village was originally a secret military research facility. Isolated from the outside world, they could provide themselves with food, clothing and shelter, but everything else needed to be bought from outside for money. Yotsuba in the outside world had affiliated companies, business partners and sponsors, whom the head of the family sometimes personally visited during the survey of possessions.

"I want you to go to Okinawa. Together with Miyuki."

"With Miyuki?"

"Officially, you will go to the meeting to discuss the commemoration of the fifth anniversary of that incident. You are visiting out of necessity, but you can just listen. At the call of the government, the tribute will be paid to the dead. In addition, a visit to the temple on Higan is required."

The incident she spoke of was the invasion by the Great Asian Alliance on Okinawa in August 2092. In that battle, they lost Sakurai Honami, the guardian of their mother Miya, who they considered to be part of the family.

"But both of us? We in fact do not have any concern for the families which were lost there. "

Miyuki said this because she didn't want Tatsuya to return to the painful memories, and completely forgot that she too can remember the bad moments. Tatsuya has not yet recovered real emotions, perhaps they will not be returned until his death. But even if there were no bad thoughts, a little sadness remained in the depths of the consciousness.

"To some extent, after all, do we belong to such families? This is also the official duty of the Ten Master Clans. And from the Top Ten Clans you are the only ones who are directly connected with this incident." Maya dismissed such an excuse

"...Yes, I understand. I said a stupid thing."

"Do not worry about that." Maya accepted Miyuki's apology with a smile and turned to Tatsuya.

"The real work that I wanted to entrust you is here."

Hayama, standing motionless behind Maya, as if waiting for these words, suddenly approached Tatsuya and handed him a large envelope.

"Can I open it now?"

"Yes, you can look at it here."

Tatsuya cut the envelope with a paper knife lying on the table and took out a folder of thick paper without any inscriptions, inside of which there were about a dozen documents. He quickly ran his eyes through all the pages, returned the folder to the envelope, and gave it to Hayama. He bowed to Tatsuya, and handed the envelope to Maya

"Tatsuya-san, I wonder, can you take care of this problem?"

Saying "Yes," Tatsuya again received the envelope from the hands of Maya. Immediately after receiving it in his hands, the envelope with the documents disappeared.

"Haha-hue, can I tell Miyuki about the contents of the envelope?"

"Oh sure. I'd like you two to work together on the problem I assigned Tatsuya-san."

However, this time failure will not be forgiven.

Maya didn't say it out loud, but Tatsuya understood that the successful completion of the case was implied without words.

"I got it."

Nodding in response to Tatsuya's bow, Maya stood up.

"I'm sorry they didn't serve tea. I have a busy schedule today."

"No, everything is okay." Tatsuya and Miyuki also got up.

Saying "I'll take my leave" to two people, stiff in deep bow, Maya left the room.

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On Monday Miyuki and Shizuku were talking on their way to the practice room.

"Miyuki, are you going to Okinawa?"

Hearing about the trip to Okinawa, Miyuki became a little agitated. Last night, Tatsuya told her about his "real work" there. Shizuku could not find out about this, but she chose such a time for her question that it could not be associated with anything else.

"To Okinawa?"

"Yeah."

"Do you know that an artificial island is being built on Okinawa, next to the island of Kume?" Instead of a laconic Shizuku, the conversation was supported by Honoka.

"Yeah, I know." Miyuki nodded, maintaining perfect calm.

"As expected from Miyuki..." Honoka suddenly began to admire, because she didn't know about the artificial island until Shizuku told her. And that was normal, because Shizuku didn't know until she heard from her parents.

"...So that's it. It seems that Shizuku's father's company invested in the construction of this island."

Miyuki thought this was not surprising. Shizuku's father is the head of one of the leading groups of companies in Japan, and the artificial island project is extremely important from a political point of view, as it will bring valuable resources. And it was no surprise that this project received investment from the government.

[^ If someone can verify this last line as it was rather confusing, unsure if it was "didn't" or "did" receive]

"The artificial island was completed last month. So..."

Honoka looked at Shizuku. She thought that she should continue her words.

"There will be a party, a celebration of the end of construction. Miyuki do you want to come?" Taking the baton from Honoka, Shizuku invited Miyuki.

"When?"

"The 28th of March. We leave on the 25th, and we plan to return on the 31st."

"I apologize. At that time, I have planned family business."

Hearing an apology from Miyuki (which, incidentally, was pure truth and not acting), Honoka rounded her eyes.

"Family affairs, you mean Yotuba's affairs?"

Having said this, Honoka suddenly closed her mouth with her hand in fright.

"It's not that there is any unusual business." A bitter smile on Miyuki's face appeared for the first time since she was caught unawares. The fear of Yotuba was clear, but it still seemed that such a reaction was excessive.

"This year is the fifth anniversary of the Okinawa incident?"

When someone mentioned the "Okinawa incident", in recent years everyone understood that it was the invasion of the Great Asian Alliance to Okinawa in August 2092. The meaning of these words also reached Honoka.

"This summer a large memorial service will be held. I need to attend a preliminary meeting to organize this event. In general, the next year will be more important, as it will be the 'seventh time'," therefore Miyuki added that this isn't a very important matter.

[note. "The seventh time" is the 6-year anniversary of death.]

Feeling the atmosphere, Honoka and Shizuku were silent.

"I also need to participate in the ceremonies during the time of Higan, which will be held at the same time. Therefore Onii-sama and I will go to Okinawa immediately after the closing ceremony on the 23rd. That's why we will not be able to accompany you on this trip... but we also are going to Okinawa, so we can meet you by chance."

Honoka's eyes gleamed when she heard that Tatsuya would be going to Okinawa. Yotuba's work in the Top Ten Clans meant a refusal to travel, but hearing that the destination was the same, Honoka was looking forward to it.

"If you have free time, can we meet?"

As the atmosphere of tension grew, Honoka didn't have to wait for an answer for a long time.

"Exactly. Since there isn't much work for me to do there, I will contact you whenever I get free." Miyuki nodded with a soft smile.

"Yeah."

Shizuku, before listening to Miyuki and Honoka, was, as usual, terse, but looked to also be eagerly awaiting the events being discussed

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March 15th. The day of the graduation ceremony for the schools of magic. Not only for First High, but all nine schools at the same time.

At First High, the farewell party of the graduates had just ended, and the school was enveloped in an atmosphere of both joy and sadness. Last year, Tatsuya was still on the disciplinary committee at the time of the graduation ceremony, so he didn't participate in its organization. He was simply in the mode of readiness for incidents. But this year he was a member of the school board, and carried out the instructions of President Miyuki.

After the completion of the first and second course parties, which were also held separately this year, Tatsuya came to the school boardroom. Miyuki, who was surrounded by guests and entertaining them, came to the school boardroom with him.

"Oh... no, Tatsuya-sama."

She didn't call him Onii-sama. However, she simply could not say "Tatsuya-san". More recently, Miyuki has become accustomed to not calling him "Onii-sama" publicly, however, she could not get used to Tatsuya-san yet. This treatment put her on an equal footing with Tatsuya, which didn't correspond to her feelings. Somehow, Miyuki managed to accept the "Tatsuya-sama" approach as a compromise. Perhaps this was borrowed from Minami, who also used "Tatsuya-sama."

The beauty of Miyuki, as if coming from a fairy tale, perfectly complemented her image of the "bride", so her treatment of "Tatsuya-sama" was not perceived by others as something wrong.

"Thanks for the work you've done."

"Miyuki, you've done a good job too."

Minami brought a cup of coffee to Tatsuya, who was at a terminal. Although there was a ban on the use of drinks and food near the terminals, no one pointed this out to Tatsuya. Even Izumi, who still treated him coolly, recognized his services in servicing all the equipment in the school board room.

...It could be said that because of Miyuki's charisma, no one dared to say it aloud, because no one could deny the fact that the current school board of First High definitely had a dangerous trend of lacking democracy.

And yet, Tatsuya had an excuse that allowed him to use the terminal instead of a table where he was allowed to eat and drink. For the meeting (supposedly) the table was fully occupied by the graduates: Azusa, Isori, Kanon, Hattori, Kirihara and Sayaka.

"Shiba-kun, thank you for the work done." Isori thanked Tatsuya sitting at the table.

Tatsuya, also sitting, nodded in return. Since during the graduation ceremonies, he had already congratulated all of them repeatedly, so he decided that repetition would be inappropriate. Graduates, including Kanon, didn't complain about Tatsuya's behavior. Isori already turned to the others and continued their conversation.

"So, everyone agrees with the prepared schedule?" Summarized Azusa. No one had any objections.

"When I was a freshman, I could not even imagine that we would have a graduation trip in such a composition."

"Mibu, now you do not have to worry anymore."

"Hattori is right, Mibu."

"Exactly. After all, Mibu-san isn't from our company. ...And in my opinion, it would be really good if only Kei and I went together."

"Kanon. Do not say such things."

Honoka approached while drinking coffee and listening to the graduates.

"They say that Nakajouu-senpai's company will have an exit trip to Okinawa."

"Senpai will also go to Okinawa?" Tatsuya already heard from Miyuki about the trip of Honoka and Shizuku to Okinawa.

"Yes. It seems Isori-senpai's family helped in the construction of an artificial island that was financed by the Shizuku family, so they will all attend the party in honor of its completion."

The Isori family deserved their reputation thanks to their magic engraving. This magic is especially appreciated for its usefulness as a counteraction to natural disasters. With the help of engraving, it is possible, albeit briefly, to significantly increase the fire resistance and impact resistance of building materials, and this is done very quickly. Using engraving magic to build an important facility for the country, for example a base for the extraction of marine resources, makes this a very good use of magic. The participation of Isori's family confirms this. In truth, the coincidence of this trip being at the same time as Tatsuya's work was not accidental. The work entrusted to Maya was connected with the party in honor of completing the construction of the artificial island "Saikasin", which Honoka spoke about. It would be best if Tatsuya warned at least Honoka and Shizuku. But he was told to keep his mission secret at the highest level. Unlike Tatsuya, Miyuki was very concerned about the possible involvement of their friends in this matter. But it was a secret mission involving the military. So, despite the desire to warn them, they could only remain silent.

The graduation ceremony was over, but the third semester was still going on. Despite the fact that the closing ceremony this year will be 2 days earlier than usual, the enemy will attack regardless.

The work entrusted to Tatsuya by Maya was to prevent diversions during the celebration of the completion of the artificial island, which will be held on the 28th. Therefore, to just perform this task, he didn't need to rush, instead he could just wait until spring break begins.

However, the more time the enemy gets, the more complex the task will become. In addition, the enemy's goals were not limited to the ceremony. If a Yotuba magician, who was present on the spot, allowed foreign enemy forces to commit sabotage, making the task a failure, this would be a large problem.

This would also be a problem not only for the Yotuba family. The reputation of the Ten Master Clans would be destroyed, as well as the reputation of the Japanese army and self-defense forces being disgraced. According to information about the purposes of this attack by foreign agents, the interests of the Yotuba and the army coincide.

March 17, Sunday.

Tatsuya, a Yotuba magician along with a special officer of the self-defense forces, visited the headquarters of the Independent Magic Battalion, which was quite natural. In this mission it was necessary to act not on behalf of the army, but to show Yotuba's cooperation with the army.

Tatsuya came to a meeting of the detachment of Kazama just as they were solving this very issue. Before Tatsuya could speak, Kazama told him:

"We will advance to Okinawa before you. We will unite during the ceremony of Higan on the 24th."

The present Kazama understood this well. Perhaps his regret was that they were inactive at a time when Gu Jie was creating his lawlessness. Well, whatever the reason, Tatsuya decided to thank him anyway.

"I really hope so." Tatsuya expressed his gratitude. But at the same time he asked the question that was tormenting him. "Lieutenant-Colonel, will you personally direct the operation right on the spot?"

Kazama shook his head with a smile at Tatsuya's question.

"Not just lead. This time I will also fight. Because the features of this operation do not allow for the use of a large number of people." Perhaps he was seized by the excitement of returning to the battlefield after a long time.

"Perhaps the enemy will not be limited to one small detachment."

Tatsuya didn't take this idea seriously. After the Okinawa incident, it took 5 years. And a year and a half has already passed since the incident in Yokohama. Tatsuya believed that both the police and the army at the moment were competent enough to withstand a large-scale invasion. At least he believed that.

Kazama was of the same opinion, but on duty he could not give up such thoughts that were now in Tatsuya's head.

"If the enemy engages large forces, we will receive support from our troops stationed on the ground. But in this case, even if the enemy's actions are unsuccessful, their target can be achieved if there is a big stir."

Tatsuya immediately realized what he wanted to tell Kazama. The tactical goal of the enemy, which is going to be sabotage, is either the destruction of the artificial island, or the murder of one of the important people who will attend the party. However, a more important, strategic goal is an attempt to provoke hostility towards the Japanese and to abolish the peace treaty. If a large number of people are involved, the media will start sniffing out what this is for. If it turns out that behind the attempt of sabotage is the faction of opponents of reconciliation from the Great Asian Alliance, this will cause serious problems with society.

But such a situation, presumably, will bring problems not only to Japan, but also to the Great Asian Alliance...

Chapter 2

The peace treaty between Japan and the Great Asian Alliance was concluded on December 2095.

With the event "Scorched Halloween," which destroyed the southern tip of the Korean peninsula in late October, the Great Asian Alliance lost its naval base and many ships. In addition to this, in order to achieve a final victory, in the middle of November a fleet was sent from Sasebo. It was an incomplete fleet, as it was collected from the remnants, because all the major forces were mobilized to prepare for war with the New Soviet Union. Formed in Sasebo, the fleet was accompanied by the only magician of the Strategic Class, publicly disclosed by the government of Japan, one of the "Thirteen Apostles" by Itsuwa Mio. In this way Japan declared its readiness for total war.

Fortunately, the clashes with the fleet of the Great Asian Alliance didn't occur. The Magic of the Strategic Class "Abyss" was not used, and the valuable magician of the Strategic Class was not lost by Japan. Because as soon as the fleet reached the open sea, the Great Asian Alliance sent a proposal for a truce, using the Union of South-East Asia as an intermediary.

As a result, the final form of the treaty, in which the Great Asian Alliance accepted almost all of Japan's requirements, was concluded in March 2096. Immediate establishment of peace, which the Japanese demanded, influenced the modesty of the demands put forward. But the main reason was the huge damage received by the Great Asian Alliance.

But this didn't mean that everyone agreed with reconciliation. In any country, in any army, there are always forces that do not want peace. Both in Japan and in the Great Asian Alliance there were many against reconciliation. And among them were those who planned to destroy the world by force and restore the state of war.

21 March. Okinawa, Naha airport.

This day was not special. Same as yesterday, same as any of 365 days a year. There were no identical people among those passing through the landing and disembarkation, but all the differences between them could be accommodated in the concept of "individuality". Even if you have a height of 2 meters, even if you are a mountain of muscles weighing a hundred kilograms, if everything is in order with the documents, and if nothing is illegal in the baggage, you will easily pass customs as any other traveler.

This man didn't have large suitcases, like those of other travelers. With only a Boston bag as luggage, he left the lobby and went to the taxi stand. [note. Boston Bag - a small hand bag]

For some reason, there were no other people around him. Nobody left the building. There was not a single car at the taxi stand. Feeling unhealthy, this man stopped. From the side of the terminal for domestic flights one could hear the approaching steps of one person. The man turned to the sound of footsteps. Throwing the bag on the road, he stood in a stance with slightly bent knees and elbows.

The man walking towards was not as big as this man, but, undoubtedly, he was the owner of impressive musculature. If a man could simply be said to possessing a very large body, then that person possessed this aura. Thanks to this he could be called a giant. A single glance would be enough to say this.

These two, possessing large bodies, concealed incredible fighting abilities. The owners of these bodies were trained only to fight.

"Captain Lou..." The man turned to the man approaching him. He involuntarily muttered his name.

"A deserter, Lieutenant Bradley Zhang." Lu Ganghu, on the contrary, clearly pronounced his words. "I do not mind if you resist."

On the face of Lu Ganghu there was a smile of an ogre-tiger.

"U-Ghost Walker!?" [note: another name is "Kimon Tonko"]

Zhang finally noticed the reason for the lack of passersby. A Ghost Walker technique that could create a kind of isolated space around the user. It was meant to not let oneself be caught.

Zhang was taller by 10 cm and heavier by 20 kg than his opponent. However, at the smiling Lu Ganghu, Bradley Zhang watched with an impatient expression.

Zhang turned his back to Lu Ganghu. Pretending that he wants to escape, he suddenly kicked in the direction of the approaching danger. Lu Ganghu didn't stop. His body continued to move. Catching the foot of Bradley Zhang's boot, he simply pushed him back.

Zhang's body soared into the air. With unimaginable ease for such a giant, he was on the roof of a taxi station building. The grinning Zhang looked down and his face suddenly froze. Lu Ganghu was not on the road. Bradley Zhang looked up.

The views of Zhang and Lu Ganghu met. Their eyes were at the same height.

Zhang fell off the roof. He didn't chose this way to go down in vain. The empty space, where Zhang's head had just been, was pierced by the right foot of Lu Ganghu, enveloped in a whirlwind.

After sending his body down, and pushing his left foot off the edge of the roof, Lu Ganghu quickly returned to the road. Prepared Zhang attacked Lu Ganghu at the moment of landing. Toward head of Lu Ganghu, a slashing hand struck from above, coming along at an arc. Lu Ganghu met Zhang's blow with the edge of his hand. From the colliding hands there was a sound like a gong.

"Steel Qigong."

"Not only you know this technique." Said Zhang in response to the muttering Lu Ganghu.

While answering quite joyfully, his words didn't carry any sign of superiority. Lu Ganghu smiled. This smile was like the grin of a wild animal.

Lu Ganghu kicked the road. At that very moment, Zhang was pushed aside, and a scorched trail remained on the road. Immediately followed by lightning strikes with his fist, elbow, and palm. With a face showing that he was waiting for this, Zhang reflected all the blows. But in this situation it was obvious that the advantage was for Lu Ganghu.

Suddenly, a dagger flew at him. Lu Ganghu nimbly dodged this attack, but his pressure, albeit for a moment, was interrupted. Zhang took advantage of the hitch and took a sharp jump in the distance away from Lu Ganghu. Without moving his head, Lu Ganghu directed his gaze to the side where the dagger came from. There was a man wearing sunglasses, about 180 cm tall. The intruder, seemed able to overcome the technique Ghost Walker.

A familiar "voice" appealed to Lu Ganghu.

"That's enough, Captain Lou. Temporarily retreat."

The source of the "voice" was not the enemy who was before him. And also not his ally, coming in from behind. The "voice" came from the headset of the communication device.

"Understood."

Briefly answering the "voice", Lu Ganghu turned from Zhang. Standing in the fighting stance, Zhang observed Lu's back calmly. Looking at him, he realizing that there were absolutely no open places to attack. Lu Ganghu disappeared into the building. A taxi was approaching the station. This was not strange as it was a taxi station. Bradley Zhang and the man with sunglasses got into the taxi that had arrived.

"Did you recognize the identity of Bradley Zhang's accomplice?"

"According to the passport, his name is James Jackson. Ostensibly a tourist from Australia."

For this question, Kazama answered, with Fujibayashi standing diagonally behind him.

"From Australia? How unusual."

After the Third World War Australia has adopted a policy of extremely limited contacts with foreign countries. In the understanding of the Japanese, this was "the actual state of the isolation of the country". However, Australia's policy was not similar to the policy of complete isolation of Japan in the Edo period.

Although the Australian government had adopted a policy of diplomatic isolation, migration and trade have generally been allowed. Visitors were prohibited from directly owning property, but indirect ownership was allowed in the form of the right to distribute income.

What then is the reason for the widespread opinion about the "actual state of isolation"? The reason was in extremely strict customs rules. Any visitors and departing people underwent thorough checks under the pretext of combating crime, and exchanging material was almost completely suppressed.

Many countries have condemned this policy. But during the Third World War, which lasted 20 years, there was a case when terrorists entered the country in the guise of travelers, and were able to build a military base, under the cover of investment. So the officially named pretext "for self-defense" was difficult to challenge.

Severe inspections were made even on their own citizens returning to the country. This was the case even for short-term trips. Under the name of a simple check, a thorough investigation of each case was concealed. At the moment there were very few people who wanted to go abroad, and as a result, the opportunity of seeing an Australian outside of Australia was very rare.

"Ask the intelligence department to investigate his real identity."

If he is a spy, why use such prominent Australian citizenship? That is the question. If he pretends to be an Australian, then the question also arises, for what purpose.

"I'll deal with this immediately." Having given honor to Kazama, Fujibayashi left the room with a tablet terminal under her arm. After, a giant man entered the room. Having just had a fight outside, Lu Ganghu returned to the airport's conference room.

"Captain Lou, thank you for your work." The head of the division of the special forces of the Great Asian Alliance, Chen Xiangshan, sitting opposite to Kazama addressed Lu Ganghu.

Chen Xiangshan and Lu Ganghu were captured during the Yokohama incident and imprisoned as war criminals who committed illegal subversive activities. But as a result of the conclusion of the peace treaty between Japan and the Great Asian Alliance, they were released as prisoners of war. More precisely, an informal exchange of prisoners of war was made. Captured enemy agents, hiding their belonging to a country, do not have the right to such an exchange. But still it was made informally for the rescue of the captive Japanese captured by the Great Asian Alliance.

"No, I missed it."

"Never mind. This time I gave the order to retreat. In the end, a major clash in such a place would only play into the hands of the enemy."

After saluting and saying "Understood," Lu Ganghu stood behind Chen Xiangshan. The views of Lu Ganghu and Sanada, standing behind Kazama, crossed. Lu Ganghu and Sanada ignored the impudent grin with an unflappable face.

"The taxi will be the objective of surveillance. Since we are on the island, we will not lose sight of them, I suppose."

"Thanks for the concern." Chen Xiangshan responded in fluent Japanese to the words of Kazama. "We would like to capture not only Lieutenant Zhang, but also the other deserters."

The prerequisite for Zhang's desertion was the desire to free his comrades.

"I see. We are also in the same situation."

Kazama, no, the army wanted to seize all the saboteurs who had infiltrated Japan. It was the coincidence of interests that eventually caused their temporary cooperation.

After completing preparations for further cooperation, Chen Xiangshan and Lu Ganghu left the airport. Subordinate Kazakhs escorted them to the apartment they provided. The driver also part-time watched them.

When Chen Xiangshan and the others left, Major Yanagi entered the conference room. Together with him was Fujibayashi, who had recently left.

Kazama, Sanada, Yanagi, and Fujibayashi. The entire officer staff of the Independent Magic-Equipped Battalion, with the exception of Yamanaka, was present in Okinawa.

"Yanagi, did you notice anything?"

"I believe that Bradley Zhang fought seriously. Lu Ganghu, on the contrary, looked frivolous." Yanagi immediately gave the answer to Kazama. Although the content of the answer was only a guess, there was no doubt in his voice. Yanagi watched the battle of Lu Ganghu and Bradley Zhang, despite the activated technique of the Ghost Walker.

"So they are not in cahoots?"

"Apparently, hunting for deserters isn't a cover, but the truth."

Kazama nodded, saying "this is how" and invited everyone to sit down, gesturing his hands toward the chairs.

"The special officer will probably be shocked."

"Major Sanada. This time he isn't a 'special officer.'" The answer of Fujibayashi to the jocular words of Sanada also sounded like a joke.

"Including his part of the work, the operation is on schedule."

Of course, by "him" Kazama meant "special officer", that is Tatsuya. Tatsuya is participating in this operation as a magician of the Yotsuba family, and not as a special officer of the Independent Magic-Equipped Battalion. This is what the meaning of Fujibayashi 's words was "not a special officer".

However, by the reminder from Kazama, there was talk of cooperation with Chen Xiangshan's division.

The order for a joint operation with the Great Asian Alliance was received from Saeki at the beginning of the month, before the meeting with Tatsuya. But during the meeting on the 17th Kazama didn't tell Tatsuya about the desire to cooperate in the capture of diversion-planning deserters. It was not strange when the army of the Great Asian Alliance addressed this proposal. Violation of the peace treaty threatened the Great Asian Alliance, and not Japan.

For the central government of the Great Asian Alliance, which is experiencing fragmentation problems, military control has the highest priority. If they tolerate desertion, it can grow into a major insurgency according to the "domino theory". For the central government, these risks are not something that you can allow to continue.

Nevertheless, there was also the likelihood that the joint operation to find deserters is being used as a cover for some trick. Without such caution, you will not just be a loser, you will be accused of non-performance of duties, renunciation of responsibility, and deprived of an officer's rank. Of course, in the 101 brigade, General Saeki considered this possibility. Considering the possible deception of the army of the Great Asian Alliance, the choice fell on Kazama.

Kazama also understood this. He was chosen for this mission for a reason, because he was connected with Chen Xiangshan.

Communication with the Yotsuba family had nothing to do with it. This was because of the reputation of Kazama Harunobu as "Daitengu", who fought with the army of the Great Asian Alliance on the Indochina Peninsula, and also in anticipation that his subordinates could cope with the "Tiger-cannibal" Lu Ganghu.

"At the moment, we are considering the unit of Chen Xiangshan as allies." Taking into account the results of observations of the current joint actions, and having listened to the report of Yanagi, Kazama decided to trust Chen Xiangshan for the time being.

"For the moment, at least." As Sanada said in an ironic voice, no one thought that this cooperation would last long.

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March 23, Saturday.

Immediately after the closing ceremony, Tatsuya, Miyuki and Minami flew to Okinawa. In fact, they wanted to skip school today, but Miyuki is the president of the school board so she could not miss the closing ceremony.

If you think about it, they could go tomorrow because the first event in which they need to participate will be held on the 24th in the afternoon. However, instead of making a fuss that day, it seemed to them that it would be easier to go a day in advance to prepare.

Honoka and Shizuku will arrive in Okinawa on the 25th in the afternoon. Shizuku's father, Kitayama Ushio, must fly on the plane on the day of the party, and her younger brother and mother Benio must be present on the same ship as her.

Also, yesterday the group with Azusa had already arrived in Okinawa.

In an airplane five years ago, Tatsuya had an ordinary tight seat. But this time he was in a capsule, like that of Miyuki. Minami was also not sent to the usual place, despite the servant's actual position. Minami herself, in a luxurious capsule, felt uncomfortable.

After arriving, these three were accommodated in a luxury hotel near the airport. They didn't use the villa on which their mother Miya spent time with Honami while she was still alive. But even if its owner is still Shiba Tatsuro, they still didn't want to go there with Minami.

On the day of check-in, nothing remarkable happened. The next day, March 24, was the ceremony of Higan. Since Hayama handled all the preparations, only Tatsuya and Miyuki needed to be present as the representatives of the Yotsuba family. Miyuki was in a completely black evening dress, her hair was not in her usual style as it was gathered up into a bun. Although she attracted a lot of attention among those present, nothing remarkable happened here either.

After the ceremony, they returned to the hotel, changed their clothes and left to fulfill the real task.

The hotel in which Tatsuya and company stayed was close to Naha Airport. The place they went to was also in the vicinity of the airport. It was a two-story restaurant opposite the military base of Naha. Not a restaurant of Okinawan cuisine, but a steak house run by someone descended from those of the US military once stationed in Okinawa called the "Left Bloods." The destination of Tatsuya company was the reserved second floor of this restaurant.

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"Oh, Tatsuya! Hey, long time no see." When Tatsuya entered the restaurant, a big black skinhead man called out to him. This physique and a cheerful voice were familiar to him.

"Joe." In the voice of Tatsuya, who called the name of the interlocutor, was surprise. "Long time no see. However, what is this appearance? Did you retire?"

A military magician, whom he met here 5 years ago, Higaki Joseph, was dressed in a colorful apron with the logo of the establishment.

"Of course, I'm still in the service. The other day I was promoted to sergeant."

"Congratulations."

Five years ago, Joseph was the youngest corporal. It seems that his services during the incident with the invasion of Okinawa were taken into account, and he got up quite well on the career ladder.

"It's closed today. And this outfit is just to help. They will not be paying for my assistance. This institution belongs to my retired friends."

"That's it."

Five years ago, Joseph and his friends walked around the neighborhood in the form of punks. But for the courage in the battles during that incident, the "Left Blood" deserved the softening of a prejudiced attitude. Looking at him now, it is easy to understand that this is really so.

In that incident, part of the "Left Blood" took the side of the enemy. The army kept this secret, and Tatsuya and the others promised to remain silent. Looking at the present Joseph, Tatsuya was again convinced that he was not mistaken.

"As for you, I always hear your name. Is that Tatsuya..."

"Joe." Interrupting Joe, Tatsuya didn't speak in an elevated tone.

"Oops, I'm sorry. I've already detained you." However, Joseph already realized that he allowed himself to say too much.

"Your comrades are waiting on the second floor. Please go up this ladder."

Tatsuya bowed to Joseph, and they went to the second floor with Miyuki and Minami.

"This is Shiba Tatsuya."

He knocked on the door. Soon, from inside, the sound of a key was heard, and the face of Sanada appeared from behind the door.

"It's good that you came. Well, come on in." Sanada cast a fleeting glance at Minami, apparently because he had not met her before. However, what will happen to them will be reported to Minami in advance. There being three guests was of no surprise instead of two.

It was Tatsuya's turn to be surprised. In the room were Kazama, Sanada and an unexpected person. Tatsuya kept his face poker face, while Miyuki, almost screaming in surprise, covered her mouth with her hands.

"Lieutenant Colonel Kazama, Major Sanada, it's good to meet you."

"I'm happy too, I'm counting on you." Standing up, and having answered Tatsuya, Kazama drew attention to the sitting Chen Xiangshan.

"In this operation we are in a cooperative relationship."

Kazama decided to clarify the situation before offering to them to sit down, because he understood that the presence of this person cannot be easily understood. After all, Chen Xiangshan was here because of a mission, which would be difficult to just guess.

"This time Colonel Chen from the army of the Great Asian Alliance is our ally. Take note of this and sit down."

"Understood. Miyuki."

"Yes; I also understand."

Miyuki sat in an armchair, not the one offered by Kazama, but instead in the one that Tatsuya put forward for her. Also, refusing Kazama, with the words "I'm sorry", Tatsuya sat down next to Miyuki.



Minami stood diagonally behind Miyuki. Kazama glanced at Minami. But he didn't try to force her to sit down.

"Then I'll go straight into the explanation of the current situation."

"You are welcome to." Tatsuya replied to the conversation that had begun. Chen Xiangshan was silent all this time.

"There are no large movements among enemy agents penetrating Okinawa. Once, with the help of Colonel Chen, we tried to provoke them, but at the moment we are acting cautiously."

Tatsuya directed his gaze to Chen Xiangshan. From that there was no reaction. Tatsuya again looked at Kazama.

"What are the known enemy forces at the moment?"

"Six people on this main island of Okinawa. Among them 2 Japanese and 1 Australian"

"An Australian?"

"According to the passport. Also, the place of departure of the plane, on which he flew, Sydney Airport."

"What is known about this Australian?"

"His name is James Jackson. Age of 40 years. Profession is a journalist."

Hearing the word "journalist", Tatsuya made an understanding face. Masking as a reporter is a good cover for sending agents.

"The purpose of the visit is tourism. With him is a 12-year-old daughter."

"Is she really his daughter?"

"Here's a picture." Kazama handed Tatsuya a tablet terminal. Tatsuya turned the terminal so Miyuki could also see, and looked carefully at the screen. There was displayed the image of a mustached man and a girl, about 12-13 years old, wearing a straw hat.

"It does not look like a parent and child."

"Suppose they are really a parent and a child." Kazama expressed his impression with a bitter smile. "If this is a disguise, then I do not understand the intention to bring such a girl. Are they going to use her in a suicide attack?"

"If it's really a girl." To Tatsuya's words Kazama slightly rounded his eyes.

"Do you mean if she does not look her age?"

"It's hard to say for sure only one photo."

"Hmm, you cannot deny that possibility. However, information from Australia is extremely difficult to obtain. For now, let's just keep in mind the opportunity you indicated."

Kazama didn't use the military appeal to Tatsuya, but simply said "you." [note: in Japan there is a "military" "you" (貴官 / kikan), used in official communication when addressing military and officials]

At the moment he was not "Special Officer Ooguro Riyuuya," but "Shiba Tatsuya from the Yotsuba." This was due to the presence of Chen Xiangshan. Chen Xiangshan does not know that Tatsuya is a magician of the Strategic Class Special Officer Ooguro Riyuuya, but on the other hand he saw the fighting power of Tatsuya and Miyuki during the Yokohama incident.

However, Kazama does not hide from Chen Xiangshan the cooperation with "Shiba Tatsuya" for another reason. Foreign magicians are planning subversive activities against Japan. It's no wonder that the Yotsuba from the Ten Master Clans are using their powers to solve this problem. Since Tatsuya was declared a member of the Yotsuba family, one can say that the existence of the Special Officer Ooguro Riyuuya is now connected only with the secret of the strategic class magician.

"There is still no activity on Kuma Island. However, there is no doubt that the aim of the agents is the artificial island off the western coast of Kuma."

There was no reason to say that this was accurate data. But Tatsuya didn't doubt it. The purpose of the defense in the instructions provided by Maya was the artificial island

"Saikasin". Tatsuya suggested that Kazama determined that the enemy's target is the artificial island, based on information provided by Chen Xiangshan.

"Let me know as soon as any movement appears. Until now, we are regaining strength."

"I got it."

Tatsuya understood his role. He and Miyuki, as members of the Yotsuba family, were too noticeable. The beauty of Miyuki was not the only thing that attracted attention at today's ceremony. Those searing glances from all sides, those impudent whisperings behind their backs, the attention of the media - all this proved that their personalities were well known.

"That's all I wanted to say. Do you have any questions?"

"No, nothing special."

"I see. What are you going to do now?"

"Miyuki seems to be a little tired from the ceremony. I think we'll go back to the hotel to rest."

When Tatsuya said this, Miyuki bowed to Kazama with an apologetic face. It was an excuse not to stay in this place. Maybe for the army, Chen Xiangshan was now an ally, but for Tatsuya and Miyuki, he was not an interlocutor with whom they can communicate peacefully.

"You came from Tokyo only yesterday? It is quite natural to be tired." Sanada, who was silent before that, said, apparently thinking that everything will be fine. "Because Fujibayashi-kun also said that she was tired."

"Really."

"Is there a break for Senior Lieutenant Fujibayashi? I saw her at the ceremony, but there was no way to talk, and I wanted to say hello here."

For a moment Sanada's face showed concern that she gave out the reason for Fujibayashi's absence as it was not as simple as it was stated.

The reason for the absence of Fujibayashi was that she was avoiding Tatsuya.

"Ah, she's resting on the base. I'm sorry." Tatsuya's question was answered by Kazama.

"I got it."

Tatsuya didn't begin to ask further questions, like why there is no commander's assistant.

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Around the same time, when Tatsuya met with Kazama.

"Um, is it really good that I went too?"

Said a handsome young man walking with a group of people around the shopping center.

"What is it, Sawaki? Isn't it too late to ask?" Hattori replied in a surprised voice to Sawaki's question.

"Right, Sawaki. Is this not the third time today already?"

"That's right, but if I didn't go, there would be three pairs? I thought that I understood the situation."

"Wh...!?"

"S-Sawaki-kun, what are you talking about!? Me and Hattori-kun are not in such a relationship!" Instead of the hesitating Hattori, the reddened Azusa spoke.

"As Nakajou said. I think that a single guy or girl in a company of two couples will not feel uncomfortable."

Hattori thought "it was expected," by looking at Isori, Kanon, Kirihsara and Sayaka.

Isori was in a fashionable patterned shirt with an open neck and beige Chinese pants. Kanon was in the same colorful shirt and in a beige skirt to the knees. Equally matched in color, the clothes gave out the pair.

Kirihsara was wearing a simple T-shirt and white jeans. Sayaka was wearing a T-shirt of the same color and white, shortened to 3/4 length, with jeans. Again, the same clothes gave out the pair.

The clothes of Azusa and Hattori differed. In contrast, Hattori was dressed in a light jacket, while Azusa was dressed in a rough style in shorts and a sweater with a hood. Indeed, it was impossible to say that they were together.

In response to Hattori's words and glance, the two couples laughed.

They are graduates who have just finished First High at the National University of Magic. Isori and Kanon, Kirihsara and Sayaka, Hattori, Azusa, and finally Sawaki - these were the seven graduates participating in this trip.

"Sawaki-kun thought so, because of what he saw while watching Shiba-kun?" asked Isori, looking around. To his left hand, Kanon was stuck, but Isori didn't show that he was worried. No one could say if this couple in love is classmates. Sawaki, it seems, didn't bother.

"I didn't notice anything like that, but since you say so..."

With a face showing "that's it," Sawaki nodded. Standing near Hattori, put in the zucchini, saying "What are you talking about?"

"However, I probably understand the train of thought of Sawaki-kun. Though it may be unreasonable to think about such at the ceremony of respecting the deceased, but Shiba-kun and Miyuki-san really looked suitable to each other."

There was a bit of admiration and a little envy in Sayaka's voice. When it comes to the beauty of Miyuki-san, it is difficult to find the right person for a balanced couple, but the presence of Shiba-kun was not lost at all against her background.

"Those two didn't look like high school students at all."

Kirihara teased the admiring Sayaka. Not only Sayaka, but also Kanon, Isori, Hattori, and even Azusa involuntarily laughed.

"Ah, and that's the truth. I was particularly impressed by the magnificent appearance of Shiba-kun. It seemed to me that he didn't just look like a magician, nor just a member of the Yotsuba family, but the that of a warrior."

Only one person, Sawaki, nodded with a serious face.

"...Everything is fine. Because Sawaki-kun also looks at him as a warrior."

With a look that says "Is it true?", Sawaki looked at Kanon that had said so.

As mentioned before, Isori and the company visited the ceremony for commemorating the victims of the invasion of Okinawa, and after that they chatted while walking around the city. They had no special purpose, instead they were just out buying accessories, as an example. That's why the fact that Sayaka noticed this girl was not just an accident.

"What's the matter, Mibu?" Kirihara followed Sayaka's gaze and frowned.

"...It's not that surprising to see children of European appearance. After all, isn't this fairly common?"

There, where Sayaka was looking, a 12-13 year old girl with chestnut hair stood alone. By the color of her skin and the outlines of her face it was possible to see that she was of a European descent.

"I am not talking about that. Do not you see?"

"Mm?" After Sayaka's words, Kirihsara again looked at the girl and suddenly narrowed his eyes.

"What is it, Kirihsara?"

"...She's restless. This atmosphere." After Hattori asked Kirihsara, Sawaki whispered his sense of the situation. There was a lonely girl who stood around, seemingly waiting for someone (perhaps parents), while adult men approached.

In total there were four of them. Surrounding, they slowly approached her.

"Abduction?" Hattori said in a contemptuous voice, and went to the wrong side to prevent kidnapping and indecent acts.

"Wait, Hattori. Come to Kirihsara and me." Sawaki stopped him, laying his hand on his shoulder. He turned with his face, which read the question "why?"

"Kirihsara and I are close combat fighters, and not very good at long range. Isori isn't a fighter. Protect the girls, you're the only one who can use defensive magic in an emergency." Sawaki answered him and went to the girl. Kirihsara followed him. Sayaka hailed him behind him.

"Kirihsara-kun, I'll go too." But Sayaka didn't try to stop Kirihsara. She wanted to go with him.

"No, but... Look at these guys, do you not think that their goals are not at all peaceful?"

Kirihsara, who indirectly said "do not go, it's dangerous there," Sayaka expressed her objection.

When Kirihsara-kun and Sawaki-kun come closer, they will not differ from other strange personalities.

Kirihara twisted his face in disgust. The girl was a junior high school student, or just enrolled in high school. And he is already almost a student. Since Kirihara entered the National Academy of Defense, he will soon become a public civil servant. Indeed, if he and Sawaki talk to this girl, it can lead to a misunderstanding. Kirihara admitted that Sayaka's warning is correct.

"...Understood. Just do not move away from me."

"I got it."

Sayaka knew that her only skill was mastery of the sword. She was not going to do anything foolish.

Kirihara looked around. Isori, Kanon, and the remaining Hattori nodded to him. Kirihara and Sayaka stepped up the pace and caught up with Sawaki.

Approaching the girl, Kirihara and Sawaki realized that they didn't know what they should do next. Both decided that they should start a conversation. But they didn't know what to say. From the girl's point of view, they are random people. A sudden voice scattered their thoughts about it.

"Hi. I am Sayaka."

"Hi... Hello. I'm Jas."

Finally Sayaka spoke to the girl. First she wanted to say: "I must speak English? I do not know French and Italian." but the conversation began in Japanese, and fortunately, the girl understood it.

"Jas, are you waiting for someone?"

"Daddy... I'm waiting for Dad."

Sayaka tried to hide her shock from the fact that a runaway European girl had an order of magnitude better knowledge of Japanese than her knowledge of English.

"I see. He asked you to wait here? Just alone?"

"Area-san, are you from the police?"

"Eh? No, I'm not."

"I see. Could you take me to where there is a policeman? Dad seems to be lost."

It was not she who was lost, but Dad. Apparently she didn't want to admit that she was lost. Thoughts about this raised the mood of Sayaka. At that moment, she noticed how Kirihsara and the Sawaki had moved so that Sayaka and the girl were between them.

There were no pedestrians in the vicinity. Four men in dark glasses surrounded them and approached. The clothes of these four people, as well as the design of their sunglasses, were different. However, one would be mistaken that they could not have been together, as there was a similar aura around them. It was their similar behavior, not facial features or physique.

"Four...?" Kirihsara muttered in a tone of displeasure.

In the battle there will be many participants. Even if you count only men, there will be 4 against 4.

"However, one cannot force Nakajou to fight with her skills. The magic of Chiyoda cannot be used in this case. We are already getting involved in this. Isori also better not to get involved in this, but then it turns out..."

In fact, three against four. Reflecting on this, Kirihsara felt impatient, and unconsciously expelled Sayaka from the participants in the battle.

"Kirihsara, Mibu, run away." Sawaki suddenly said in such a low voice that Kirihsara and Sayaka barely heard him. It was not an offer. He decided for them and pushed them.

"Kirihsara, Mibu, go ahead!"

"Really! Mibu!" Swearing, Kirihsara called Sayaka.

"Jas, come with us!" Sayaka took the girl by the hand.

"Okay." [note: said in english]

Surprisingly, the girl, who called herself Jas, didn't hesitate and obeyed Sayaka, following her.

Kirihara, and Sayaka with Jas behind him, ran towards Hattori and the others. Sawaki was left behind. On both sides, people wearing sunglasses moved to Kirihara.

"From the road!" Kirihara without additional conversations wedged in between these two people.

The people with sunglasses in their hands didn't have anything else. They attacked Kirihara with their bare hands. One of them attacked with his foot while jumping. Kirihara twisted his body and dodged. Another man attacked with his right fist that was stopped by the sudden attack of Kirihara. Kirihara stopped his fist with the palm of his hand.

Immediately bending the discarded arm at the elbow, the man aimed a blow at Kirihara. Shortening the distance, Kirihara hit the mans right elbow with his left elbow. Stopping the man, he attacked his forehead directly. The enemy blocked Kirihara's attack with his left hand. There was a feeling that the impact hit a rubber tire.

Kirihara retreated and attacked from the side of another enemy, who aimed at Sayaka. This second enemy didn't shy away, but blocked the blow of Kirihara. And in addition to the block, he pushed him back with his foot. Not expecting such a reaction, Kirihara lost his balance.

However, this didn't become a fatal mistake. During Kirihara's strike Sayaka already removed from her jeans trousers a narrow belt.

The belt, which seemed an impractical fashion object, in one stroke turned into a small sword. It was a weapon for self-defense, created by Isori on the basis of the technique of the Chiba family "Usub Kagero." He didn't have the keenness of the original "Usub Kagero," but even if the user didn't possess the skills of strengthening magic, it could demonstrate the strength of a real sword. And with the skills of the Sayaka saber, it went beyond a weapon of self-defense.

Sayaka had such a dangerous thing with her, not because she had a presentiment of danger. It was just an accident. Although he created a hidden weapon, imitating the technique of Usub Kagero, neither Isori nor Kanon had the skills of a swordsman. Erika could have used it, but even the dilettante in the Izyori kenjutsu knew that such weapons would not suit her.

It was because of the maiden design that in his time he could not ask Kirihara to test it. That's why he turned to Sayaka for help, who he was not very familiar with at the time. And so it coincided that Sayaka remembered about this request today, so there was no reason not to try.

Belt-sword in hand, which acquired the strength of wrought iron with the help of magic engraving, Sayaka attacked the advancing enemy against her in the torso. But the attack passed by, as the man jumped back, gaining a distance from Kirihara and Sayaka. At the same time, a blast of cold air came over the man.

It was the magic of Hattori, who used adiabatic expansion as the basis of his attack. The air was compressed, without changing the temperature, and after the compression was lifted, it expanded at an explosive rate, cooling rapidly. Being under blows and at a low temperature, this man was not able to do anything.

The second person, who had previously blocked Kirihara's attack, lost his balance while trying to move forward for an attack. With a restless face Azusa looked at the feet of this man. He slipped as a result of Azusa's magic. The road was made of porous concrete which had countless microscopic holes that allow water to flow through them. And now compressed air flowed from the holes, forming a kind of air cushion.

Since Kirihara lost his balance earlier, he recovered faster. Kirihara, in one step, narrowing the gap, poked his index finger in the throat of a man... more precisely just touched his finger. The man tried to brush away Kirihara's hand. However, his movements stopped halfway, and as if he was a puppet in which the ropes were cut, the man in dark glasses collapsed.

The strength of Kirihsara was the high-frequency blade, which, to put it briefly, is magic, which makes any rod-like object he touches vibrate at high speed.

That is, he could shake everything he touched. The effect was not limited to non-living objects.

Kirihsara caused the magic of vibration, making the opponent's neck be the hilt of the sword, and the head be the blade, thereby causing a severe concussion.

Making sure that the enemy was immobilized, Kirihsara looked around. He suspected that forced to go alone against two enemies, Sawaki was fighting hard. But this was unnecessary anxiety. One person was already lying on the road. And at the moment, Sawaki has already knocked the last one out.

Isori's company of seven people, along with a girl named Jas, went to a fast food restaurant in a shopping center. Despite the fact that many wanted to stay, waiting for the police, Sawaki strongly insisted that they leave immediately. On the part of the girls there were fears that this would make Jas's Father worry, but Jas herself solved this problem by saying: "I have a mobile phone with GPS, so everything is in order." Her other words "Daddy got lost, take me to the police" apparently were said because of suspicions about the group around Kirihsara.

"Sorry for waiting."

"Excuse me."

"So much is enough." Hattori thanked Kanon and Isori, who went for drinks for everyone, and Sayaka was talking with Jas at the table where everyone gathered.

"Jas, are you all right? Are you scared?"

"Yes, it's okay. Onee-san and the guys, thank you."

Skillful possession of Japanese, as well as a calm attitude towards the situation made me think that she isn't a child at all. Pupils of magic schools also seem to people more mature than their real age, but in the case of Jas it was something more.

However, they could not just ask "how old are you?" to this person with whom they met in such strange circumstances.

"Do you know what those people wanted from you?" Asked Kanon instead.

"No. I do not know."

Jas had no reason to hide something. No one even thought that such a small child could have superb acting skills so it was impossible to determine that she was hiding something.



"Well... I do not think they'll attack in such a crowded place, but we'll still stay with you until your dad comes, so everything will be fine."

Right after the words of Kanon, as if overhearing,

"Jas!"

A male voice called Jas by name.

"Yes, daddy."

Despite the desperate voice of the man, the girl's voice remained calm. At least, she didn't have the impression of helplessness.

"I was worried because you were so suddenly lost. ...Um, and you guys, who are they?" The father looked at Isori company, not hiding his suspicions and alertness.

"You're Jas-san's Father, are not you? My name is Hattori Gyuba."

Hattori got up and introduced myself to the man. Naturally, they looked suspicious (at least Hattori believed so), so he decided to give an explanation.

"We happened to be in a place where a group of four men tried to kidnap Jas-san. We could not pretend that we didn't see anything, and took Jas-san to a crowded place."

"So that's what happened? ... *I apologize for being late.* I, Father Jas, James Jackson, desu." [note. perev .: his speech is written in katakana, apparently to show the crooked pronunciation of words]

Although suspicions still remained, but the father of Jas introduced himself in a more calm voice. His Japanese was much worse than that of his daughter, but sufficient enough for communication. Not only did Hattori sense a feigned awkwardness, but the rest also doubted it.

"Although we fought the attackers back, we still decided to leave that location, given the possibility that they had accomplices. If you want to report this to the police, I will accompany you."

"No, it's not necessary."

"That's... I will not ask your situation, but I advise you to avoid deserted places."

"Yes. We will return to the hotel. Thank you for helping my daughter, thank you very much."

"No, it goes without saying that we helped."

"Thank you. Bye-bye."

Jas, holding his father's hands, turned and waved. Sayaka, Kanon and Azusa, waving their hands, followed them with their eyes.

When these two disappeared, Hattori asked Sawaki in a low voice:

"Sawaki, why did you not want to wait for the police?" Hattori could not just discard the thoughts of the four left lying on the road people.

They were not close friends, but for 3 years at school, he became close enough with Sawaki to know his character. Therefore, Hattori suggested that Sawaki would not worry about the kidnappers.

"The guys I fought with spoke Chinese."

"What?"

"Shh!" Suddenly Kirikara cried out Sayaka sitting on the next seat.

"Oh, uh, I'm sorry."

Having gathered the view of everyone at the table, he turned away and apologized. However, along with this, he didn't stop.

"Is it... the same as 2 years ago?"

Even without mentioning the country called the Great Asian Alliance, there was no one here who could not understand Kirihsara's question.

"You cannot say for sure just because they spoke Chinese. It can be a criminal organization that isn't related to the government."

Hattori's objection was reasonable.

"So it's true, but their skills were inspired by army martial arts."

To these words, Sawaki had nothing to refute.

"But, for something like this to happen again...?"

No one laughed at Sayaka's sinister expectations.

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The explanation by James Jackson about returning to their hotel was not a lie. But this was the only truth from all that was said.

"Captain Johnson, what kind of suspicious Japanese did you show earlier?"

Jas, more accurately belonging to the Australian corps of military magicians, Captain Jasmine Williams, having finished checking the room for wiretapping, asked the reproachful voice of her "father."

"Should I not look like a foreigner who isn't used to Japan?"

'James Jackson' was a fictitious name. The real name of this man was James J. Johnson. Like Jasmine, he was the captain of the Australian corps of military magicians.

"Like a third-rate comedian. I think it attracted a lot of unnecessary attention. Those guys looked like they suspected something."

"Really?"

In response to James's lack of awareness, Jasmine only sighed.

"...Next time we'll change partners."

"I do not think we can do that."

Jasmine sighed even more. As James said, working with him in a pair started not today or yesterday. Covering the parent and child was invented long before this mission.

Captain Jasmine Williams is an improved magician. She was born with magical abilities, which were planned in advance, but as a result of the genetic modification an anomaly was obtained, which was considered a side effect.

The body remained unripe. By the age of 20 it became clear that her 12-year-old face would not change. And over the next nine years, growth was not observed. It was a picture, inverse to the syndrome of progeria.

The Australian army didn't try to cure this genetic anomaly. A magician with sufficient military training and the appearance of a girl. They decided that this way it would be more useful that she keep the appearance of a young girl. To use this situation, the Australian army trained her as an expert in penetration operations.

However, with the appearance of a 12-year-old child, so that nothing is suspected, the list of possible situations for action were limited.

Therefore, James plays the cover-up role of the "parent". They, in the past, participated as "parent and child" in many missions. Of course, the role of "parent" isn't exactly for James.

Captain James J. Johnson was 180 cm tall, weighing 75 kg, had a brown hair color and light brown eyes. This appearance struck out less than other European men. Nevertheless, if you look at people in the Australian army, it was not because he didn't stand out that he was selected.

James was appointed as the partner to Jasmine because he was highly valued for his abilities as a combat magician.

Jasmine is a magician specializing in long-range field attacks. Because of the low physical skills associated with the state of her body, she isn't able to handle melee combat.

On the other hand, James is a magician of the avant-garde type, specializing in the magic of self-acceleration. He is stronger than he looks, and stunts like "grab Jasmine and carry away from the enemy" have already become the norm for them. In a way, these two have good compatibility. Being in a pair for many years, they know each other well. The leadership will not accept the cancellation of their duet now.

"Have you identified the identities of those people?"

Having stopped grumbling without business, Jasmine transferred the topic to those who wanted to attack her.

"Agents of the Great Asian Alliance. Very similar to our accomplices."

"Are these the forces of persecution? How the hell did they reveal our identities?"

Jasmine nodded in agreement, and then bent her head in an interrogative gesture.

"Oh, did not you mean Japanese intelligence?"

James's answer to her question was simple.

"Perhaps the army of the Great Asian Alliance and the Japanese army joined forces?"

"There is no other reason for such active public actions."

"Is it not surprising, immediately after the conclusion of the peace treaty?"

James's reasoning didn't sound meaningful, but Jasmine persuaded him. Maybe she also thought along those lines.

"They must show cooperation after reconciliation in order to avoid the active actions of the New Soviet Union or the USNA."

"I mean that, despite the unofficial nature of their joint operation, the agents of each country should not lose their vigilance."

"Not only this. If they allow a diversion planned by the faction of opponents of reconciliation, then Japan and the Great Asian Alliance will lose their reputation. The Great Asian Alliance wants to catch deserters on its own, and Japan does not want new terrorist attacks on its territory. A degree of tractability can be achieved."

"Their interests are completely opposite to ours."

"Naturally. We are trying to disrupt the launch ceremony of a large national project."

These two did not just discuss the current situation. As they talked, they hastily packed their things.

"I've finished. Jas?"

"I also have. Let's go."

Since Jasmine has already become a target, this hotel is also under observation. Both Jasmine and James understood this without further discussion. Right now, they are also likely being shadowed. Even if they try to get out through the back door, it, too, is most likely kept under surveillance.

To get rid of the surveillance, these two decided to make some rough measures.

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The work entrusted to Tatsuya by Maya was to prevent a terrorist attack during the celebration for the completion of the artificial island. This time the work didn't include the search for saboteurs. That was the task of the 101 brigade, and at the meeting, Kazama said that he would contact him when the saboteurs were discovered.

Perhaps, Kazama didn't want the secret Strategic Class magician Tatsuya to interact with the army of the Great Asian Alliance, and perhaps this was the decision of Lieutenant-General Saeki.

He could not act as a fighter of the Independent Magic-Equipped Battalion, "Special Officer Ooguro Ryuuya," so he could not use special equipment, such as the mobile suit. Luckily for Tatsuya, this meant that there was no need to act separately from Miyuki.

"Can we go back to the hotel for a little while?" A little bit away from the steak house, where they spoke with Kazama, Tatsuya turned to Miyuki. They didn't lie to Kazama when they said they wanted to return to the hotel.

"And the truth is, I'm a little tired."

"Shall I call a taxi?"

Hearing the intention of Miyuki, Minami, who was walking next to her, instantly asked to call a taxi. Despite the proximity of the hotel, on foot it would take about 10 minutes.

"Yes, please."

Minami took out her mobile terminal from her bag and tried to get access to the dispatcher's unmanned taxi. But soon she frowned in doubt.

"Minami, what happened?" Seeing a confused Minami, Tatsuya asked her.

"It's... The taxi dispatcher isn't responding."

"Taxi Dispatch?"

Minami nodded. Tatsuya took out his terminal and ran his fingers over it.

"...No connection due to traffic routing problems." Muttered Tatsuya, but loud enough for Miyuki and Minami to hear.

"This isn't a software problem. Hardware failure... no, diversion?"

Miyuki's complexion changed. Minami's expression also expressed concern.

When asked by Miyuki, Tatsuya shook his head from side to side.

"If a local failure occurs, the route will simply switch to an alternative line. Without another diversion, such as arson or armed insurrection, such terrorist activities do not make sense."

"Ah, it's connected." Involuntarily pronounced Minami, confirming the hypothesis of Tatsuya.

"Maybe it was because of someone trying to escape."

It isn't known whether this was planned, or if it was accidental, but it looks like someone destroyed several base stations of retransmission in order to prevent any pursuit.

Military communication repeaters were secretly embedded in the civil mobile network, and were used to organize communications in urban areas with many obstacles, as well as for the uninterrupted transmission of large amounts of data. Even if all civilian base stations are destroyed, military communications lines will be organized through the stratospheric platform or satellites.

Destroying several base stations will only give a temporary effect of disruption of communication. For a minute or less. However, a minute is enough if you need to find a loophole in the tracking network and escape from the pursuers. The current adversary, apparently, was skilled enough if he could take advantage of this small chance. These were Tatsuya's reflections.

"...Does this mean that the saboteurs are somewhere near us?"

"They were not far from us you should have said. The absence of other diversions makes it a high probability they they have already fled."

Against Miyuki's question, Tatsuya again denied it.

"Minami, call the taxi. We're going to the hotel."

"As you wish, Tatsuya-sama."

Even with "Elemental Sight" Tatsuya cannot track the criminal. His initial information is only an assumption of the one who did it - the instigator of diversion. At this stage, he cannot do anything.

In addition, at the moment, Tatsuya does not need to rush into battle. Moreover, in the case of the "Hakone incident", the quality of the support involved was different. When it comes to finding information on the Web, Sanada and Fujibayashi should find some clues. Perhaps they have already tracked the enemy's new location.

Reflecting on the fact that everything had its time, Tatsuya and Miyuki and Minami sat down in an approaching unmanned taxi.

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Tatsuya's assumption was only partly correct.

"The capture squad sent to check the hotel and search for Australian saboteurs was completely destroyed." In a voice which seemed to have repressed emotions, Fujibayashi made a report in a room for the self-defense forces. In this room, appointed as the temporary control room, she informed Kazama about the failure of the operation.

"Destroyed? ...Did the enemy receive reinforcements?"

"No. The capture team suffered a magical attack."

The people that Kazama lead really were on the tail of the saboteurs.

But they could not detain them.

"What kind of attacks?"

"They have acute poisoning from a high concentration of ozone gas."

"'Ozone circle'?" Looking at his terminal, Sanada added in a thoughtful voice to the report of Fujibayashi.

"Sanada?"

"Yes. I apologize."

Having heard his name, spoken by Kazama, Sanada realized his inappropriate behavior before a higher officer. Therefore hastily apologized.

"Everything is fine. And yet, 'Ozone Circle'?"

"Yes. Although there is another magic that can create ozone, but if a whole squad of trained counter-terrorism fighters are defeated outdoors, and not indoors, then, in my opinion, there is a high probability that this is 'Ozone Circle'."

"...Really."

The detachment sent to capture them passed numerous counter-terrorism preparations, which included methods of counteracting not only explosives and firearms, but also chemical weapons. If they feel signs of threat, they will not suffer from gas attacks. Apparently, enemy magic took them by surprise, trapped in highly concentrated ozone gas.

If you look for magic that can generate a large amount of ozone in a short time, then, as Sanada said, the first candidate will be "Ozone Circle".

"An Australian magician with Ozone circle?"

"There's nothing strange about it." Sanada objected to the doubts of Fujibayashi.

The "ozone circle" was the magic of the Strategic Class, whose famous users were William MacLeod of Britain and Carl Schmidt from Germany. Initially, it was developed in the European Union before its division, and was intended to combat ozone holes.

Information on the sequence of magic "Ozone Circle" was provided to all the former EU countries before its division. The Australian army could gain access to it, as a former member of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

In other words, this means that the person who calls himself James Jackson is either with a girl meant to be his daughter or they are both magicians of the Australian army.

"Fujibayashi, did you find out the real personality of these two?"

"No, not yet. However, according to the testimony of the psion sensors, the user of the magic that cut down the capture group is presumably Jasmine Jackson"

"The girl?"

"Or a magician with the appearance of a girl."

After the words of Fujibayashi, the doubting face of Kazama cleared up.

"Does not look like her age? Tatsuya said something similar."

From the mention of the name Tatsuya Fujibayashi slightly shuddered. But Kazama didn't know what feelings it reflected.

"I think that the commander personally knows examples when drug agents suppressed secondary sexual characteristics of intelligence agents. There's also likely the existence of a similar agent, which took measures to control growth."

Kazama didn't comment on this inhumane suggestion of Fujibayashi. Instead, he asked:

"Have the identities of those who prevented the unit of the Great Asian Alliance been established?"

"Yes." On the face of Fujibayashi a bitter grin arose.

"They are graduates of First High at the National University of Magic. They are on a graduation trip, Tatsuya-kun's senpais, a year older than him."

"By the way, the eldest son of the Isori family was invited to a party in honor of completing the construction of an artificial island. Then it turns out they accidentally interfered, no, intervened?"

Kazama sighed and grinned. After this there were no more mentions of the graduates from First High.

"Fujibayashi, continue to investigate the identity of the agents. Sanada, look for the main enemy forces."

"I got it."

"I found James Jackson and Jasmine Jackson on a camera from the air. They will not get away."

At the same time, having risen, and having saluted Kazama, Sanada and Fujibayashi left the room.

Chapter 3

Captain Jasmine Williams, using the pseudonym Jasmine Jackson, and Capt. James J. Johnson, using the pseudonym James Jackson, heard something interesting on March 24th. Having fled from the people of Kazama, they secretly met with the leaders of the group of deserters from the Great Asian Alliance in the coastal hotel.

"Yotuba Magicians?"

One of the leaders of the faction of the opponents of reconciliation, as well as the leader of this group of saboteurs, Major Daniel Liu, nodded in response to the resent Jasmine.

"In the today's ceremony, the future head of the Yotsuba family, as well as her fiancé, took part."

"Was it a memorial service for victims of the war five years ago?"

Liu didn't add anything, instead he just nodded again.

"Leaders of magicians sent their representative to the ceremony, that is nothing strange." Said James, standing next to Jasmine.

"Indeed, there is nothing unnatural here." Liu agreed with James.

"However, I think that we cannot ignore it. Even if their presence in Okinawa isn't connected with us, the mere presence of Yotsuba magician's here can be a serious obstacle to the operation."

"However, the 'princess' of the Yotsuba and her fiancé must be still high school students."

To this response from Jasmine Liu shook his head negatively.

"During the operation in Yokohama, our army was badly damaged by the current head of the family Dziumondzi, who was at that time a high school student. You cannot underestimate them, even if they are children."

Although Liu himself urged Jasmine and others to be more careful, he himself didn't know how valuable and dangerous magicians Tatsuya and Miyuki are. It was not a misunderstanding, he just didn't know.

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March 25, 2097

On the day that Tatsuya and Miyuki, received the attention of enemy saboteurs, they spent without vigorous participation in the counter-terrorist operation.

They just relaxed at the hotel.

"From time to time to afford such a luxury is a good thing."

"That's true."

"I'm still somewhat uncomfortable..." Minami said timidly, serving two masters talking at breakfast on the balcony.

The rooms in which these three reside is a suite with two bedrooms. This time they publicly represent the Yotsuba family at a memorial ceremony for the victims of the invasion of Okinawa and at a meeting on the organization of a summer funeral service. Since the rest of the Ten Master Clans didn't participate in the ceremony, it would not be an exaggeration to say that they are representatives of the Conference of the Master Clans. Therefore, the cost of the room was the highest to show the importance of the powers of the Ten Master Clans.

In the suite where they lived, there were two bedrooms with two single beds. Tatsuya took one room, and Miyuki along with Minami the other. Neither Tatsuya nor Miyuki thought it necessary to have Minami in a separate room.

But for Minami this room was too luxurious, and she felt atrocious. She was also embarrassed that she worried about the presence of a couple of the groom with the bride. Therefore she from time to time modestly complained, asking to be moved to a "cheaper room".

"Does the bodyguard want to abandon the guard's goal?"

But every time she received such a warning, she could not object. If Minami gets a separate cheap room, then she will be on a different floor. Then, if something happens, she will not have time to assist.

"I apologize." After all, Minami had no choice but to apologize this time "Minami-chan, let's sit down too." Miyuki asked softly to sit down at a table full of food and drinks. Minami, answering "Yes," obediently sat down. She already understood that it was useless to try to resist.

Minami, making more coffee, collected the dishes on a cart. Of course, you could leave it to the hotel staff, but Minami, with the words "This is in return for being in such a luxurious room," decided to take it upon herself. ...Well, the custom to leave a tip here isn't common, so no harm will be done to the employees because of this. Thinking in this way, Tatsuya and Miyuki were silent.

"Miyuki, did you get enough rest?"

"Yes. I rested from yesterday evening, and the fatigue has completely passed."

"That's good." Tatsuya confirmed with his "sight" that Miyuki does not pretend, and smiled gently. Miyuki looked away shyly. However, soon turned back, flushed, ashamed of her own weakness.

"Shall we go for a walk today?"

"Yes, with pleasure!"

"On the job?" Miyuki didn't ask out loud. If Tatsuya wants to spend time on herself, she will not have any objections. Miyuki could not even think of such disrespectful behavior as a dispute with Tatsuya's decision.

"Minami will come with us, too."

"Yes, I will." Approaching the table Minami, also without hesitation nodded. She had no choice but to obey the words of her master.

"As we will be getting aboard a ship, I want you both to change into something that does not hamper movement."

"I got it. Could you wait a minute?"

"Do not rush. I also need time to prepare. Minami, help Miyuki with the preparations."

"As you wish."

Miyuki and Minami went to their room. Tatsuya also went to change in his room.

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Arriving at the port, Tatsuya, Miyuki and Minami went to a yacht equipped for the open sea. With the appearance of this "yacht" it was impossible to see that it was equipped with a military engine and equipment taken from army boats.

"Yo, here you are."

"Joe, I'm counting on you today."

On board the yacht, Sergeant Higaki Joseph expected them, with whom they met yesterday.

"Um, Onii-sama... is this?"

Yesterday, an unexpected meeting only surprised her, but now she forgot herself so much that she didn't realize that Tatsuya-sama should be used before strangers.

"Today I planned to use a plane, but last night I received an invitation to use a boat from Sergeant Higaki. And I decided to accept the offer."

"Sergeant Higaki Joseph, at your service. Allow me today to serve as your escort." He said with a broad smile on his face.

"Even if I say "escort", in fact, I was instructed to arrange a reception. Big cones from above could not ignore the name Yotsuba, no matter how much noise isn't raised. Ah, I do not know what kind of snake can crawl out."

Apparently, Joseph wanted to say "bush snake". [note. trans.: a Japanese saying of only 2 words, meaning that a person's actions will have the opposite effect]

"The base's management was worried, but Lieutenant Colonel Kazama said that "There is a junior officer who is familiar with the next head of the Yotsuba family" and, under the pretext of escort, was instructed to be a tourist guide to this guy. That officer is, me."

Joseph winked at Miyuki. It looked stern, but unexpectedly friendly.

"That's why, when I asked Tatsuya where he wanted to go, and got the answer that it was on Ishigaki Island, I borrowed a military speedboat with a crew. But even if I say military boat, I still guarantee a comfortable trip, because it is equipped to transport important people."

"Ishigaki Island? I didn't know that it was planned to go so far." Miyuki looked at Tatsuya in surprise.

"Depending on the weather conditions, the trip could be canceled. I didn't mean to upset you."

"I'm surprised... but glad." Miyuki said to the smiling Tatsuya.

To Ishigaki Island was about 400 km, they overcame this in 3 hours. The sea was far from calm, but inside the yacht it was surprisingly quiet, so Tatsuya and company came out to Ishigaki Island without even slight seasickness. In the port they were waiting for a rented car. Then they realized that the words "to arrange a reception" were not an exaggeration.

"Well, then, a review of conventional attractions will do?"

"Yes, thank you."

Joseph sat in the driver's seat. Only the most famous sights were near the network of unmanned roads, so to get to those that are outside these roads, a knowledgeable driver was needed. Although Joseph probably had few opportunities to leave the main island of Okinawa and visit Ishigaki, nevertheless, he was a good guide who knew the key places. Even with the escort and maid accompanying, Miyuki was pleased with the unexpected trip with Tatsuya.

In the end, when it was time to return to the main island, Tatsuya asked to stop at a well-known jewelry store specializing in pearls. Leaving Joseph waiting outside, Tatsuya led Miyuki and Minami to the store.

"This is Shiba Tatsuya."

"We have been expecting you."

Tatsuya gave his name, and the store employee took them to the service desk at the back of the store. Regarding the workers words, Miyuki realized that the visit was apparently reserved in advance.

"Here you are."

From the service room, a former employee left, and carefully opened the jewelry case with the necklace he had brought.

"Oh....!"

Inside, there was such a magnificent multicolored pearl necklace that Miyuki was involuntarily surprised aloud. The standard length graduation type combined three colors of pearls: white, black and gold. The pearls were the completely ideal round shape, without any natural damage. It was not necessary to be an expert to say that the saturation of color and brilliance was also at a high level of luxury, one which cannot be complained about.

"Is it possible to take a closer look?"

"As you wish."

The seller politely bowed to Tatsuya's words, and asked Miyuki: "Can I help you try it on?"

"Uh, is that for... me?"

Other thoughts didn't come to mind. But still, involuntarily, Miyuki asked Tatsuya.

"Of course. Happy Birthday"

Miyuki covered her mouth with both hands

"We'll buy the ring later. While we take the necklace, please be patient a little."

Tatsuya was with his usual unbiased face, but the tone of his voice was different, betraying some degree of embarrassment.

"What patience! I'm happy. Thank you very much, Tatsuya-sama."

Apparently from an overabundance of emotions, Miyuki's eyes shed a few tears. Only Minami noticed that she was able to replace the familiar "Onii-sama" "Tatsuya-sama."

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"Jo, thank you very much for today."

"It's been good. Thanks to you, I was also able to rest."

Having brought them to the entrance of the hotel, Joseph left in an unmanned taxi. Watching the taxi with his eyes until it was out of sight, Tatsuya then directed his gaze to the building across the road.

"Onii-sama? What happened?" Having noticed this look, Miyuki asked Tatsuya. Minami, hearing Miyuki, became tense. Tatsuya shielded Miyuki with his back from the building he was looking at.

"Do not worry." Despite Tatsuya's attempt to reassure, Minami's suspicion didn't weaken.

"Are those... enemies?" Following Tatsuya's gaze, Miyuki saw only a window with closed curtains. Minami's also could not understand what Tatsuya was looking at.

"Maybe it's a kind of information seeker hired with money. But even if you grab him, you cannot get much out of him."

"Do not ferret out" does not mean that you cannot try to find out. So Miyuki accepted Tatsuya's words, and could neither doubt nor disprove.

Tatsuya gently pushed Miyuki back. Following this insistence of Tatsuya, Miyuki entered the hotel door.

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In one of the rooms of the building opposite, watching as Miyuki, Tatsuya and Minami entered into the hotel, the captain of the Australian army, James J. Johnson, continued the previously detained breath. Trying to rub his forehead with his hand, he realized that his hand was completely wet with cold sweat.

(That I would experience such tension... no, fear?)

Modern Australia not only negatively sees diplomacy, but also reluctantly sends troops abroad. This is the official policy, regardless of the actual manifestation of isolation. Officially, they have no alliances with other countries, and they do not participate in any joint exercises.

But this does not mean that a soldier like James was never given a chance to participate in a real battle.

Australia is a country rich in resources, and not only minerals. Having planted and cultivated deserts, this country has one of the few natural agricultural farms in the world capable of supplying food. Other countries, in the guise of territorial claims, begin conflicts almost daily.

Also, their isolated policy does not mean complete neutrality. As in the present case, there is nothing unusual in cooperating with armed groups of other countries in secret illegal operations.

James is a veteran of the army service, a battle magician of the avant-garde, who has gained experience in a variety of battles. He was only a hair's breadth from death, not only once or twice. He was proud of the fact that in many cases he was unshakable.

(To me... from this kid?)

But no matter how he denied, he understood that this was only self-deception.

(He didn't just notice my observation, it was like a god of death, piercing the soul and piercing deep in the heart ... Are they called 'Untouchables' not just for the sight?)

Rumors that started about 30 years ago after the defeat of Dahan gave birth to this name.

Do not touch the Yotsuba from Japan. Touch and be destroyed.

Indeed, in the shadow world, to which James belonged, the rumors have already outgrown serious talk about the fact that the Great Asian Alliance went to a disadvantageous world because of what bothered the Yotsuba. "Isn't the Magic of the Strategic Class that burned the southern tip of the Korean peninsula, the development of the Yotsuba family?", Some people said.

Considered to be the strongest division in the world, Stars from the USNA were also repulsed from Japan by the Yotsuba. Unconfirmed information about this also reached him.

James could not bring himself to believe in all these amazing stories. This time the enemy of James was "Daitengu" Kazama Harunobu, who earned his reputation in the battles on the Indochina peninsula. Since then, the capabilities of the military magicians of Japan were regarded to be at a high level. The magical power of Japan isn't only the Yotsuba. Showing the world's first division of flying infantry, it was the military that repulsed the sudden attack of the Great Asian Alliance with its might.

According to the Australian army, including James, the Magic of the Strategic Class, which solved the situation, was the development of the Japanese army. Reasonably, such force is too great for one civil organization. By allowing this, they would not be able to keep the balance of power in their country.

(...And yet, Yotsuba is the enemy, which in any case cannot be neglected.)

(...Even if it's a schoolboy-teenager.)

James thought about it again in his memory.

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On Miyuki's birthday Tatsuya prepared not only a gift. Together they enjoyed a dinner in the luxurious restaurant of the hotel (Minami, after reading the atmosphere, that is, under her influence, refused), after which they went to the observation deck with some drinks.

Of course, both had non-alcoholic cocktails. Miyuki still asked, "maybe a little..." Tatsuya politely declined. He still remembered his troubled experience with Mayumi at a hotel in Kyoto.

He not only stopped her with words. Tatsuya checked with his "eye" the contents of Miyuki's glass. He was already used to checking drinks on the presence of alcohol with his "Eyes of Spirits". So he was able to find out that there was no alcohol.

"Onii-sama... I, somehow..."

Sitting on the next couch, Miyuki raised her clouded eyes and looked at Tatsuya with a defocused gaze.

Miyuki was dressed in a cocktail dress of the orthodox style "A-line" with a skirt below the knee length. Usually knees can be seen if sitting in a chair. However, on this low couch, her slender legs were visible far above her knees.

Fortunately, they were behind a partition, and it was not seen by the other visitors. But in Tatsuya's eyes the image of uncovered legs sitting on the low sofa was clearly reflected.

Tatsuya didn't know where to look, although Miyuki simply sat according to all the rules of etiquette.

"Can we go back to our room?"

She didn't feel bad, apparently just intoxicated with the atmosphere. Feeling that in any case it is better to return, Tatsuya called Miyuki and got up. Miyuki obediently followed Tatsuya. She was not one of those girls who would complain at such a time. Especially with Tatsuya's words.

Instead, she tightly wrapped her right hand around Tatsuya's left arm. And from that close distance she looked up and looked at Tatsuya with a spoiled look. At a time when they were considered a brother and sister, Tatsuya would politely pull back and scold Miyuki, but now he left it as it is. Because it isn't unnatural in their current situation.

Apparently Miyuki was counting on this. And yet she felt a little relieved, because she was afraid of being rejected, despite the fact that she knew that this was unlikely.

Tatsuya left the observation deck with Miyuki holding his left hand.

Miyuki released Tatsuya's hand just before entering their room. With a face, as if nothing had happened, she thanked Minami, who was cleaning. Tatsuya also thanked Minami, after which he told Miyuki to go to the bathroom first, and he retired to his room.

Closing the door, he took off his suit, but instead of a night-dress he put on an ordinary robe and sat down at his desk. Then he focused his attention on the results of what happened today.

He sent the main part of his consciousness into the information dimension. To the innumerable ramifications of the tree of cause-effect relationships.

Until last year, Tatsuya could only consistently track in a three-dimensional vision, but during the recent search for the culprit of the subversive terrorism incident, he searched countless streams of information and learned the ability to look at the whole picture of cause-effect relationships as a whole from a bird's eye view.

And in this vision of the whole picture from above, he quickly discovered a piece of information that he himself had released earlier. The label is found. He began to read information about the found object.

(...James Jeffrey Johnson, an Australian military magician, is a captain.)

The information Tatsuya "watched" described the enemy agent who was watching them when they returned to the hotel. He could not clearly see his face, but it was clear that this man was of European appearance. Therefore, having guessed that it could be the person from the picture of "parent with child" shown on the eve with Kazama, he shot through the Idea a tracking psion label.

(The current location is northeast of the coast of Kume Island, are they using a fishing boat?)

Unfortunately, he could not read the information not related to the marked person. The technique of the "field of vision" with the key markers was still imperfect, he was still finalizing it and learning how to apply it.

But the information received revealed that the real identity of "James Jackson" - "Captain James J. Johnson", which is of great importance. Tatsuya didn't underestimate his achievements, and, taking out the terminal-laptop from the baggage, sent to Kazama in encrypted form the data he just received.

After taking a bath and getting ready for bed, Tatsuya returned to the bedroom and saw Miyuki sitting in the unoccupied bed in her pajamas.

Her pajamas didn't have any provocative elements like unbuttoned buttons or accidental exposure of the shoulder due to the large size, but was slightly transparent and with a deep neckline. A thin silky fabric (most likely natural silk) was clearly visible, showing the contours of the body on which there was no underwear, so Tatsuya hurried to look away.

"...Did you want to talk about something?" Trying not to look below the neck of his younger sister and bride, he asked.

"Can I not just be here?"

Bending her head in an interrogative gesture, Miyuki asked softly. Despite the fact that he did it several times before, Tatsuya "looked" once again and checked the concentration of the alcohol in Miyuki's blood.

"...Please, do not look at me like that. I'm embarrassed..." Miyuki blushed and looked at Tatsuya with dull eyes.

"Ah, um. Sorry."

Even Tatsuya could not avoid a little excitement from this. If it was not him, the "small" excitement would not have ended. The limit of the strength of the mind would instantly be shaken, and the mind would become confused, as with a werewolf transforming.

"Onii-sama, you were already going to have a rest?"



Not only the tone, but the wording was somewhat suspicious. It seems that she really got drunk without alcohol. Tatsuya could not help but come to this conclusion, seeing the state of Miyuki.

"Yes, I'm going to rest."

"Then, go to bed. Because I'll turn off the light."

...I beg... Tatsuya realized that it would not work to drive her out of this room.

Although the sound of water was not audible, Minami was still in the bathroom. Leaving the bathroom, she would immediately understand where Miyuki is. Misunderstanding is inevitable. Surrendering, Tatsuya closed his eyes.

From the next bed he heard a happy sniff, which was his salvation. At midnight, trying to stay unnoticed, Tatsuya carefully, muffling his steps, left the room.

Chapter 4

The next morning.

Two girls, standing looking away and with a false expression on his face, Tatsuya told the plans for the day.

"Today, as planned, we will go to the island of Kume."

It was not a big surprise, as yesterday, it was planned from the very beginning.

But this had no direct connection with the mission. If you have free time, you need to look at the artificial island, which must be protected, adhering to the position "if there is time after all the affairs." The main goal for today is tourism. Yesterday the main point was Miyuki's gift, and today the main thing is to carelessly kill time.

Will the mission not be completed if the party for the completion of the artificial island construction on the 28th is successfully defended?

However, in order to prevent a diversion in advance, it is necessary to deprive the enemy of the ability to conduct military operations, and for this it is necessary to find out where the main forces of the enemy are hiding. This search is being conducted by the army, so Tatsuya's part will not come until the main enemy forces are found.

Arriving in Okinawa, and spending several days in the hotel, Tatsuya felt that this was a waste of time. He didn't want to go out to look for foreign magicians, simply because it was not his job.

That's why Tatsuya decided to have a day off today.

"We depart at 8:30. CAD's can be taken on board the aircraft."

In this environment, this was not something that needs to be repeated. In most cases, public officials are allowed to carry CAD's on the permission of the police. Students of the University of Magic, and students of Schools of Magic automatically have such permission. So this isn't the privilege of the Ten Master Clans. However, in return, there is a duty to save people in emergencies.

"Preparation are complete. Tatsuya-sama and Miyuki-sama have to only change."

"Good job."

"First, we'll go and have breakfast."

Miyuki thanked Minami for her diligence, and Tatsuya took them to the hotel restaurant, where breakfast was waiting for them.

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"Tatsuya-san!" Entering the departure hall of the airport, Tatsuya heard a voice from the side.

"Honoka. Together with Shizuku?"

The voice that was calling out belonged to Honoka. Next to her stood Shizuku. Tatsuya was not surprised by the appearance of these two. He heard from Miyuki about the invitation to go on a trip from them. He also heard that the purpose of their trip and the purpose of his assignment overlaped.

"Yeah. Good morning."

In addition to Honoka and Shizuku there were other familiar faces.

"Nakajou-senpai, good morning."

"Good morning. Miyuki-san and the you guys, are you also on the island of Kume?"

"Yes."

"We saw you at the recent ceremony of the Buddhist festival of Higan, and thought that it would be nice to meet somewhere, and by chance coincided."

"I also heard that the sempai would go to Kume Island, so we thought that we would likely meet."

Miyuki listened to Azusa's speech for a long time, nodding, and then in turn she greeted Hattori, Isori, Kanon, Kirihara, Sayaka and Sawaki.

It was not a pre-planned meeting. But even with randomness, it was not surprising. The time of arrival of their flight was 9:00. A good time to plan a trip from the main island of Okinawa to the island of Kume for sightseeing. There was a coincidence for the same date, but the coincidence of time was inevitable.

"We have already agreed with Mitsui-san, but will the company of Miyuki-san join us?"

As Azusa said, with Tatsuya's company of three people, Honoka, Shizuku, and Azusa's company of seven people, a total of 12 people were waiting for landing. Needless to say, she had in mind that she was inviting them all to spend time together on the island of Kume.

Miyuki looked at Tatsuya with the expression "What should I do?" on her face.

"Not a bad idea." Tatsuya nodded and answered so that Azusa could hear him too. Having answered "Yes," Tatsuya and Miyuki turned back to Azusa.

"Please take care of us." Miyuki bowed politely. Without asking the consent of Hattori, Isori and others, Tatsuya decided everything for them.

Arriving on the island of Kume, a group of students and graduates of First High first swept around the island on a boat organized by Shizuku with a transparent bottom. In the original plan, several places were rented for this boat, but with the increase in the number of people, Shizuku rented the whole boat for 1 round.

As expected from the family of Ushio, one of the leading wealthy families in Japan, the request sent before departure was already satisfied with their arrival.

From the airport the port of Kanegusuku was in a straight line of about 5 km.

After reaching the port on the rented bicycles, the group, after a short wait, boarded the ship.

"Uwaa!"

"It's amazing..."

Kanon gave a gleeful cry, and Azusa uttered words of admiration. Their surprise was not an exaggeration.

The ship, rented by the Ushio family for Shizuku, was a semi-submersible type with windows allowing them to watch the sea through the sides.

But the word "window" to this ship was not suitable. With the exception of the nose and stern, each of the sides of the submerged part of the ship was completely transparent. The floor was also almost transparent, except for a small part. The view from there was a full underwater panorama.

Not only the underwater view, but also the view from the deck was wonderful. It was a view of white beaches, a diverse rocky terrain, where the rocks were seen in various bizarre shapes. The pupils and graduates of First High were busy running up and down the ship.

Having skirted the southern extremity of Kume Island, the ship headed north-east and stopped at the shore of the famous beach on the uninhabited island of "Hateno".

"I wonder what's going on?"

"This vessel has a large underwater part, so they prepared a rubber boat for landing."

As Isori replied to the question of Kanon, the sailors began to inflate a rubber boat on the deck and attached an outboard motor to it.

Since the boat was a six-seater, behind them they prepared a second one. However judging by the size and power of the engine, a person was required with the rights to manage small vessels.

"Tatsuya-san, do you have the rights?"

"Rights to small ships? I do."

"Ah, I also do."

Tatsuya nodded to Shizuku's question, then Isori raised his hand, so 12 people were able to go to the uninhabited island at the same time. Also among them, Minami had the same second-class license as Tatsuya's (watercraft management), and Hattori had the usual license for small boats.

"Tatsuya-sama, I'll take care of the boat." Minami said to Tatsuya, who had completed the engine condition check.

"Very well, please."

"Please leave it to me."

Knowing that it was useless to say anything, Tatsuya instructed Minami to do it. Besides, they were just high school students. Even if you force her to go by force, she will just worry, feeling uncomfortable. Tatsuya came to the conclusion that she could relax if left alone.

"Then, I'll take care of the other." Sawaki said to Tatsuya after lowering Honoka. And he went to the boat, without waiting for Tatsuya's answer.

From there, he heard Azusa's nervous, hurried voice saying "We are not together with Hattori-kun!", But Tatsuya said nothing, deciding that it didn't concern him. Because the events in the neighborhood didn't distract him.

Honoka, who was waiting, suddenly took off her outer garment. Under the blouse with short sleeves was a separate swimsuit with a top in the form of a bikini and a bottom in the form of short tight shorts.

Complementing this style, her usual hairstyle with two tails, laid on her shoulders, created a very mature and sexy image.

Although it is the subtropical island of Kume, it was still March. It is a bit early to wear a swimsuit. It is unlikely that now you would find at least one tourist who has come to swim or dive.

Honoka's courageous swimsuit caught the glances not only of her fellow travelers, but also of other tourists.

"Tatsuya-san, why do we not go over there?"

But Honoka, ignoring the evil glances directed at her (or not showing it), and pressed herself against Tatsuya's hand. Obviously, she pressed herself tightly to his arm. Seeing this bold action, Miyuki opened her eyes wide. Blissfully, clapping her eyes, she stood, stunned. Catching this moment, Honoka tried to drag Tatsuya.

Tatsuya was also surprised by Honoka's assertiveness. But he didn't relieve the grip of Honoka, not because he didn't fully understand the situation, but because it was dangerous. Honoka always desperately follows her goals, as if fighting to the end. And today this impression was especially strong.

On the face of Honoka, Tatsuya, seized by the hand, saw the smile of a little devil. So... when he saw her, he understood everything.

At the moment when Honoka looked forward, Tatsuya looked at Miyuki. Honoka is important as a friend, but not enough to harm Miyuki's mood.

However, Miyuki returned him the same agitated and completely unbending look, saying "It seems that Honoka does not behave quite normally." Perhaps yesterday's presents (not only things) were to blame, but no accusations were sent to Tatsuya.

Of course, the aggressive behavior of Honoka had a history:

Honoka and Shizuku arrived in Okinawa on March 25, so yesterday. And the day before, rarely acting separately from Shizuku, Honoka went along with Amy and Subaru for shopping in a fashionable place in the city center.

No, Honoka and Shizuku didn't quarrel or anything like that.

Shizuku isn't only a young fledgling magician, but also a "young lady". In order to get a "cultural education" peculiar to the "mistress", she has had many additional lessons, aside from schooling.

Before the long trip, she was more busy learning "lessons" for the entire missing period in advance. That's why before the trip Shizuku could not go anywhere.

Eimi suggested they "go for a walk in some cheerful crowded place."

Honoka usually didn't go to places where people go in droves. But it was because Shizuku does not like turmoil. Honoka was not disgusted with crowded places. It was rather preferable because of the energy radiated by the lively youth of the same age.

Thus, it was a kind of attempt to enjoy a cheerful life in a city that could not be done for a long time, without hindering the convenience of Shizuku.

They just walked around, looking at the shop windows and sometimes buying food, mainly because Amy and Subaru had no specific goals. But Honoka had something she wanted to buy.

"Actually, I'm going to Okinawa tomorrow." Suddenly Honoka spoke, when they were sitting in one of the fast food establishments.

"Uh, really!?" Eimi tried to hide the feeling of envy with a surprised look.

"I know. Are you going to a party on an artificial island in Kumejima?" Subaru demonstrated her awareness, then, asked Honoka: "And what?".

"I would like to buy clothes for Okinawa, but..."

"A dress for the party?" To Amy's question, Honoka waved her head.

"Clothes, in which you will appear before Shiba-kun?"

With the approval of Subaru, Honoka didn't agree and didn't deny it. But shy silence was perceived here as consent.

"That's it, that's why you need our advice!"

Eimi said her conclusion with the expression "Riddle solved!". She was not mistaken.

"...What do you think is good?" Honoka asked shyly of the two

"How about a swimsuit? In the case of Honoka, the top should be a bikini." Subaru's answer was simple.

"Uh-er!?" Honoka screamed in an embarrassed voice. If she now drank her drink, it would be an eruption of a geyser.

"Subaru, smartie~"

Subaru glanced back at Eimi's praise with a proud face.

"Wait!" Honoka protested. "Only I'll be in a swimsuit, that's a bit..."

"It will be Kumejima, will not it? Then you will definitely visit the beach, though not swimming."

"... Probably."

"Then to wear a swimsuit will not be strange. And if the swimsuit is only on Honoka, she can prove her stance even stronger."

"It's a shame."

Subaru looked dispassionately at the ready to explode Honoka.

"Honoka." Subaru approached this look with the name of Honoka.

"Honoka, are you really ready to take Shiba-kun from Miyuki?"

From such a serious tone, not only Honoka, but also Eimi didn't know what to say.

"Oh, what is this evil way of asking a question? I know that Honoka loves Shiba-kun seriously. I think whether Honoka is serious about surpassing Miyuki? That's what was meant."

"Well..." For some reason Honoka could not complete the phrase "Of course."

"I think Honoka understands better than me that Miyuki can win in direct competition."

"...I see."

Her words were a cruel reality. However, "reality" isn't in all areas, because it was a real "battlefield" for Tatsuya's heart.

"Despite the fact that there are minor differences between Honoka and Miyuki, they are in general similar. Equally rectilinear. Devotees who tend to get out of control sometimes, but mostly modest."

Honoka didn't answer at all. The words said by Subaru reached her one by one.

"Therefore, if you go on the offensive with an approach that is the same as your the opponent, the difference will be unnoticeable." Answered Eimi, not Honoka. "Then, Subaru, what do you think you should do?"

"It's not me, but Honoka. She needs to change the approach."

"How exactly?"

"First of all, the image change. Honoka has a good style, you have to use it as a weapon to the maximum. But you need to strive to look sexy."

"Hmmm..." Eimi agreed. Honoka only opened and closed her mouth, but there were no sounds.

"And then do what Miyuki cannot do. For example, she is the only one in the swimsuit pressing herself with her breast."

"Thats impossible!" Finally, Honoka gave a short scream. However, Eimi and Subaru only looked at her, and then continued the meeting to discuss the strategy.

"I wonder if she can charm Shiba-kun without something like that?"

"Impossible. This person isn't affected by the usual childish charm."

"Oh, well, that's true..."

"In that case, it seems that Honoka's defeat has already been decided. Do not be afraid to risk it. Do you get it, Honoka?"

"Y-yes..." Honoka nodded dejectedly at these sudden words.

"Good." Subaru said, standing up. At the same time pulling Honoka with her.

"Eh?"

"If you think so, then we are going to look for swimsuits now."

As if confirming her agreement, Eimi got up and took the cups on a tray.

"You have to choose to be brave enough."

"Uh-uh? Uh-uh?"

Subaru dragged Honoka to the exit from the institution. Eimi, after putting the tray into the dishwasher, ran to catch up with the two of them.



With such a history, Honoka, hiding the shame behind the mask of a small devil, was actively trying to get Tatsuya's attention.

Whether irresoluteness is finally overcome, or believing that Tatsuya's light mindedness cannot be accepted before the graduates, Miyuki rushed to Tatsuya. Nevertheless, Honoka embraced Tatsuya's arm more tightly and didn't let go of him.

Not only the tourists of this beach observed the attempts of Honoka's seduction. From the neighboring beach "Nakano", towards the beach "Hateno" looked a middle-aged man. At the same time, he deftly moved his hand, working on a strange portable terminal, which was seemingly incompatible with his light clothes. Tatsuya felt this look, but, since there was no difference with the views of other curious people, he didn't pay much attention to him.

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After returning to the ship with a transparent bottom, the activity of Honoka continued. Although she threw back on her blouse, the top 3 buttons were unbuttoned, revealing the swimsuit bra.

"Honoka, wait a little."

"Tatsuya-san?"

Tatsuya's sudden change of voice confused Honoka. Without answering, Tatsuya disengaged from Honoka and went to the bridge of the ship. Hattori, who noticed the unusual signs of Tatsuya's behavior, followed him. Hattori was followed by Sawaki and Kirihsara. The three heard Tatsuya's speech informing the captain of the emergency.

"Captain, five hundred meters ahead, in the vicinity of the seabed you will find the traces of a warship."

"What!?"

Behind Tatsuya Hattori, Sawaki and Kirihsara looked at the captain's taut face, who at that moment was already instructing the crew to focus the sonar forward towards the seabed.

"Vessel found! The estimated length is 80 meters, it looks like a standard submarine!"

"Why did something like this appear here!?" Kanon screamed.

"Maybe she's from our army?" Sawaki expressed his assumption.

However, he himself believed that the probability of this was close to zero.

"If it's the army, then there's no problem. But we must take into account other possibilities!" Hattori declared the discussion of the hypotheses meaningless.

"Change of course! Right rudder!" Apparently, the captain came to the same conclusion as Hattori.

Following the order, the ship began to maneuver along an arc to the right. Noticing this movement, the submarine also started its engines and started to move. This fact immediately ruled out the possibility that the submarine belonged to the self-defense forces.

"Sound of water injection confirmed! It seems that the suspicious vessel is preparing to launch a torpedo!" Cried the sonar operator.

"Did you hear the injection of water into the starting shaft? Apparently this ship is an old type."

"Why did you say that!?" Hattori growled at the carefree (or fearlessly) muttering Tatsuya. Instead of answering Hattori's condemnation,

"Minami."

He called Minami, who also recently came here and stood behind three graduates.

"Yes, Tatsuya-sama." Despite the situation, Minami's response was as calm as usual.

"Prepare an anti-object barrier. Place of installation: 30 meters from the ship. Size: ten meter radius before each torpedo. Blocking the course of the ship is strictly prohibited. Could you? "

"Leave it to me." At the task set by Tatsuya, Minami, without a hitch, confidently nodded.

"Torpedoes launched!"

Two white tracks on the surface, quickly picking up speed, rushed in their direction. Thus, they will not have time to evade them.

"Minami."

"Yes." Minami already prepared her CAD in the form of a mobile terminal for activation. Tatsuya was not the only one who discovered anti-object barriers created under the water, with his magical perception.

Suddenly, water columns rose. However, there was no splash of water from explosions. Minami's anti-object barrier had the ability to repel an explosion, but the torpedoes were not originally intended for destruction.

"Foam torpedoes. Their goal is to detain us?"

Despite the fact that Tatsuya spoke to himself, his speech was an explanation for Hattori and others. After Minami canceled the barrier, the foam began to slowly creep along the surface of the water.

"Leave it to me." Isori, waving his right hand, manipulated his CAD. Foam from the surface of the sea was removed, as if a windshield was being wiped clean.

"Further, there will likely be an attack by manned torpedoes with landing."

"The second wave is approaching!" As if following Tatsuya's prediction, the sonar operator's cry reached their ears.

"A gift in return!" The magic of Hattori caused an explosion where four tracks from the torpedoes were visible (or whatever it was). Formed in the sea air bubbles wrapped the 4 torpedoes. The pull of the blades could no longer push them, and the inertia was extinguished by foam.

The back of the manned torpedoes opened wide. From the inside, people jumped out wearing military wetsuits.

"I'll take care of them!" Sawaki jumped from the deck to a man who jumped up from the sea. In a jump, being above this man, Sawaki abruptly changed his trajectory and crashed down. His kick sent the enemy back into the water.

It was not the magic of flight. Air maneuvering by means of vector control. Once again, pushing away from the air, Sawaki shot down another enemy.

The remaining two enemies landed on the ship.

"How about leaving them to me!" Despite the situation, Kirihsara's voice was joyful. "Explosive fishing!"

Entering into a rage with a battle cry, Kirihsara attacked the enemy with what was in his hand - a fishing rod. The enemy raised his hand and blocked Kirihsara's attack. More precisely, he defended himself against the high frequency blade Kirihsara created by an anti-objective barrier near his hand.

"Oria Oria Oria! Ha-ha-ha-ah!" However, Kirihsara's attack didn't end with one attack. Using a high-frequency blade in combination with the technique of preventing self-destruction on the fishing rod, Kirihsara showered the enemy with blows. Loudly laughing, furiously attacking the enemy, Kirihsara-berserk, from the side looked like a real villain.

Eventually, the violator, being unable to cope with the pressure while splashing blood, fell. As expected from Kirihsara, he didn't forget himself enough to chop off anything from the enemy, none of his attacks even reached the bones. ...But from those severe injuries it still didn't matter.

The last of the enemies didn't watch in silence, as his companions were shredded. In order to help his ally, who almost defended himself under the squall of attacks, he pointed a pistol toward Kirihsara. But he was unable to shoot. Surprised from behind by a huge number of small stones, he was slammed onto the deck face down. These stones turned out to be ice, created from sea water from the magic of Hattori.

Hattori had a lot of techniques, similar to the magic used by Mayumi. This was not a coincidence, but precisely because Hattori closely watched Mayumi, and not only imitated her magic, but also modified it, fitting it to himself.

"Who are these guys?" Back on board Sawaki, looking at the defeated opponents of Kirihsara and Hattori, asked a question to the void.

"Pirates... I think they can be called sea pirates." Tatsuya answered him. He crouched down to photograph the pirate defeated by Hattori then, grabbing him by the belt, threw him over the side of the boat.

"Hey!?"

Ignoring the nervous Hattori, Tatsuya took a photo of the second person who was bleeding from Kirihsara's attacks, then, grabbing him by the leg, dragged him to the edge of the deck.

"As long as these guys are in our hands, the pirates will persistently attack us."

"Are they coming to pick them up?"

"Or else to prevent the disclosure of their personalities, they will likely try to sink this ship, right?" Tatsuya answered, not turning his head to Hattori, and threw overboard the pirate, who he dragged over.

"So, while the pirates pick up their friends, we'll get some time. So let us take advantage of this to escape."

The last phrase was addressed to the captain, who came to see the situation.

"I understand." The captain with a pale face quickly went to the bridge to give orders to his subordinates.

"... You're a terrible guy."

In response to the trembling Kirihsara, Tatsuya only shrugged his shoulders.

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As Tatsuya expected, the submarine no longer pursued the group of students and graduates from First High. Tatsuya was right not because he had excellent deduction skills, it depended on whether you knew the circumstances.

Tatsuya knew (Miyuki and Minami also) that these underwater pirates are a joint unit of deserters from the Great Asian Alliance and Australian military agents. Therefore, it was easy to predict the behavior of the submarine, especially knowing the fact that they should hide their identities at all costs (especially the Australians) until they attack the artificial island, which is the real goal.

There was a depressing atmosphere inside the submarine.

"That's why I advised that you not do this." An agent of the Australian army, Captain James J. Johnson sarcastically reproached Major Daniel Liu, leader of the group of deserters from the Great Asian Alliance. [ed: captain is one rank lower than major]

His partner, Captain Jasmine Williams, was not on board the submarine. She didn't get on board not because women are not taken on submarines, but because her appearance is an important weapon in the current mission of the Australian army.

Forcing the enemy to tolerate a person with the appearance of a 12-13 years old and experience with the rationality of an adult would be difficult. Who also happened to have advanced magical skills. This level of concealment becomes a big advantage over other agents.

Even in this joint operation, on the part of the deserters of the Great Asian Alliance, only Daniel Liu knows about the appearance of Jasmine. She could not avoid contact with the other soldiers if she went with them on a submarine.

That's why Jasmine at this time acted separately from Captain Johnson. "You cannot disregard them just because they are schoolchildren. That's what Major Lyu-dono said, guys!"

This time the wounded were only among the deserters of the Great Asian Alliance. At first glance, Johnson was not upset, but in fact he was filled with annoyance that, because of this useless attempt, the Japanese would increase their vigilance.

"So, what are you going to do from now on?" Subduing his irritation and quickly calming down, Johnson asked Liu about the plans for the future.

"We narrow the mission's goal to the party on the 28th." The tone of the respondent Liu had a hint of anger.

This time, the attack on the ship with Tatsuya was a plan for Liu's closest assistants.

Capture the Yotsuba magicians, or at least cause injuries so that they could not prevent the operation on the 28th.

At the same time, kidnap the daughter of the Ushio family to distract the enemy forces to search for her, pretending to be kidnappers asking for a ransom. And adding to the ransom accompanying the daughter of the Ushio family was the students of the National University of Magic and the National Defense College, which will definitely make them seen as pirates and will help hide their identity.

To this plan, Liu himself, honestly, was not very enthusiastic. But he was not against it either. Johnson, obviously, was against it.

As a result of this operation, no good outcome was achieved. One of the people was so seriously injured that he could not return to service, and the existence of a secret weapon in the form of a submarine also became known to the enemy.

Realizing that the continuation of the mission was impossible, they could only admit that Johnson was right, and they were wrong.

In short, their honor was tainted. For people like Liu, this was unbearable in and of itself. It was because of this honor that Liu from the outset opposed the peace with Japan. Although there are reasons such as the instability of the internal political system, the reduction of diplomatic presence, the lack of underwater mines, but the main thing is the feeling of intolerability to the fact that one has to kneel before such a small country as Japan.

"I think this is a reasonable decision." Johnson's polite caring words, at the moment sounded like a mockery.

"However, I do not understand." To distract from disappointment, Liu decided to change the subject. "How did they find our presence?"

"... Is it not with the help of an active sonar?" Johnson's answer to Liu's question was superficial.

"This is understandable. However, active sonars of private civil and recreational vessels are designed to search for obstacles affecting navigation in shallow water, and by themselves cannot detect a ship near the ocean floor."

Liu interrupted his speech to see if Johnson understood what was being said. From the eyes of Johnson slept the cover of indifference.

"The distance between us was about 500 meters. Sonar of a private ship cannot find our ship without knowing the coordinates of the aiming place in advance."

"...Is this also the magic of the Yotsuba?" There were signs of fear in Johnson's voice. From this Johnson anxiety, Liu felt a slight tension.

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Was the magic of the Yotsuba what foresaw the attack of the submarine? Captain James J. Johnson came to the conclusion that is about half right.

Tatsuya, Miyuki and Minami returned to the hotel on the main island of Okinawa. Shizuku and Honoka went to the hotel on the island of Kume.

Azusa also moved to the same hotel. Initially, they planned to go to a party from the hotel on the main island of Okinawa, but Shizuku organized this more convenient option.

Tatsuya also received an offer from Shizuku. But Tatsuya and Miyuki still had official work on the main island. Having reported this, they separated from the main group at the airport.

And now, in the room of the hotel room, Tatsuya checked to see if the mark keeping track of Captain Johnson was still active.

Released yesterday the psion bullet still possessed sufficient strength, having only small signs of wear. However, just in case, Tatsuya released a new bullet through the Idea, destroying the old label.

Apparently, the Australian military magician has not yet discovered this technique. During the recent attack by the psion bullet, he didn't notice any signs of understanding or opposition.

Tatsuya was able to detect the attack of the defenders of the Great Asian Alliance who pretended to be pirates of the sea, not because he had found the submarine, but because the mark on the position of Captain Johnson showed that he was at coordinates east of the island of Kume.

Johnson does not know that he walks with a bell on his neck. He does not even suspect the possibility of observation with the help of Elemental Sight. Therefore his companions also do not know.

The tail is seized by the Australian army, and not the deserters of the Great Asian Alliance.

Curiosity killed the cat.

Johnson's observation of Tatsuya and Miyuki can hardly be called curiosity. However, the situation was exactly like that of the proverb. The magic of Tatsuya, and not the magic of the Yotsuba, kept the Australian military forces under control.

Chapter 5

The next day, on March 27th, a meeting was planned to discuss the preparations for the summer memorial service. The official work for today is over. Now only the response to the invitation of the Ushio family to attend the party dedicated to the completion of the "Saikashin Island" was left, but certainly that was not everything because of Tatsuya's work. That work will most likely start today.

"Tatsuya-kun, what happened? Isn't this the middle of the meeting about the memorial service?"

Suddenly coming to the meeting place with Kazamu, Tatsuya met Fujibayashi. Apparently, the attitude of Fujibayashi to Tatsuya has not changed since the New Year.

Even if the meeting was not scheduled, there was time for psychological preparation while he walked from the gate of the base to the room. Tatsuya didn't know whether the relationship had really changed. And he didn't even think about forcing her to explain. Until now, Tatsuya did not even think about Fujibayashi, it didn't matter. She is a valuable employee. The range of opportunities vary dramatically depending on whether the "Electron Sorceress" is involved in the operation or not.

Tatsuya thought that, if possible, it is necessary to maintain friendly relations with Fujibayashi. However, he was not going to take any special action for this. Simply put, if Fujibayashi pretends that everything is as before, then Tatsuya will simply enjoy this advantage.

"Help came from the main house, I trusted Miyuki to them."

Last night, from the main house in Okinawa came one of the subordinates of Hayama, the butler Shirakawa. In fact, he meant only assistance for the time of the meeting of the memorial service. But it was not about helping with discussions. However, Miyuki, who has never visited public places as Yotuba's successor, will openly participate in the meeting with the title of the next head of the Yotuba family.

There are those who harbored anger at the Yotsuba family and those who want to use the Yotsuba family. You never know when to expect all sorts of difficulties associated with them. Because of such anxiety, Tatsuya was also going to attend the meeting just in case.

However, with the presence of Shirakawa, the need for Tatsuya's presence had disappeared. Being an experienced subordinate of Hayama, Shirakawa possesses the necessary skills and will cope better than Tatsuya. Today's potential threat is neither magical power nor physical strength, and the power of language is the skill of negotiating.

Apparently thinking about this, Maya sent Shirakawa here. Tatsuya was just glad of such a favor. Despite the fact that it was simultaneously a depressing message "I sent help, so do your job properly."

"I see. Then, I wonder what kind of clue Tatsuya-kun brought us?"

Fujibayashi didn't ask seriously. She didn't think that Tatsuya could provide an opportunity to get in touch with the enemy. It was a kind of joke.

"I would like to ask for help in flooding the submarine saboteurs. Here are the coordinates of the supposed current position of the target submarine."

To understand what Tatsuya said, Fujibayashi took some time.

"...I'll call the commander. Wait a little, please." Fujibayashi switched her behavior from the attitude toward her younger friend to the attitude of a representative of one of the leading magician families, took a memory card from Tatsuya, and went to the next room.

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The waiting time was unexpectedly long. However, after seeing the face of Fujibayashi, he understood the reason for waiting.

Officers of the Independent Magically Equipped Battalion: Kazama, Sanada and Yanagi. And also Chen Xiangshan and Lu Ganghu were with them. They sat around the tactical table.

Prior to this, Tatsuya and Lu Ganghu met face to face only once in the Hachioji Special Detention Center. This was when Lu Ganghu attacked the Special Detention Center to deal with Sekimoto Isao, who became the pawn of the Great Asian Alliance.

At that time, Lu Ganghu defeated Mayumi and Marie, and Tatsuya only stopped his attempt to attack Mayumi. Finally, the victor against (but not killed) Lu Ganghu was Marie. Later, during the Yokohama incident, Tatsuya didn't participate in intercepting Lu Ganghu in front of the Yokohama Gulf Tower. Therefore, it could be said that there was no direct connection between Tatsuya and Lu Ganghu.

However, it was also true that a year and a half ago Chen Xiangshan and Lu Ganghu had done a lot of work in relation to Tatsuya and his entourage. At that time, Chen Xiangshan and Lu Ganghu were Tatsuya's clear enemies. And now he met them without any hostility (but without friendliness too). Lu Ganghu seemed to be puzzled by the unorganized attitude of Tatsuya.

Chen Xiangshan, as expected, showed no misunderstanding.

"May I call you Shiba-dono?"

"I do not mind, colonel-dono."

The greeting of Tatsuya and Chen Xiangshan was limited to this.

"We were told that this is a tactical meeting about the attack on an enemy submarine, but is it clear that enemy agents are hiding on it?" Chen Xiangshan spoke, immediately went to work. Tatsuya felt the irony when he heard "enemy agents" from him, but didn't purposely spoil the atmosphere.

"There is no doubt that there is an Australian military magician on board, acting in concert with the deserters of your country."

"How do you know, I probably should not ask."

"I cannot tell you this."

Tatsuya didn't give a clear answer.

"This submarine does not belong to either your country or our country. We have contacted all countries that have diplomatic channels, but not one has recognized that this is the business of their country." To fill the silence, Kazama began the explanation.

"Have you contacted Australia, too?"

"Yes. Well, they could have been lying."

When asked by Chen Xiangshan, Kazama nodded in a bitter smile. Chen Xiangshan, after saying "Really", also smiled bitterly. And immediately they both returned to having serious looks.

"Despite the fact that they almost disappeared from observation, the current position of the enemy vessel is defined in the open sea. There they could be drowned without public attention."

Kazama looked at Tatsuya.

"How about flooding a long-range magic attack?" Tatsuya answered carelessly.

"The magic of Yotuba?" Chen Xiangshan Asked Tatsuya.

"Exactly." This time he didn't evade the answer.

"Thank you for the offer, but I would like to leave this as an insurance in case of unforeseen circumstances." Sanada said this to Kazama, his gaze forced him to continue.

"Based on the data of the sea map provided by Shiba-kun, we also understood the current position of the submarine."

When Sanada mentioned Shiba-kun, Chen Xiangshan looked at him with a face that expressed surprise. He openly showed it. With the Shiba-kun appeal reflected the special relationship between Tatsuya and the Japanese army, his behavior showed that he had noticed the remark.

However, there was no need to hide Tatsuya's connection with Kazama and Sanada, which arose during the incident 5 years ago. The secret was in Tatsuya's participation in repulsing the invasion force (or it's better to call it completely destroying), but simply showing close relationships would not clearly link these facts.

Those who have good logical thinking, must understand that this is too rapid of an assumption.

Sanada came up with the use of the Shiba-kun appeal. In this case, there should not be such a reaction.

"The enemy ship began to ascend. It seems they decided to refill their supplies." Ignoring Chen Xiangshan's gaze, Sanada continued the explanation.

"Are they coming to the surface?"

"No. Your compatriots will not be so stupid." To the question of Chen Xiangshan, Sanada shook his head with a smile. Although he didn't say anything, his smile seemed to betray an evil man.

"They are no longer compatriots. They are deserters."

"Sorry about that. Returning to the topic, the submarine moored itself in a floating dock disguised as a medium-sized tanker."

In this era, the use of petroleum products as fuel is considered obsolete. However, as an industrial raw material, there is still a great need for oil. There is nothing special about a tanker floating on the East China Sea.

"It's unclear how long the replenishment will last, so if we want to capture a submarine, then we need to attack it now while it's in the dock."

"Will the captured deserters of our country be handed over to us?"

"Of course. We sincerely hope to cooperate in this operation and are ready to do this for your convenience." To the question of Chen Xiangshan, Kazama answered to his conditions.

"Thank you." Chen Xiangshan nodded to Kazama and gave a look to Lu Ganghu. He got up and left the room. He went to the detachment to join the attack.

"This operation is a game against time. Begin preparation for the performance immediately."

"We will be ready within 10 minutes." Yanagi cheerfully answered the order of Kazama. "Can Shiba-kun also come with us?"

"I got it."

With that response, Tatsuya rose from his chair.

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Prepared by a faction of opponents of the reconciliation of the army of the Great Asian Alliance, the submarine was of the standard type. It was not possible to use an atomic submarine.

At present, the use of nuclear energy in armaments and military equipment is prohibited by international treaties, and the International Magic Association monitors the existence of such problems. The main application of atomic energy in the field of armament is for large ships, but as soon as such a ship with an atomic engine is discovered, the Association immediately begins the process of neutralizing it.

Nevertheless, the International Magic Association does not have the opportunity to test all the weapons of the world. The borders of many countries are still closed. For all these reasons, it was difficult to test for any and all atomic submarines, even practically unrealistic.

However, the activity of the International Magical Association is an extreme argument. If it is necessary to prevent the use of nuclear weapons, regardless of nationality, the association would be permitted to use any means necessary. According to the "Charter of the International Magical Association", all countries, fearful of nuclear weapons, are obliged to follow these rules for their magicians.

But even if the government does not fear nuclear war, ordinary people are afraid of it. Those governments that ignore the views of their citizens, have the risk of making the magicians of the world their enemies.

Since the "prevention of the use of nuclear weapons" includes a ban on the use of military equipment with nuclear engines, influential countries cannot own nuclear submarines openly. Therefore, the possession of such submarines carefully concealed, and their use in active operations extremely limited.

Hardly anyone can easily obtain evidence of the existence of an atomic submarine in such conditions. Therefore, for such a small fraction of escaped detachment of deserters, it was impossible to get an atomic submarine.

Although the submarine involved in the detachment of deserters was of a standard type, it had a modern power supply based on tidal fuel cells, and also an air-independent propulsion system (AIP). Because of the progress in fuel cell technology, it has become possible to use AIP-engines not only as auxiliary power, but also as the main, supplementing the "fuel" of fuel cells with hydrogen and oxygen, if necessary. But for a small-sized vessel, besides fuel, there is a need for other frequent replenishments of resources.

For example, the replenishment of the torpedoes used in yesterday's operation. Therefore, the hidden entrance to the dock the day before the main events was simply necessary.

...With an understanding of all this, Johnson could not hide his disappointment. Yesterday's operation was completely meaningless. By the morning of the next day, this thought was becoming stronger and stronger.

Because as a result of the failure of this useless operation, they had to make this unplanned replenishment, which in fact was like surfacing in the backyard of the enemy. The advantage of the submarine was lost with this failure.

His discontent was somewhat transferred to many of the deserters on board and a heavy atmosphere arose between them. It cannot be said that this was the reason, but Johnson had to temporarily split up with the main forces of the detachment of deserters. Therefore, he was waiting for the arrival of the contact boat.

"Captain-dono, the contact boat has arrived."

"I got it. I am on my way."

The boat he was waiting for was moored to the hidden dock, which was made inside the tanker. He already noticed her and knew where to go.

In the improvised dock a small long and narrow two-seater mini-submarine surfaced. In fact, it was a modified and disguised underwater motorcycle, its speed and concealment were good enough. Johnson has already changed into a wetsuit for landing on a sightseeing boat. In order to not turn this into a confrontation with friendly troops, he decided to move forward as quickly as possible.

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Tatsuya noticed the movements of the Australian agent five minutes later, but he didn't say anything about this to Kazama.

The location of the submarine was found. There was no reason to doubt the words of Sanada. They boarded a military amphibious aircraft disguised as a civilian jet, and headed toward the submarine, or rather toward the disguised dock in which it was hidden.

The submarine has a higher priority. And the location of James J. Johnson is constantly monitored. Excessive information now will only introduce confusion.

"Five minutes before arrival."

"Prepare for the landing."

In response to the report from Sanada, Kazama ordered airborne to be ready at any time. To Chen Xiangshan and Lu Ganghu, he didn't issue any special orders. These two have already mastered this type of operation. This was evident from their behavior.

Sanada remained to fly the plane. Tatsuya, of course, went to storm the submarine. From the side of the Separate Magically-equipped battalion, this time, not only Yanagi, but also Kazama joined the detachment.

Kazama went into battle for the first time in a long time, and Tatsuya remembered the experience of the jump before the army invading the battle 5 years ago, so they didn't experience any discomfort.

At the speed of a jet plane, they quickly got to the location.

"I see the goal."

"Descend!"

Yanagi, his seven subordinates, Lu Ganghu, Chen Xiangshan, his eight subordinates, Tatsuya, and then Kazama - all went down in that sequence.

A detachment of deserters from the Great Asian Alliance could not respond to the sudden appearance of the joint detachment of Japan and the Great Asian Alliance that landed without any parachutes on the deck.

The method of descent by using slowing magic at the last moment of the fall was not new. During the Third World War such a method had not yet been applied, it was accepted into practical use approximately 20 years ago by the armies of the USNA, the New Soviet Union, the Indo-Persian Union and Japan. Five years ago, this tactic was also used to repel the invasion of Okinawa. But even knowing all this, it is difficult to cope with such speed. This time, using the camouflage of the aircraft, the Japanese army, with its skills in this tactic, was able to catch the enemy by surprise.

In this operation, not only Tatsuya, but Yanagi and the others didn't wear mobile suits. Of course, it was not okay to disclose this to the army of the Great Asian Alliance. Nevertheless, the military clothing they now wore, although it looked like ordinary fabric, had protective properties on the level of a bulletproof vest.

The helmet's protection also possessed enough strength capable of stopping a bullet from a sniper rifle while being completely transparent. Naturally, against an attack from a large-caliber machine gun it will not help, and even a shot from an anti-magic rifle of increased power also leaves no prospects. However, other types of small arms couldn't penetrate.

The troops of the Great Asian Alliance, led by Chen Xiangshan, were also clothed in their bullet-proof suits. Lu Ganghu this time was not in the armor of the White Tiger, but in the same combat clothing as the rest, but his "Steel Qigong" would be able to stop even a rifle of increased power.

As if rivaling each other, Yanagi and Lu Ganghu descended from the deck to the lower level. Tatsuya, along with Kazama, watched what was happening from the rear. According to him, this was not the place where one should climb into the thick of events. Instead, Tatsuya focused on supporting Yanagi's unit, destroying interception systems.

Using the new information retrieval ability of looking at the picture in perspective, he first found and located one by one all the anti-personnel radars. Then he destroyed the inner chambers of the ship. Although all this was not used as a weapon, but during the invasion of the inside of the hidden dock, he destroyed various systems of this ship when they came across his "eye."

When the control room of the dock, disguised as a tanker, discovered Yanagi and the others, it was already too late for the detachment of the deserters of the Great Asian Alliance.

"There is no response from the remote fire point!" The officer responsible for the ship's defensive systems shouted.

"Use the gas!" Major Daniel Liu, who crossed from submarine to dock, shouted in a usual orderly tone.

"But then our allies will fall as well!"

"Never mind that. Stopping the invaders is more important!"

"Hey, what are you waiting for!? Close the partitions! By any means, we must delay the invasion!"

"The partitions... they wont move!"

"What going on here!" At Liu's cry, none of the people present had an answer.

In the rear, Tatsuya released his magic.

...The remotely controlled turret in the path of Yanagi and Lu Ganghu was destroyed. Tatsuya freed his magic.

...The electrical installation of the gas outlet was cut.

Tatsuya's magic was free.

...The power line of the electric motors of the partitions was cut off.

Maybe not as spectacular as the cracking of Fujibayashi or Sanada, but theirs didn't work at the hardware level, which gave possibility of recovery.

He didn't destroy the hull of the ship directly, but "decomposed" all the insides of the hidden mobile dock.

"Thats enough." From Kazama, walking next to Tatsuya, came the call to stop. "It seems Yanagi and Colonel Chen have reached their destination. There is no longer any need to risk showing your magic."

"Understood." Tatsuya nodded at the words of Kazama, and the last "decomposition" broke the assembly of the propeller and the shaft of the submarine.

Yanagi and Lu Ganghu invaded the dock at the same time. After that, they looked at each other in the eye for a moment. Lu Ganghu jumped to the submarine, and Yanagi ran further along the aisle dock.

From the other entrance to the dock appeared enemy soldiers though there were not many of them. Probably because the deserters had a limited number of people, and left the majority on land.

They also had insufficient weapons. In the Yokohama incident, not only the main forces, but also the penetration unit possessed high-power rifles, and the soldiers who appeared here, except for conventional rifles with bayonets, had nothing else.

In this case, the battle should be simplified by the bulletproof properties of clothing, but Yanagi had no intention of indulging the enemy. He rushed into contact with the enemy ahead of his subordinates. The enemy was not even given time to pull the trigger.

These assault rifles were apparently created for use inside a vessel or building, using a pull-and-pop system to reduce the total length of the handle and with an inner grip for the left hand to eliminate the deflection of the barrel direction.

Yanagi struck his hand under the chin of the nearest enemy, flinging him into the air. The height to which he took off would never be possible when struck by physical force alone. Activated at the moment of contact, Speed Magic acted not only on the chin, but on the whole body, throwing him.

From two different sides, bayonets rushed towards Yanagi. It seems they didn't shoot for the fear of hitting their own. This decision, in principle, was not a mistake. However, looking at the result, this was the wrong choice.

Yanagi approached the right enemy and, grabbing the assault rifle of the enemy by the handle, sharply pulled. Leaning forward toward an enemy soldier Yanagi grabbed his collar, shoving the soldier behind him into another. As a result, the soldiers bayonets hit each other. Yanagi, adding speed, struck the enemy in the back. A cutting scream was heard after which they dropped their assault rifles with bloodstained bayonets a moment later, the two men then fell to the floor.

The enemy became extremely confused. Yanagi was right in the middle of them. If you shoot at him, the bullet is likely to hit an ally. However, if they choose to battle with bayonets, they saw what kind of future awaits them, shown by their killed comrades.

They were in a narrow corridor of the hidden dock. There's nowhere to go either. The soldier detachment of the deserters of the Great Asian Alliance, sent to intercept, were mistaken in their tactics by crowding together in one place. It was natural to think that you should take advantage of superior numbers, but that was until you had to stop because the enemy had engaged in close combat. In addition, Yanagi was followed by his subordinates.

Suddenly Yanagi crouched down. From a short distance, two of Yanagi's subordinates opened fire from short submachine guns.

Since the enemies were also in bulletproof vests, this didn't lead to their complete destruction. However, dealing with the damage received by shots from a distance of only three meters was not easy. Thanks to this, Yanagi and his subordinates coordinated the final attack and completely suppressed the enemy soldiers. More shots came from the exit of the corridor from the side of the submarine.

"Three, follow me. The rest, cover behind, and get busy with these guys." Without waiting for the answer of his subordinates, Yanagi moved on down the aisle. Three of his subordinates followed him, and of the remaining four, one remained on Yanagi's orders to bind the recently defeated enemies, and the three began the covering fire.

The detachment of the Great Asian Alliance, which jumped on the submarine, was divided into two parts. Chen Xiangshan, surrounded by four people, remained on the upper deck, and the remaining five, including Lu Ganghu, penetrated inside. With his physique, Lu Ganghu often had to bend over not to bang his head against the ceiling, but he didn't look cramped with his movements, chasing and defeating the deserters one by one. The other four fighters didn't have the skills of Lu Ganghu, but they were much superior to their former comrades in combat. In a small submarine, firearms cannot be used freely. But "Steel Qigong" can reflect even bullets of highpower rifles, not to mention ordinary rifles.

Lu Ganghu went to the rear of the entrance hatch alone, while the four others moved to the nose of the submarine.

"The takeover of the ship is under control."

"Is Daniel Liu caught?" Chen Xiangshan answered the question with Lu Ganghu who came to the connection.

"No, he was not on board. Bradley Zhang was also not found."

"Leave the detainees to the others, Captain, return to us immediately."

"Understood."

It is very likely that Bradley Zhang acted separately from the very beginning. On the other hand, Chen Xiangshan was convinced that Daniel Liu is here. If not on a submarine, then he is in the mobile docks command room.

(The Japanese must have already reached that place...)

Reflecting on this, Chen Xiangshan was not at all nervous. The main instigator of the sabotage, Daniel Liu, and commander of the advanced lines, Bradley Zhang if caught would cause all the plans of the opponents of reconciliation to collapse. However, Chen Xiangshan didn't care to catch Liu with his own hands. After all, it didn't matter when the main goals were achieved, namely stopping the diversion and catching a detachment of deserters. Only that it was done.

Kazama and Tatsuya headed for the bridge of the ship disguised as a tanker. Initially, they planned to go to the dock where the submarine was placed, but after receiving a message from Yanagi that the opponents were less than expected, they decided to take control of the mobile dock. Kazama changed direction, and Tatsuya followed him without asking anything.

They were both students of Yakumo, but their relationship was not like that of close friends. It's not that they achieved any kind of harmony, but it seemed, under the influence of one master, they had a similar mindset, so that one could understand the intentions of the other without words.

Internal cameras and other surveillance equipment were destroyed blinding those on the bridge. Even if the enemy commander wanted to escape, the natural procedure for him would be to send people to find out what was going on.

Tatsuya and Kazama have already met two groups of two people, four scouts in total. The enemy soldiers coming in front didn't notice Tatsuya and Kazama. Tatsuya was sure that he was also somehow invisible. Bypassing the opponents one by one, he didn't remember knowing the technique with which one could escape detection by others.

(This is one of the 'Technician Tengu,' developed by Kiichi Hogen, 'Cloak of invisibility?' This technique is somewhat reminiscent of the 'Hiding Mantle,' ancient magic from Europe.)

Kiichi Hogen was a famous exorcist from legends who stole knowledge of Minamoto-no Yoshitsune's military art, and was also known as a kenjutsu master, the founder of the ancient style of the sword Kyohatiryu. ["The style of the eight capitals"]

However, with the recognition of the real existence of magic, another list has been added to the list of legends about Kiichi Hogen. In his relations with Minamoto no Yoshitsune, Kiichi Hogen from ancient times was identified with Kurama Tengu.

[ed: Tengu is a mythological ugly being with a red face and a long nose, something like a goblin, Kurama is a mountain, i.e. verbatim Goblin from Mount Kurama]

The art of kenjutsu Yoshitsune taught Kurama Tengu, and martial arts: Kiichi Hogen. If you look from the point of view of Yoshitsune, then it will be natural to consider these two as one person.

But why was Kurama "Tengu"? Kurama is understandable. The monk from Mount Kurama taught Minamoto the art of the sword, which later became the beginning of the Kyohati-ryu style. But none of this leads to the notion of "Tengu".

According to the theory put forward by the researchers of the history of magic, Kiichi Hoheng was called Tengu, because he systematized the art of exorcism for use against people, he invented the "Tengu-jutsu" [Tengu Techniques], later presented as "Ninjutsu".

This thesis received many supporters and is now accepted as an established theory.

Kazama practiced these techniques even before he became a disciple of Yakumo. From this ancient magic came the nickname of Kazama "Daitengu" [Big Tengu]. Despite the fact that he learned many techniques of ninjutsu from Yakumo, the main weapon and strength of Kazama is still "Tengu-jutsu".

The magic that prevents detection, "Cloak of invisibility" is one of the characteristic magics from "Tengu-jutsu". It looked like an innate magic (BS-magic).

Do not see the visible, do not hear the audible, avoid seeing, and do not notice that someone escaped.

Instead of changing light or sound waves, it invades the consciousness and makes the enemy think that you are not there.

This power of concealing ones presence is inferior to Ono Haruka's similar inborn ability. However, "Cloak of invisibility" of "Tengu-jutsu" cannot be used by any of his current companions, including Tatsuya himself. The coverage of this magic depends on the skill of the operator. Kazama could hide up to four people, including himself.

Tatsuya was not seen by the scouts of the enemy precisely because of the "Cloak of Invisibility" of Kazama.

They approached the entrance to the bridge, containing only the control room, not the steering room. Even though looking like a tanker, the internal structure of this ship resembled the structure of warships.

Kazama opened the door to the control room. The head of the detachment of the deserters of the Great Asian Alliance, who was inside, turned to the sound, but when he saw Kazama, he turned away, as if losing interest.

"Report the situation! Hey, hey! ...It's useless, major-dono. It looks like the intercept unit has been destroyed."

"Those who remain on the submarine are also not answering. I think we need to run by ourselves."

Three people remained in the control room. The others were sent to the dock or to scout. Unfortunately, Tatsuya didn't know what they were talking about, but Kazama understood Chinese. The view of Kazama gave Tatsuya a sign that he was sure that these three were the leaders of the detachment plotting the diversion.

With "Decomposition," Tatsuya made holes in their bodies. Both shoulders, both hips, 4 points for each person. Summoning magic at the same time for 12 targets, Tatsuya instantly neutralized the enemy leaders.

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Captain Johnson was still at sea when the troops of Kazama and Chen Xiangshan completed their operation of taking control of the submarine and the disguised dock. Arriving at the meeting point at noon, he descended from the mini-submarine into the sea and surfaced in a wet suit. Seeing that there, as expected, was an anchored ship disguised as a private yacht, Johnson gave a sigh of relief.

His partner, Captain Jasmine Williams, was waiting on board.

"Jas! Did something happen?"

According to the plan, she had to wait in the shelter on the island of Kuma. Jasmine was not such a person who would back away from the plan on a personal whim. Johnson asked about the reasons for changing plans with a serious face, not giving himself any reason to joke.

"Do not you know? ...No, you don't seem to know."

From Jasmine's response, Johnson's unpleasant premonition grew stronger. Unfortunately, it was not an unnecessary fear.

"The main forces of tomorrow's operation were captured by the Japanese army. Therefore, I want to hold a meeting as soon as possible to organize everything from the very beginning."

Johnson only thought for a short time, which was less than a second.

"...Understood. I'm going to change my clothes."

"I will be waiting in the dining room."

Watching the departed Jasmine, Johnson went to a cabin.

In the dining room (the mess-room) Jasmine was waiting at the table with one of the leaders of the detachment of deserters from the Great Asian Alliance, Bradley Zhang.

Zhang often looked at Jasmine, apparently because he could not believe in her real personality.

Jasmine tried to avoid the deserters, except Liu. The meeting with Zhang was inevitable, because Liu had just been captured.

Today, Zhang first saw her face. Naturally, with her 12-13-year-old appearance, it was hard to convince him that she is a magician of the rank of captain.

The place where they waited, though being called the dining room, only had a mini-kitchen and a small table with chairs. With the giant Zhang here it seemed to be very crowded, but there was not even a hint of complaint on his part. As with Johnson.

"So they were caught... was it an inspection? The mobile dock was supposed to be in international waters."

"This was not an inspection. I do not know all the details, but it seems that it was an illegal surprise attack."

"Piracy by the regular army!" Johnson spat in anger.

"It's not for us to condemn the Japanese army in this regard." Jasmine didn't reassure him, but said to look at what they themselves did.

"...Do you know anything else?"

A little, after calming down, Johnson asked this in a more subdued tone.

"It seems that the search party of the Great Asian Alliance also participated in the attack."

"I thought that the Japanese army would be cooperating with the army of the Great Asian Alliance, this is bad. Does this mean that there was a leak of information about tomorrow's operation?"

"The other party has already resorted to illegal operations. I have no doubt that they are now resorting to truth serum." There was no reproach or disgust in Jasmine's words. Brainwashing and torture were not unusual for her, who specializing in covert operations. This meant that the operation itself, had all but failed.

In the current operation, the Australian army plays the role of a reserve for the faction of opponents of reconciliation from the Great Asian Alliance. They had to remain for direct physical support, but now the Jasmine and Johnson pair is the only available fighting force.

They didn't plan to participate as the basis of the force in the sabotage operation. In the agreed plan, Australia supported a faction of opponents of reconciliation, provided that the main task is to monitor the situation to the last, and intervene only in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

Of course, the Australian army didn't forbid them to engage in battle entirely. If they didn't want a battle, they would not send these two. This intention reflected British influence, without it Australia would not have gone to these actions.

Nevertheless, Australia would not go for an operation with such a low chance of success. This time Australia acted as a secret ally of Britain, which organized this operation to stop Japan's growing global presence.

"The operation must be carried out. It will be a sacrifice in vain if we stop now."

But Bradley Zhang's position was different. He insisted on conducting sabotage at any cost.

Naturally, Zhang had such a point of view. They deserted from the army of Hong Kong, part of the Great Asian Alliance and engaged in this operation.

It's no secret that Hong Kong is under the political influence of Britain. And yet the country to which they belong, is still the Great Asian Alliance.

Zhang cannot return to Hong Kong, there he is already considered a criminal. The punishment that awaits him there, as a highly qualified combat magician, will at best be in the form of heavy correctional labor, but more likely he will be turned into a puppet soldier with brainwashing... that is, degradation to the state of a living weapon without free will.

Although brainwashing leads to a deterioration in magical skills, and despite the fact that the variety of magic is limited, the army of the Great Asian Alliance has put into practice the brainwashing of soldiers for absolute obedience. This technology was derived from magic (or better call it occultism) by Gu Jie through the organization of No-Head Dragon.

For a magician, being turned into such a puppet was equivalent to the death penalty. Deprived of free will, a thing that will be used and thrown out when it breaks down. And a person does not even have the mind to realize his suffering, this horror is stronger than the death penalty.

The only way left for Zhang is to successfully sabotage and abolish the peace treaty with Japan. He will turn this crime into a feat. Even if he cannot rehabilitate the faction of opponents of reconciliation with this achievement, he can try to gain asylum in Britain or Australia as a reward for the success of the sabotage. He will not have a future if the operation is unsuccessful during tomorrow's party in honor of the construction of the artificial island.

Therefore, he could not agree with the cancellation of the operation.

"But we lost the submarine, which is the main force of the operation."

As Jasmine noted, tomorrow's operation consisted of the fact that Zhang with a detached detachment would distract the attention of the guard, while the attack from the submarine follows from the sea. In addition, it was not planned to launch a direct attack with missiles or torpedoes, but secretly dispatch agents who, having approached, would install bombs on the pontoons holding the island afloat.

"There is still a small boat left. In principle, because we just need to get under water imperceptibly the presence of a submarine isn't absolutely necessary for the operation."

"Will this work out?"

"In our detachment there are magicians who are well versed in underwater activities. Although our number has decreased, this will not be an obstacle to the operation."

After listening to Zhang's confident speech, Jasmine looked at Johnson.

"We cannot make a decision on our own. Please give me time to contact our country." Instead of Jasmine Johnson, he suggested this to Zhang. It was not an attempt to delay time. It was an indisputable fact that they would need to get permission from Australia first.

"...I understand. I expect a good answer." Zhang also understood this. Suppressing his haste, he nodded.

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Johnson contacted his senior officer via wireless communication, aiming the radio wave at the British military communications satellite. It was unnecessary to say that the communication channel was protected from listening. However, unfortunately for him, even now his message was intercepted by the Japanese army.

"Senior Lieutenant Fujibayashi, good work."

"Thank you, Commander."

Fujibayashi's second name, Electron Sorceress, was obtained mainly for her ingenious hacking skills, but also reflected her magician skills. She is a skilled user of the magic of systems for scattering, concentration and oscillation, by which she interferes with electromagnetic signals. Instead of using an electromagnetic wave as a means of attack or intelligence, this "sorceress" specializes in magic interfering with communication, whether wireless or wired. The optical component is also included in the area of its influence, since it is still ultimately converted to an electrical signal. In addition, Fujibayashi has special skills not only able to intercept actual transmissions, but also data from rewritable and erasable magnetic, electronic and optical media.

Despite the fact that there are messages that she cannot decipher, there are practically no messages that she cannot intercept. The satellite communication session of Captain Johnson also entered the receiver of the Independent Magic-Equipped Battalion with the help of Fujibayashi.

"Sanada, did you decrypt it?"

"Yes. The cipher was not so complicated."

Sanada could crack most ciphers that were difficult even for Fujibayashi. Sanada isn't only excellent in magical engineering, but also an expert in cryptography.

"And what does it say?"

"A question was asked whether the operation scheduled for tomorrow should be stopped. The Australian army postponed the response."

"Seeing their position, I would be grateful if they would continue..."

If Tatsuya were here, he would dispute the words of Kazama. For him, the incident was far from over. However, from the point of view of Kazama, some victims are inevitable for obtaining a favorable result, no, rather, he believed that these were the necessary costs to achieve the goal. A detachment of deserters from the Great Asian Alliance has already lost the ability to be active. Kazama and his entourage analyzed this situation. The probability that they will be able to replenish their forces during the day is zero.

It is predicted that even if they decide to conduct sabotage, they will not cause much damage.

"And if they slipped a fake answer... No, that's impossible."

Sanada with a smile of regret replied to the murmur of Kazama:

"Substitution of communication flow is technically possible. However, it is difficult to block others from reading the real answer."

"Really."

Because Kazama himself understood this, he cut short his thought halfway. In addition, the enemy didn't have time to organize a false signal.

"The response of the Australian army came."

Kazama, still thinking about the possible deception listened to Fujibayashi who reported on the interception of the message.

"And what do they say?"

As expected, the same encryption key was used from the last decrypted message, so automatic machine decryption was possible.

"It says: 'It is permitted for the operation to continue tomorrow. To successfully complete the assignment, cooperate with the faction of opponents of reconciliation from the Great Asian Alliance.'"

"I see. Yanagi." Having answered "Yes", Yanagi came up from the corner of the room.

"Inform Chen Xiangshan about this and form a detachment with him. I entrust you with the details of the interception."

"I got it." Having given honor to Kazama, Yanagi left the room. His gait a bit easier than usual.

"Despite everything, Australia seems to be self-confident. Maybe they have some new weapons?" Sanada turned to Kazama in a tone that didn't seem serious.

"No, I do not think that they will achieve serious success." However, the answer from Kazama contained no signs that he took it as a joke.

"Truly?"

"I also think that this was a somewhat irresponsible order, hoping for a serious success. As the situation worsens for them, if they really wanted to succeed in the sabotage, they would send detailed instructions on the strategy."

In response to a question from Sanada, Fujibayashi expressed her own assumptions. Fujibayashi's answer was close to the thoughts of Kazama.

"Such thinking is for the big bosses who usually stands behind such matters. In addition, instructions issued from afar often will not match the situation on the ground, and management always wants to control the situation as accurately as possible."

Kazama, speaking with sarcasm, had in mind a more general case, applicable not only to the military. Due to the fact that he was treated with a cool attitude because of false accusations for arbitrary actions, even if he was eventually promoted a rank, he still had a tendency to make vicious expressions with respect to his superiors. Naturally, given that they will not hear it.

"And vice versa, when no specific instructions are given, it often means foreseeing failure and unwillingness to take responsibility. In our case, this seems to have occurred."

"The commander's opinion can be understood, but do you not think that if the operation is considered to be a failure beforehand, then they are willing to expose their agents to danger?" Since he is someone who does not agree with Kazama, Sanada expressed his opinion.

"Naturally, I understand this. My opinion is that the Australian army thinks that everything is in order."

Sanada could not hide his surprise at this bold conclusion.

"Will they just throw their magician agents away?"

In contrast to the surprised Sanada, Kazama nodded with an unflappable face.

"If they really didn't want to lose their magicians, they would not have put them on such a dangerous operation. This isn't just a big risk. It's like walking on a rope without a safety net."

"They were considered one-time garbage from the very beginning...?"

The voice of Fujibayashi, who asked instead Sanada, who was speechless, was trembling slightly.

"Suppose a magician appeared in the USNA, who was recognized as an immediate threat to Japan. Would you send Tatsuya alone to the USNA?"

"No... at least I think that you need to organize enough support."

Fujibayashi nodded understandingly in response to the specific example given.

"Even though there are shortcomings in abilities, or in physical terms they were assigned to a mission of penetration. I think, even though they are competent, that their loss will not be pitied."

Kazama picked up the tablet terminal from the table. It was the same one used during the meeting with Tatsuya on the second floor of the steak house. He brought on screen the same thing as at that moment. A photograph of a mustached man and a girl 12-13 years old in a straw hat.

"For example. What if the look of this 'girl' isn't due to taking medications, but because of a genetic anomaly that appeared as a side effect of adjustment?"

"Commander, this is..." The phrase "side effect of adjustment" paralyzed the language of Fujibayashi.

"It's only a guess. But do you not think that this is possible?"

"And the truth," Instead of Fujibayashi, Sanada became again the opponent of Kazama. "Very much can be this. Moreover, it isn't surprising that, if this is an improved magician, her body can burn at any time. The likelihood that Australia conducts research, similar to the said commander, is very high."

After Sanada's conclusion, there were no more comments.

Chapter 6

Finally, it was March 28th. Miyuki's public affairs as heiress of the Yotsuba family ended yesterday. For today, it is planned to attend the party at the invitation of a friend, and Tatsuya should go with her for company.

This is on an official timetable.

However, the main task for today is the work entrusted to the current head of the Yotsuba family. Initially, the job entrusted was to contribute to the successful holding of the party by stopping the sabotage operation.

"Miyuki-sama arranged for her presence at the party, but now it has become unnecessary." Shirakawa, the butler with a soft smile, sent by the head of the Yotsuba family, said.

He has the 6th rank among 8 butlers and isn't in the top three with access to Yotsuba's secrets.

However, these were secrets that, except for the head of the family, only a handful of people from the main and secondary families knew including, Hayama rank 1 among the butlarians, Hanabishi rank 2, Kurebayashi rank 3, as well as the engineers associated with the former Fourth Laboratory. But this didn't mean that from the 4th rank on, the butlers, including Shirakawa, didn't know the facts about the rest of the Yotsuba's activity, that was hidden from the world.

Shirakawa also had the necessary knowledge to support the completion of the mission. That's why he was sent here.

"However, it is difficult to judge whether Tatsuya-sama's participation in the party is necessary or not."

Tatsuya could not blame Shirakawa for lack of attention, as the main representative of the reinforcements sent. After all, Miyuki is looking forward to Tatsuya accompanying her there, so he was a little upset.

"I'm sure that the enemy's activities will be extremely limited, because this time we know when and where their target is. Support is also good."

These were arrogant words. But these were Tatsuya's real thoughts. However, not only Miyuki, but Minami and Shirakawa knew that these arrogant words didn't carry pride in themselves.

Knowing the attacked object and not taking any measures, the enemy will be able to win by force only if the defense forces are limited. This does not apply to the present case. Since there was no need to look for where the enemy was hiding, it was easy for Tatsuya.

Tatsuya and the rest were now on a yacht prepared by the Yotsuba family. Immediately after the incident of Yokohama, predicting that the work at sea will be greater, the second rank among the butlers of the main house Hanabishi ordered it at the Nagasaki shipyard, and it arrived yesterday in Okinawa for assistance in the current mission. Looking like a yacht for leisure, it was a "wolf in sheep's clothing," a high-speed ship stuffed with equipment for battles.

"Time to leave."

This time, at the helm was Shirakawa. Both Tatsuya and Minami were technically able to manage, but only Shirakawa had a license to operate small vessels capable of entering the open sea, at a time when Tatsuya was not able to due to age restrictions.

In addition, Tatsuya should focus on intercepting the enemy, and Minami should always be next to Miyuki as an escort during the party. Shirakawa at the helm was a natural choice.

"Good."

After Miyuki gave her permission, Shirakawa started the engine of the fast boat disguised as a yacht. The departure was so soft that there was no shaking at all.

Three days ago the ship, borrowed from the army by Joseph, was convenient, but this fast boat was even more comfortable.

Apparently, this was achieved with the help of some magical trick. The ship itself was a magical device, similar to a weapon with an integrated CAD. Tatsuya with his perception found another servant of the Yotsuba, who, apparently, got on board as an engineer to activate the magic, relieving the pitching and vibration.

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An ordinary plane flying from the main island of Okinawa to the island of Kume would take about three hours, but the speed boat reached the port in the east of the island in two hours.

"At maximum speed we would have reached an hour, but I chose the movement with maximum comfort." Said the butler Shirakawa.

They didn't go directly to the artificial island "Saikashin", but arrived on the island of Kume, because the party will begin in the evening, and it was not yet noon.

"Miyuki."

"Tatsuya-san!"

Shizuku and Honoka were waiting at the port. Miyuki informed them in advance about the planned time of arrival.

"Honoka, Shizuku. Did you come to meet us?"

Miyuki didn't tell Tatsuya that she had sent a message to the two. Although for him the appearance of Honoka and Shizuku was unexpected, he was not surprised. Perhaps because he was thinking about such an opportunity? Or unconsciously thought that this does not affect his work? At least he didn't think about Honoka and Shizuku that "it does not matter whether they meet or not."

"Have you two already had lunch? If not, how about joining us?"

Here he got to the point, because they themselves wanted to say it.

"Of course! Certainly! With joy!"

"Honoka, you're overexcited... We also were going to have a snack."

Tatsuya barely smiled noticeably, looking at the ready to dance with enthusiasm Honoka, and Shizuku who was embarrassed by the unexpected offer. It was a kind smile, and not that ironic expression with a tight smile, which he used to demonstrate from the first days after admission to high school.

On the advice of Honoka, they ate "Shrimp hamburgers." Honoka justified her choice by the fact that the party will be in the style of receiving guests with a buffet of expensive food, so it's better to eat something simple in the daytime. These were hamburgers with shrimp of two kinds of frying, fried and sauted. Five people (Tatsuya, Miyuki, Honoka, Shizuku and Minami) took one hamburger, cut it into pieces, and tried this food that is hard to get in Tokyo.

"By the way, Tatsuya-san, where are you going to change?"

For dessert thereafter, there was the Okinawa zenzay (shredded syrup with grated ice), during which Shizuku asked Tatsuya while looking at Miyuki. Shizuku was probably worried that they, staying at a hotel on the main island of Okinawa, had nowhere to change clothes. It was really a topical issue.

"If you want, there is a beauty salon nearby."

"Thank you. But everything is in order. We change our clothes on the yacht."

However, for Miyuki everything was already provided. Although not as good as in a beauty salon, but on the yacht (disguised speedboat), a cabin with a full-length mirror and accessories for make-up was allocated so she could go to the party right from the ship.

Tatsuya felt anxious, when he heard this question.

"Miyuki, why do not you accept Shizuku's offer, because she tried for us?"

Tatsuya believed that Miyuki is incomparable in beauty without the need for makeup specialists. And also thought that if the expert is unprofessional, it can even spoil the charm of Miyuki. Because of this subconscious thought, he didn't even think of reserving a place in a beauty salon on the main island of Okinawa or on the island of Kuma.

However, the specialist who was hired by Shizuku is unlikely to be a "layman". Most likely it will be a first-class specialist, who can at least improve the image.

"If Tatsuya-sama says so, then... can I ask for that?"

"Yeah, its good." Without showing any irritation, Shizuku answered Miyuki, who had rejected her previous words. "Minami too."

Hearing an unexpected name in Shizuku's speech, spoken in an address to Miyuki, Minami looked at Tatsuya.

"It would be nice to take care of Minami too."

Pushed by his principle of necessity to give an immediate answer, Minami with the words "Yes, please," bowed to Shizuku.

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At 2 pm Tatsuya took a taxi to deliver Miyuki's and Minami's dresses to the hotel where Shizuku stopped. And when the preparations were over two hours before the party at 16:30 Miyuki contacted him. The waiting time was unexpectedly short. Quicker than expected, Miyuki returned from a first-class stylist who prepared a proper appearance for the party. No, better to say, not ashamed of the beauty of Miyuki, he showed his talent. It can be said that managing at two and a half hours is a pretty quick result.

However, there's also the fact that there isn't much time left. Having met with Miyuki and Minami, Tatsuya decided to go immediately.

In addition, Shizuku and Honoka said that they plan to go to the venue of the party by helicopter. The artificial island "Saikasin" was built 30 kilometers west of the island of Kume. The helicopter will fly there for 10 minutes. These two (especially by Honoka) were persistently called to go together by helicopter.

Indeed, with the presence of a helicopter, you do not have to worry. However, for the convenience of his present work, Tatsuya could not accept the offer of Honoka and Shizuku. Miyuki cannot act separately from Tatsuya, and Minami's job is to protect Miyuki. In such circumstances, these three led by Tatsuya returned to their yacht and headed for an artificial island.

When Miyuki and Minami were preparing for the party, Tatsuya didn't sit around. He visited a military base in the north of the island, where he met with Kazama and gave him the latest data on the location of James J. Johnson, obtained by "Elemental Sight." After the meeting, he flew around the artificial island on the reconnaissance aircraft of the Air Force, checking the situation both with his own eyes and with his "eyes."

He returned to the eastern port at 4 pm. He quickly changed into a costume for a party and went to pick up Miyuki and Minami.

This compressed schedule was tiresome for Tatsuya. Although it would have been a little easier if they didn't have lunch with Honoka and Shizuku, he was not going to complain about it. And the fact that he was able to finally take a breath when the boat went off was not a sham.

Tatsuya took off his jacket, hung it on the hanger, and sat in a chair in the cabin. Although it was not a sofa, the chair had a soft high and wide headboard back, giving a feeling of complete comfort.

For a moment, the thought came to his mind that the suit might have been wrinkled, another change of clothes would be a problem. But he stayed in the chair.

"Onii-sama?"

No one answered the knock. Surprised that there was no answer to either the knock or the voice, Miyuki carefully opened the door.

"Oh!" Involuntarily made a surprised sound, Miyuki covered her mouth with both hands. It was not noticeable that Tatsuya woke up. Relieved, putting her hand to her chest, Miyuki entered Tatsuya's cabin, trying not to make noise.

To see this defenseless sleeping face brought happiness to Miyuki. She knows that even during deep sleep Tatsuya feels signs of activity around him. Even in a dream, he is always ready for battle.

He still has not woken up because he does not consider Miyuki an enemy in every sense of the word. This was evidence that Tatsuya fully trusts Miyuki and sees no reason to defend himself against her.

Miyuki advanced further, closer to Tatsuya.

Looking back, she was convinced that the door was tightly closed. Still worrying, she looked around several times, then calmed down, as if realizing what her behavior looked like from the outside. Closing her eyes and putting her hands to her chest, she regained her breath.

Opening her eyes, holding her hair with one hand and the edge of the skirt with the other hand, Miyuki slowly brought her face closer to Tatsuya.

Two days before the competition of dissertations, in October of the year before last. Late in the evening two days before that incident of Yokohama. Remembering her failure in a similar situation when her hand slipped, Miyuki supported her body, not touching the handrail chair on which Tatsuya sat

Meanwhile,
The lips of Miyuki approached Tatsuya's lips.
There was still no sign that Tatsuya was awake.
The distance was even less than when the breath starts to mix,
Probably less than a millimeter remained.
Miyuki, closed her eyes tightly,
And suddenly turned around, and fled from the cabin,
blushing to the ears.



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Saikashin has an underwater mining plant on the ocean floor, and itself is an octagon floating on 12 cylindrical pontoons, and also has 4 pipes as a route for lifting the ore. The artificial island platform itself is a five-layered structure divided into residential areas, among which there is a luxury hotel for the guests of the island.

Today's party will take place in the banquet hall of the hotel, located in the first layer on the top floor of the platform. 30 minutes before the opening ceremony, invited guests one by one gathered in the lobby in front of the banquet hall.

"...Are you sure I will not be unnecessary here?" Sayaka said, looking at the crowd of gentlemen and ladies in expensive clothes and with expensive accessories, which showed their high social status, although she didn't understand this.

"Everything is fine. Mibu-san, you really are."

"Is it true?"

Even Azusa's words were not convincing for her, Sayaka nervously fingered the tip of her stole. [ed: cape on the shoulders, such as a scarf]

"Thats excessive thinking, Sayaka. As you can see, there are other students besides us. In addition, this party isn't the main event of this trip. You need to discard these superfluous thoughts and come off to the fullest."

"R-really." Sayaka finally calmed down when she heard words of enthusiasm from Kanon. As Kanon said, in the lobby everywhere you could see young people aged 20-25 years, as well as girls who look like their peers.

Suddenly, Sayaka's and Kanon's eyes attracted their cohays, descending the stairs to the lobby.

"Chiyoda-sempai, Mibu-senpai, you came early."

Careful not to disturb the rest of the guests, Honoka approached and spoke to them.

Approached with her, Shizuku bowed slightly.

"Mitsui-san, Kitai-san, have you come alone?"

Kanon's group was invited on behalf of the Isori family, Kanon herself accompanies the groom, and the remaining five are friends of Isori. However, in the case of Shizuku, her parents were originally invited guests, and Honoka and Shizuku, their escort. Therefore, when entering the venue, they should not have been separated from their parents.

"No, my parents are over there." As always, the laconic Shizuku showed the direction with a glance. In the place where Shizuku was looking, there was a high school student and a married couple from China, Ushio and Benio, who exchanged greetings with famous politicians, whom Kanon also knew.

"That's amazing." Azusa, who stood next to them, said delightedly.

"That man is quite an outstanding politician, after all? The one who came up to say hello..." Kanon said seemingly surprised.

"That is one of the senior ministers. He is a very influential person from a family associated with the JSDF, but there's nothing to worry about." Said in a whisper when Isori came up.

The family of Ushio does not belong to any company directly related to weapons. However, the corporate group of the Ushio family holds a large share in the production of intermediate goods for weapons, such as bullets and fighters. Since the production of ammunition for the army isn't their main activity, losing the favor of the army, Benio and Ushio could easily start selling to the army, and sales could be transferred to civilian use or exports. The expression "do not worry" used by Isori reflected this state of affairs.

"In that case, we will go greet them."

"Whom?"

"Both sides, of course." Pushing Kanon from behind, Isori went to Ushio, Benio and the politician talking with them.

Outwardly looking calm, Isori was far from having complete control of himself.

"Do not worry so much." Sayaka and Azusa watched the back of the departing couple with their eyes, and, in a whisper to Shizuku, blinked continuously, like a dove caught off guard by a shot from a toy gun. Even if they do not go to the greeting now, Shizuku is still here. Even after the party starts, there will be plenty of opportunities for conversation. As a result, a serious expression appeared on the faces of these two people.

"Honoka, what's wrong?" Shizuku, in turn, had not yet seen Isori's affairs. She talked with Honoka, who kept looking around uneasily around the lobby. Nevertheless, she knew, without asking who Honoka was looking for.

"Tatsuya-san, it seems, has not come yet?"

"Exactly. As soon as Miyuki's group arrives, everyone will notice at once."

Shizuku had in mind "you forgot about Miyuki and Minami," but her words never reached Honoka.

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At the time when Honoka expressed her excitement, the speedboat with the Tatsuya group had long since arrived at the port of the artificial island. Miyuki didn't appear in the lobby, because she didn't like being surrounded. Covered with many mysteries, the Yotuba Princess is of considerable interest among the masses, who will constantly strive to talk with her. And Miyuki's astounding appearance will only exacerbate this situation.

Tatsuya didn't approach the venue for another reason. He was heading for the newly opened underground shopping center of the artificial island.

Full-value sales in all stores will begin next month with the start of the mining subsea plant, but some souvenir shops and convenience stores have already opened.

He found James J. Johnson in front of a well-known store that had offices all over the country. Johnson changed his hair and eye color, and also shaved his mustache. In addition he had changed the look of his body. However, Tatsuya's "look" does not deceive. He initially didn't find him with ordinary eyes, but with "Eyes of Spirits" that allowed him to read his exact location.

The enemy also had to notice Tatsuya's approach. In particular, because Tatsuya was not at all hiding. Nevertheless, one could say that the absence of even a little nervousness was a good sign.

With Johnson was a girl that looked around 12-13 years old. Red hair and green eyes. The colors differed from those shown by Kazama in the photo. But Tatsuya would never be mistaken, although she was wearing clothes that slightly increased her visual growth, and she also changed her image quite a lot, he still recognized her.

The girl looked up. Her and Tatsuya's eyes met.

"I apologize." With a slight bow, Tatsuya turned to Johnson. "Today we are holding a private party, so... I would advise curious glances to stay away."

"No, please do not worry about it." Johnson answered in a nervous voice and tried to hurry away from Tatsuya. However, Tatsuya could not let them go away just like that.

"Mistress, also accept my apologies. Such treatment in relation to the lady is unacceptable. I apologize."

Looking at the girl... Captain Jasmine Williams directly in the eye, he made a formal apology, which isn't used in communicating with children.

"...Thank you for being courteous. In fact, do not worry about it." The girl answered with her high, firm voice contrary to her appearance and bowed. After that, Johnson and Jasmine turned and left.

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Having made sure that behind them Tatsuya had entered the store, Johnson quickened his pace. Jasmine had to run a little to keep up with his pace, but he didn't slow down. Johnson calmed down only when they turned a corner and left the line of sight of the store. But he was still walking, just dropping the speed to normal for Jasmine.

After reaching the blind spot in the surveillance cameras, Johnson stopped. Johnson and Jasmine quickly looked around. After making sure that there was no one, they opened the door to the ladder for the workforce that they got a key for in advance and went inside. After that they, Johnson very deeply, and Jasmine slightly, sighed.

But this relaxation was only for a moment.

"Jas."

"What?"

"How did he notice us... in your opinion?"

"No idea." To the nervous Johnson's question, Jasmine shook her head with a serious face.

"There were no signs of persecution. There were no signs of using magic either..."

The voice of Jasmine was unexpectedly messy.

"Jay, there were no signs of using magic? We didn't do anything, did we?"

Jasmine called Johnson a friendly name, not a military appeal, unlike the usual. This was a sign that she was in a state of confusion.

"Jas, what happened?"

Jasmine is one year younger than Johnson. But now in his eyes she was helpless, corresponding to her appearance as that of a young girl.

"I do not know... There was no sign of magic. There was no sense of magic attack. So why? Why did this feeling of anxiety arise? What is this eerie feeling when suddenly you realize yourself with a tight rope wrapped around your neck, tightening all the same?"

"Jas, calm down."

In truth, Johnson already had a memory of the feeling that Jasmine felt right now. Hearing her words about the "tight rope", he remembered the shock that he himself experienced that other time. However, he somehow managed to suppress that feeling of anxiety and calmed his trembling, after which, making the most fearless expression he could, looked Jasmine in the eye.

"I didn't see anything done to you either. At least this guy didn't even touch you with a finger."

Jasmine's breathless breathing slowly returned to normal.

"...I'm sorry. This is an unusual occurrence for me. This Yotuba magician looked as if he understood too much."

"Yes. Undoubtedly this guy felt some mystery."

Jasmine relaxed slightly, because she thought Johnson was joking. However Johnson was absolutely serious.

"Jas, will we stop this time?"

Jasmine took several seconds to understand the meaning of these words.

"...Do not say nonsense. The order for the continuance of active actions has already been obtained."

"I deliberately said that this mission... is dangerous." Johnson hinted at the refusal of the mission.

"Captain Johnson, these words are drawn to a military tribunal."

"It's just us. This means that we ourselves are the ones who make the decisions in this operation. If a serious deterioration of the situation is expected, we, at our discretion, may decide to evacuate."

"This is only in case the fatal situation is predicted with high accuracy! Nothing so specific has happened yet."

"Is this an ordinary magical fight in our mind!? This is a secret battle between magicians. It isn't known what kind of threat can be waiting!"

"All the same as our other work! This isn't an excuse to run away!"

Johnson and Jasmine stared at each other. The first person to look away was Johnson. "...I'm sorry. I do not know what came over me."

"...This time I'll pretend that I have not heard anything."

Jasmine accepted the apology of Johnson, who admitted his mistake.

"Yes. ...Is it time to return? The party will begin soon. That guy is probably gone."

"Let's go."

Johnson walked up the stairs to the aisle and headed for the other door. Jasmine, who was following him, tried to suppress her own desire to abandon the mission, which she undoubtedly felt as well.

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Tatsuya bought mineral water from the store and returned to Miyuki waiting on the yacht. He didn't want the drink. Simply, he considered that leaving the store without buying anything would look unnatural.

"Onii-sama, is it time to go to the venue?"

When Tatsuya left the yacht alone, he said that he would return when the time came to go to the party. But he suddenly shook his head at Miyuki's question.

"We still have a little time right? Give me five more minutes."

"It's okay... you will let me know when, Onii-sama?"

"I'll call you when the time comes."

"Thank you."

After answering the suggestion of Miyuki, who had understood everything, Tatsuya went into his cabin.

Although Miyuki and Minami will not enter without permission, Tatsuya still locked the door just in case, took off his jacket and sat on a chair. And immediately closed his eyes. Of course not to take a nap. It was in order to direct his "view" to a world that cannot be perceived only by the five senses.

Tatsuya can "see" the information dimension even at a time when he looks at the ordinary world with the naked eye. However, it is much easier to do this by observing slowly with a lowered stimulation from the five ordinary senses.

Using the psion bullet released earlier through the Idea as a guide, he got access to information about the "girl" he met in front of the store.

(Jasmine Williams, Captain of the Armed Forces of the Australian Armed Forces. So age and appearance do not coincide?)

Improved magician with a genetic anomaly.

Even realizing this, Tatsuya didn't flinch. To treat the enemy in a prejudiced manner because of this would be very frivolous of him. As an enemy Tatsuya saw her only as one to be neutralized. If they cease to be an enemy, then the attitude towards them can change.

To be sure, Tatsuya also checked the label of James J. Johnson. It was still being tracked without problems. He realized that it would work for another three days, unless they were, of course, found.

(Maybe it's reckless ... but it will be a good practical test for that.)

"...Onii-sama. It's almost time."

"I got it." Having answered Miyuki, he opened the door. Miyuki's hair was without her usual ornaments and gathered up into a bun, and on her open neck shone a tricolor necklace well balanced from pearls of white, black and gold colors.

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The party dedicated to the completion of Saikasin began. The door to the hall opened, and the people wandering around the lobby began to slowly go inside. There are people with two types of thinking: the boss should go first, and the big boss comes in after everyone. Today, it seemed, none of this applied, and people just started to enter based on who was closest to the entrance. For this reason, Tatsuya's group that was not waiting in the vestibule was the last, but was not considered late. In other words, Miyuki, accompanied by Tatsuya and Minami behind her, entered the hall already filled with people.

At the moment of their entrance, the hall, before full of noise, died down. As if the main characters appeared. No, at this moment, Miyuki, of course, was the star of this place. People, holding their breath, without stirring, as if losing their self-awareness, looked at this beauty, which a mere mortal cannot have.

Miyuki smiled slightly embarrassed under all these glances and, standing in the center of the hall, bowed slightly.

Thus, the fetters of the mind with the people in the hall were removed.

The noise of voices returned. Almost all of them were about Miyuki: "Who is this beauty?", "She is from the Yotsuba...", "What, she!?" There were only a few exceptions.

Of course, these exceptions were long-time students and graduates of First High, as well as Shizuku's parents, who knew Miyuki.

Tatsuya with Minami first of all accompanied Miyuki to greet Ushio. This is quite natural, because they were here as his guests.

"Long time no see. Thank you for today." Tatsuya bowed politely. After him, they all bowed: Miyuki was elegant and cute, and Minami was innocent and reserved.

"Thank you, too. Thank you for your courtesy."

Having gathered many views from the audience, Ushio answered Tatsuya with a smile. Tatsuya and Miyuki also met with Ushio last month, after the incident with the terrorist attack in Hakone. So, although in fact it was not "long time to see", but it was not necessary to honestly tell the truth in a situation where someone can overhear. In addition, with the wife of Ushio, Benio, they really have not seen each other for a long time, so this was not a strange greeting.

"Since our previous meeting, you have become much more grand."

Benio spoke to Tatsuya in a suitable tone for one in her position. However, Tatsuya was able to read in her words a hidden complaint: "You deceived me well at that time."

"And Madame still looks great, and has not changed at all. It's an honor to see you today." Nevertheless, Tatsuya didn't feel guilty at all. Benio, looking at him with an evil look, somehow managed to keep a friendly smile on his face.

"Wataru-kun, we have not seen each other for a long time. You're already in high school right?" Trying to defuse the situation, Miyuki spoke to Wataru, who stood tensely next to Benio. A beautiful voice, suitable for her beautiful appearance, sounded like a bell through the hall and again made many, regardless of their age, stiffen.

"Yes, since this April I am a high school student!"

Wataru's tension was justified. Despite the meaningless answer, it was worthy of respect that he was even able to speak at all.

Talking with Tatsuya, Ushio watched with such a sad smile.

"My daughter is here, too. Do not want to go talk to her?" Where Ushio pointed with his gaze, gathered in one group, stood Shizuku, Honoka and graduates.

After bowing once more, Tatsuya's group left Ushio.

Only after that, people around were able to realize that their behavior was impolite. They hurriedly turned their eyes away from Tatsuya's group and returned to chatter with the nearest interlocutors. Miyuki herself was relieved only when she reached Azusa, Hattori and others.

"I thought that I had already got used to it, but... looking at this beauty, I am again amazed."

Kanon's force of will was quite high, since she managed to say this, because Azusa, Sayaka and the others were completely absorbed in Miyuki's aura (except in the usual sense this cannot be called "aura" in the conventional sense).

"Guys, the people of the Yotsuba family are all unusual."

Miyuki answered without modesty and compliments. After she had gathered so many looks, if Miyuki praised the appearance of Kanon now, it will sound like sarcasm. Miyuki also realized this.

At this point, the organizer of the event climbed onto the stage. After a short greeting, congratulations of about a dozen people followed.

When, among others, Ushio spoke, Shizuku looked a little out of place.

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Approximately 60 kilometers west of the island of Kume was a ship, heading northwest. The ship was just a bit larger than an ordinary fishing boat. Even if it was a fishing boat, it didn't catch fish, it was clear that it was returning to its port at effective speed.

A few years ago in this areas patrol boats often chased the illegal fishing vessels of the Great Asian Alliance, among which were even disguised warships of both countries. After the incident 5 years ago of the invasion of Okinawa, such cases were a covert provocation of the Great Asian Alliance. But after the conclusion of the peace treaty last year, this ship could openly cross the sea on the surface.

"Lieutenant-dono, do you really want to go? We cannot retrieve you ..."

"We'll figure something out later. First of all, the success of the operation is everything." Lieutenant Zhang said and lay down on his stomach in a capsule of a controlled torpedo.

Zhang was the number two among the detachment of deserters of the Great Asian Alliance. He became the leader in the current situation, when the number one, Major Daniel Liu, was captured by the Japanese army. Nobody dared to argue with Zhang when he announced that he had chosen a one-way ticket.

However, this meant that Zhang fully understood what was going on. The phrase "something we have come up with" was his assessment of the situation. If the diversion is successful, even if the artificial island isn't sunk, the chaos caused by this is inevitable. It will not be so difficult to hijack a ship capable of long navigation in all this mess.

"Close the hatch."

"Understood."

At the command of Zhang, the hatch behind him was closed. Zhang's eyes were filled with pitch darkness, but a moment later this was driven away by the dim light of the switched-on electronics.

In total, they had five such torpedo capsules. Zhang was alone in his own, while two men climbed in each of the others. These nine men formed a detachment of suicide bombers, going for their final task.

The capsules were thrown into the sea through an opening at the bottom of the ship. Each torpedo capsule propeller was enclosed with a metal cover completely covering the rear part. This was done to prevent the detection of sound waves.

Thus, moving solely by the magic of people sitting inside, five torpedo capsules began to advance towards the artificial island of Saikashin.

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The banquet hall of the hotel, located on the first tier of the underground layers of the artificial island, was filled with cheers and it was now time for free communication. The gathered representatives of the elite finally regained their composure and began to cast their glances at Miyuki less. A group of graduates, also getting rid of the tension on their faces, went to a table with food.

"I thought that Isori-senpai would also appear on stage."

During the selection of snacks, Tatsuya spoke with Isori. Taking a snack from the same plate as Tatsuya, Isori shook his head with a smile.

"Well, I had such an opportunity, but I decided to refuse. I have no one here to please with speeches."

"This isn't true! I'd like to see Kei's gorgeous performance!"

Kanon reacted instantly. From her tone it was obvious that this was not the first time this topic had been brought up.

"By the way, senpai. Could you give me some of your time?"

"Tatsuya-sama?"

The one who was surprised at this proposal, was not Isori himself, but Miyuki. What she didn't say at the moment "Onii-sama" showed that she, it seems, had finally gotten used to it during this time. Actually Isori was also puzzled, but Miyuki overtook him with her reaction.

"... Did something happen?"

It seems instead of surprise, Isori felt worried. From Tatsuya's expression, he realized that his reasoning was correct.

"I got it. Let's go there."

The Isori family has to do with the design of this artificial island. So he knew about the presence of a small room next to the banquet hall. It was a room prepared for changing clothes, so today it should not be used.

"Miyuki, wait for me here. Minami, I trust Miyuki to you."

"...Understood."

"Yes, Tatsuya-sama."

"Kanon, wait, too."

Tatsuya stopped Miyuki, who tried to follow them, and Isori, stopped Kanon, after which these two, without attracting any attention, went to the next room.

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"So, what really happened?" Although there was no one in the room, Isori immediately addressed Tatsuya in a whisper.

"This party is being aimed at by deserters from the Great Asian Alliance."

Tatsuya honestly answered Isori's question. From Isori's mouth came a sound. It was not the sound of swallowing saliva, but more like a muffled cry.

"Why now..." With a hoarse voice Isori reproached Tatsuya. The broken phrase should be "Why didn't you tell me before?".

"Please do not get me wrong." Lifting his right hand in front of him, he stopped Isori with a stop gesture to calm down. "Countermeasures against the planned attack have already been completed. They will be unable to do anything."

Although it seemed that he didn't fully believe Tatsuya's words, Isori still made it clear that he was ready to listen further.

"Saboteurs will approach the artificial island under the water and plan to place bombs to puncture the pontoons."

"...In that case, this island will not sink."

"However, today's party will be canceled? If they carry out the plan"

It seems, Isori, at last, has restored calmness and the ability to reason normally. He directed a questioning glance at Tatsuya.

"Your words sound pretty confident, but... why did you tell me all this?"

"To ask you to be careful if the battle does begin."

"Even if you didn't say, you're going to be involved in some dangerous business?" asked Isori with his usual pacifist expression. However, Tatsuya's face showed an obvious answer.

In addition, Tatsuya laid out the cards that destroyed Isori's poker face.

"I know about the defense system of this artificial island, which was made by engraving magic. Sempai can also freely activate this magic."

Isori opened his eyes wide. However, immediately nodded quickly with an understanding face.

"It's normal for Shiba-kun to know this. In that case, do you know that it is impossible to install a bomb without the help of the defense forces?"

Isori was one of the direct participants in the Yokohama incident. He knows that Tatsuya is a special officer of the national self-defense forces.

"To begin with, they cannot even get close. There is a repulsive force field, generated on the surface of the pontoons, in order to drive away large marine inhabitants, which will also affect people. They will not be injured, but bio-electromagnetism will not allow them to approach the pontoons or mining facility."

"Correct. In addition, the adherent deposits are also peeled off by ultrasonic cleaning. Therefore, it is impossible to install a bomb while there is a magician capable of activating the magic of engraving by my family, even if it's not me."

"Exactly. The fact is that the saboteurs also know this."

The complexion of Isori changed. He was not stupid enough not to understand the meaning of these words.

"...Will they target me, too?"

"Correct. To be precise, they already aimed at sempai, right?" Tatsuya nodded in his calm, unbiased manner. "But be calm. A magician of the self defense forces is here and will guard you."

At the moment, as Tatsuya said this, Behind Isori, the presence of a man appeared. Hurriedly turning Isori gave the honor to the magician in the uniform of the waiter.

"When did he..."

Without answering Isori's question, the magician, disguised as a waiter, introduced himself:

"The National Defense Forces, Chief Sergeant Haebaru, at your service. I apologize for not being able to say which division I belong to, as this is a military secret."

The soldier, who introduced himself as Haebaru, was a lean man of about 30 years of age. However, even poorly versed in this Isori realized that he isn't in such a physical state, that he would be noticed at first glance.

"Sergeant Major, who is an escort specialist. He is excellent in personal protective magic, and also has extensive experience in battles. Please tell the sergeant about your plans for movement."

Confirming that Isori nodded, Tatsuya suggested:

"Then, come back."

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Returning to the Hall, there was a beautiful woman in a modest dress who at first sight left the impression of "the secretary of the president of the famous corporation".

"Senpai, please go back to the table without me."

"I got it." Isori, without asking who this woman was, returned to the table, where Kanon and the others crowded. Because he recognized her, too.

"Is that the eldest son of the Isori family? What a sweet boy. He should have a dress."

"Only do not say so, please. I can guess for him this is a painful topic."

"I will not say so. Do I look so careless?"

"No, just in case." Tatsuya replied carefully. She showed the furious smile of Fujibayashi.

"They came?" He asked in a tone of secular conversation.

"Yes. They will come into contact with the line of defense in five minutes."

Around them was activated "Barrier" cast by Fujibayashi, protecting them from anyone listening in, set so that no one noticed it. It was not a modern magical soundproofing field, but the inherited ancient magic of the Fujibayashi family. Unlike strong modern magic, this ancient magic was poorly perceived by sensors, which suited this place well.

"So it's about ten minutes to get to the surface?"

"Maybe a little earlier."

"I got it. Then I will also begin to prepare for the engagement."

"I got it. I'll tell the commander."

Already intending to leave, Tatsuya stopped, noticing in the look of Fujibayashi's a desire to say something.

"Something else?"

"Tatsuya-kun, you seem ... not at all baffled."

"What are you talking about?" Tatsuya was not pretending to be a fool. The words of Fujibayashi were too vague, and he didn't know what she was hinting at.

"I heard that five years ago Tatsuya-kun also lost a loved one."

"This is true. So what?" Tatsuya's voice could only be called unfeeling.

"The same terrain, the same enemy, everything is the same. ...I would also like to become so strong."

"This is absolutely not the same. The nature and position of the enemy are different from that time." However, Tatsuya gave an honest answer.

"Besides, there's only one really important person for me."

The name of this person was not necessary to ask.

"...Even if you do not lose Miyuki-san, do others not matter?"

"This is a meaningless assumption. Since, while I'm alive, nothing will happen." Tatsuya responded with absolutely no tension and this time left Fujibayashi.

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Curious views were gathered on Tatsuya's table that he had come back to. In fact, Kiriha and Hattori were already ready to open their mouths to ask.

"Excuse me." But Tatsuya took the initiative. "They contacted me from the main house of the family, I had to solve one thing."

Until last year, Tatsuya was cautious about various things in order to keep the secret of the "family". However, now he can use the pretext that he is a relative of the Yotsuba family. If you hint that this is a matter of the Yotsuba family, then there will be no unnecessary questions because of the scary reputation. Honestly, Tatsuya felt that it would be imprudent to use this "excuse" every time. Though, as expected, the question "What's the matter?" was not asked.

"The situation isn't yet complete. Miyuki, I'll be back at the end of the party."

"Yes, Tatsuya-sama. I'll wait with patience."

Tatsuya nodded and went to Benio Ushio. To also inform about the unfinished business.

"So you're calling him Tatsuya-sama now?" With her gaze at Miyuki, Azusa spoke up.

"Yes. Because 'Tatsuya-san' sounds unsuitable."

Despite the suddenly raised topic (Miyuki while standing in front of Azusa had already many times used "Tatsuya-sama"), Miyuki didn't panic and with a radiant smile answered this question. On such a frank answer, Azusa could not react in any way, except to smile.

"Ha~, no, well, what can I say... Shiba-san and his repertoire." Kanon with the expression "thank you for eating" on her face, looked at the ceiling. "For me it seems impossible..."

"Kanon is as good as it is. So I'm happy."

"Ehehe... is this true?" Kanon pressed closer to Isori, standing beside him.

"Ah, those two are again in their own separate world. Indeed, where did the modesty of Yamato Nadysiko go?" [ed: expression describing the ideal Japanese woman] Kirihsara turned away his gaze from those who began to spread the love atmosphere and began to complain.

"Says someone who is here with a girl."

Tsukkomi Hattori had no effect on Kirihsara, but:

"So Kirihsara-kun likes modest girls? Well, then I'll decide to abstain for a bit."

"Hey!" He could not hide his frustration at Sayaka's gag though.

While the graduates, including the "created their own world Isori and Kanon" all laughed together, Honoka and Shizuku spoke in a low voice with Miyuki.

"Miyuki, do not you have to go?"

"Can we help?"

"I believe that to be calm is the best assistance we can provide."

With her answer, Miyuki didn't disclose the real state of affairs.

Initially, it was even included in the operation plan that Miyuki will play an important role for the final stage. But now she could relax.

Miyuki's answer was justified from the point of view of minor civilians, and Honoka and Shizuku were convinced. However, there were those who didn't retreat. Those who have the foresighted from the very beginning to anticipate any impending disaster. Tatsuya (although Miyuki too) slightly underestimated the hot blood of the graduates.

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Approximately one kilometer west of the artificial island of Saikashin. Illuminated by the light of the full moon, a man stood on the waves. A giant in white armor that was of the Chinese style. Wrapped in the magical "Armor of the White Tiger" was Lu Ganghu.

"They'll be here soon."

"Understood. I'll start the dive."

"I think you know that although the armor of the White Tiger does not belong to 'Fire,' it is still poorly compatible with 'Water.'"

"I understand. But if you do not give them any advantage, it will not be interesting at all."

"Well, we are talking about the captain, who does not consider 'Fire' as something significant. We have nothing to worry about."

"Please leave it to me."

"All right, go ahead."

On the orders of Chen Xiangshan, the body of Lu Ganghu began to sink underwater. This was not strange in itself. On the contrary, the man standing on the surface of the water looked abnormal. However, instead of falling into the sea, splashing water, the figure slowly went under the water - that's what looked strange.

Lu Ganghu didn't have an oxygen tank behind him, nor a breathing tube. But he breathed as usual. If you look closely, his body does not touch the sea water. The huge body of Lu Ganghu, dressed in the Armor of the White Tiger, was covered with a thin layer of air.

He stopped sinking and looked straight ahead. Neither the light of the stars nor the light of the moon reached that depth. The water of the night sea was filled with darkness. Nothing was visible even at arm's length. There was very little physical light.

However, Lu Ganghu could see the psion light emitted by the body of those that use magic.

Leaning with his feet on the sea water, Lu Ganghu stretched his left hand forward, and pulled his right back.

The layer of gas covering his body became thicker. To the air taken from the surface of the sea, he added the oxygen extracted from the sea water. Usually this leads to oxygen poisoning, but Lu Ganghu's was used to consumed highly concentrated oxygen to increase "strength."

Pulling forward his right hand, he released the energy accumulated by this "technique" of energy in the form of a powerful "wave." This "wave" didn't move water, but acted only on living beings. Lu Ganghu felt the response of the "wave" oscillation, which bounced off something. Starting from the water, he ran forward.

Going below the torpedo capsule, he kicked his foot up, throwing it upwards. The two people were thrown out of the capsule, which had its nose lifted upward. They panicked and tried to surface.

Of the other capsules, one by one, the deserters jumped up and began to climb to the surface. Lu Ganghu followed them with a fierce smile.

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"Major, did you see that?"

"Did you see it, too?"

Tatsuya and Yanagi caught with their various perceptions the "wave" that had spread across the sea.

"Enemy agents are rising to the surface."

"I will go. Cover me."

"There it is."

Immediately after the answer, Tatsuya and Yanagi jumped from the boat. He had in his hand a pole about two meters in length.

Yanagi landed on the surface of the sea. It should be said that he splashed down, but when it was clear that the legs didn't sink in the water at all, what happened could only be expressed as "landed."

Standing on the waves, he stuck a pole into the water. Grabbing a pole with his left hand over the upper end, and right by 50 cm below, he made a "lever" by pulling his left hand down and his right up. This dragged the enemy soldier out of the water. Yanagi sent the soldier into the air. The soldier's cries drowned out the noise of the hydrocycle. The fact that heavy damage was inflicted could be seen only by the sight of the flying body.

The soldier who was thrown by Yanagi, fell directly into the boat, which Joseph led. Joseph quickly tied the fallen man. Yanagi, meanwhile, was already heading for the next enemy, who had already surfaced.

The sign of someone strong quickly approached the surface. He chose a position to attack Yanagi from behind. At the moment when Yanagi, using a rowing movement, attacked the head of the emerging enemy in front of him, a giant human figure jumped out of the water, like a jumping whale.

Tatsuya aimed magic at this big figure. But the imaginary trigger didn't pull. Because he realized that there was a more ferocious thing than this person pursuing him, and was approaching to jump out of the water as well.

He already realized that the big man is the deserter from the Great Asian Alliance, Lieutenant Bradley Zhang. And his pursuer is captain of the army of the Great Asian Alliance, Lu Ganghu.

Bradley Zhang surpasses Lu Ganghu in body size. However, according to the amount of energy contained in the body, Lu Ganghu is 1-2 steps higher. Tatsuya left Zhang to Lu Ganghu and decided to help Yanagi deal with the remaining trifles... however...

At that moment, something so unexpected happened that even Tatsuya could not have foreseen it.

"Destruction!" With a little incomprehensible battle cry, the familiar figure rushed in with a flying blow to an enemy who had risen to the surface of the sea. After the attack, drowning the enemy, they deftly reacted and landed on the second seat of Tatsuya's hydrocycle, the young man turned out to be his senpai, a former member of the disciplinary committee, Sawaki.

"...Senpai. What are you doing in this place?"

"Mmm? I see, you're not surprised."

"Well, that's because I learned by the shape of the jump with a blow that it was senpai."

Tatsuya's answer was not a lie. He knew that the one sitting behind was Sawaki, because the unidentified enemy would have been shot down in the air.

"Could you understand this in such darkness? As expected from Shiba-kun."

"...No, it's not that dark. There is a moonlight. To some extent this is enough."

Today it was a full moon with clear weather. It cannot be said that there was "not a cloud", but at the moment the moonlight, unhindered, lit the entire southern sea. As Tatsuya said, it was not difficult to distinguish human outlines.

"Seryaaaa!"

Suddenly he heard a familiar voice coming from a short distance. Tatsuya felt a phantom pain in his head.

"Kirihara-sempai, too?"

"And Hattori is with us too."

From the answer sitting behind Sawaki the pain was no longer phantom, but a real headache. Tatsuya unfolded the hydrocycle to the side where he heard Kirihsra's voice.

After shooting a couple of times with weak magic for Yanagi's cover, Tatsuya drove up to the hydrocycle that Hattori was driving.

"Not only Sawaki-senpai and Kirihsra-sempai, but even Hattori-senpai... What are you all doing? Especially in this form."

Tatsuya changed out of his costume from the party. But not into a wetsuit, but to special naval combat clothing, which will not cause problems, even if he fell into the water. But all three graduates stayed in the same suits that had on at the party.

"I thought that such an adventure would not hurt, since we were going to have fun! Shiba, taking all the fun yourself isn't good!"

Kirihsra shouted joyfully, holding a 120-centimeter stick, which was a replacement for a wooden sword. Perhaps he borrowed it from one of the guards on the artificial island.

"We left the girls in a safe place. Unlike Yokohama, here you can tackle the extermination of bad guys without hesitation." Answered Sawaki, seemingly seriously.

From the words of Kirihsra and Sawaki, Tatsuya felt the headache intensify, and wondered if they had lost a few screws from their heads. The share of surprise was also present in the impression "is this his true nature?" from Sawaki.

"...Hattori the senpai. And about you..."

"No, I was against it! But I thought that it would be better than letting them go alone!"

In Tatsuya's eyes, Hattori also seemed to call on magic with great enthusiasm. But he didn't dare say so out loud.

"Lieutenant Colonel Kazama." Instead, he decided to complain to Kazama.

"...What?" The answer came with a little delay. Tatsuya thus realized that Kazama already knows about the runaway graduates.

"Why were civilians released during the external alarm?"

As expected, a bad answer came to the question posed with emphasis on "external alarm".

"Officially, there are no military operations in this area currently."

Since the defense forces intend to hide the attack, it is common practice that this battle will not remain in the official records.

"But this isn't a reason to allow civilians here."

"Unlike airspace, free navigation by sea in waters where there are no military operations, we cannot prohibit. Moreover, we cannot officially say that the battle is going on."

Obviously, Kazama insisted that he himself would not say what was happening. However, to explain to the graduates that they were in the center of the battle and stop the reckless attempt to break into the middle of the battle, these were different things.

"Anyone can come up with a pretext. Lieutenant colonel. I have no doubt that you could easily stop them."

"The addition of civilians to the front line was not our initiative."

(Do they want to assess their fighting strength for the future...?)

Tatsuya realized that further questions were useless. As was seen by the names of Hattori, Kirihara and Sawaki, none of them belonged to the "Numbers". They were outside the mainstream of the representatives of the magical world centered around the Ten Master Clans. For a Separate, magically equipped battalion, no, for the commander of the 101 Brigade, Lieutenant General Saeki, they were suitably talented candidates. That is, Saeki wanted to take advantage of this in order to deepen the relationship.

"You mean you cannot drive them away?"

This meant the approval of their participation in the battle.

Returning Sawaki to the hydrocycle, Tatsuya continued to provide covering fire for Yanagi.

Despite the fact that most of the enemy agents were already captured, two of the remaining three people, Sawaki and Kirihsara, happily attacked, one with their fists and the other with a stick. The skills of the opponents were not very high. Therefore, it was not bad to leave them to do whatever they liked.

But there was one more person left. It was not enough to simply say that the level of his skills was higher. But here, too, there was no problem, because there was someone to trust. More precisely, it was useless to interfere.

Lu Ganghu ran along the surface of the sea. Sliding on the surface of the water, Zhang stood up in a protective stance. The left hand of Lu Ganghu and the right hand of Zhang rushed forward. The hands of these two clasped together. But this didn't turn into a clash of four hands. Just after a moment of struggle between the two, Zhang was severely discarded. Lu Ganghu went after Zhang, who had been started sinking into the water.

Zhang's body began to sink. Lu Ganghu stamped his foot on the water. The surface of the water shook. Waves didn't spread. Within a radius of 5 meters the water began to harden and shook like a bell. Having hardened, the water immediately turned back, foaming and swelling upward.

Zhang jumped out of the waves and foam. Directly on him Lu Ganghu was already approaching. There was an ascending elbow blow. Zhang, distorted his face in agony, flew into the air and fell into the water.

Tatsuya noticed this, watching the battle of these two. Bradley Zhang used "points of support" over the water. Lu Ganghu was making a "road" over the water.

Tatsuya could make a "foothold", but didn't know how to make a "road". Lu Ganghu used a system of magical techniques that differed from Tatsuya's.

"I would like to better consider, but... it is unlikely to work out."

This was not the only place Tatsuya had to "see" in order to not make a mistake.

There were other things occurring as the battle between Lu Ganghu and Zhang came to an end.

Assessing the remaining enemy's skills as low, Tatsuya based this opinion on the comparison with the level of Yotsuba, the Independent Magic-Equipped Battalion, and also Kokonee Yakumo. But for Kiriha and Sawaki, they turned out to be quite strong opponents. Neither Kiriha nor Sawaki have yet learned how to run freely on the water during a battle. Kiriha could make points on the water for 8 steps, and Sawaki - for 5. However, Sawaki could, after jumping into the air, take another five steps.

But in any case, during the battle Kiriha and Sawaki constantly had to return to the hydrocycle, which was led by Hattori. The borrowed hydrocycle was large, able to accommodate three people, so even if those two jump on it simultaneously there would be room. However, this forced Hattori to track the positions of Kiriha and Sawaki, and to travel between them so that they do not fall into the water. Because of this Hattori was even more nervous than the two men fighting in close combat.

Tatsuya saw that the Kiriha and Sawaki had higher combat abilities than the enemy soldiers they were fighting. But the enemies that were in a disadvantageous situation went under the water and aimed at their feet.

The soldier-deserters from the army of the Great Asian Alliance had activated magic that allowed for free movement on the surface and under the water. If compared with Japanese ancient magic, it is similar to one of the techniques of ninjutsu, "Water escape".

The magic of the army of Hong Kong, to which they originally belonged, is based on ancient magic from the continent and ancient magic from Britain, and is now in a chaotic state with a mixture of modern magic and the magic of their enemy, Japan, so it cannot be classified as any one "style." Criminal organizations, like "No-Head Dragon" are faithful enough to the traditions. The deserters themselves, using their techniques, probably do not know which system they belong to.

However, "Use, them if you can," is the correct way to use "techniques" as tools. By itself, such thinking will not affect the outcome of the battle.

"Seryaaaa!" Kirihara slashed a stick at the shoulder of the enemy. Even with high-frequency blade, the stick didn't have the attack power of a real sword. Nevertheless, the stick vibrating with a high frequency tore the clothes and skin of the enemy, sending damage to the bone.

Even when the enemy blocked the attack with a knife, the vibration spread through the blade and fingers into the palm of the hand and caused numbness. The enemy would not drop the knife, because they had hand protection, into which the fingers were pushed. Having fallen on one knee, the enemy completely disappeared under water.

"Again? Wooo!?"

With such an unexpected underwater speed, Kirihara was finally knocked down. Receiving an attack from under his feet isn't what you would usually expect. Even when using magic "kenjutsu" Kirihara fell onto the surface of the sea, simply beginning to sink. The hand of the enemy moved around his neck while at the same time, the enemy soldier tried to strike Kirihara with a knife, which he held in his other hand.

Directly under them was an explosion. The blast wave pushed them to the surface and threw their bodies into the air. While Kirihara was still flying, the body of the enemy suddenly pulled down to the surface of the sea because of increased gravity. At the moment when surface tension began to support the enemy on the surface, electric current flowed through the water. It was a weak electric attack, which was not enough to neutralize a person. However, the strength was enough to make it difficult to act for a short time.

Underwater explosion, accelerated falling, electric shock. This magic chain was built by Hattori.

"Kirihara, now!" Hattori used remotely applied magic while also continuing to move the hydrocycle. Even though he shouted loudly, it is likely that his words were not heard.

"Yes!" But Kirihara did hear him and he didn't miss this opportunity.

Kirihara changed his trajectory with the help of the magic "jump", rushing to the enemy with a stick wrapped in "high-frequency blade". The sea water, affected by the high-frequency vibration of the stick, evaporated, bubbling violently. This resistance absorbed the strength of the stick, but as a result, everything went well.

Having pushed through all the water in its way by evaporation, Kirihara's stick reached the body of the enemy soldier. But instead of a slashing motion, he pressed the stick against the enemy, and he, furiously shaken in a bubbly pillow, lost consciousness.

Kirihara who had risen appeared on the surface of the sea, raising the captured enemy soldier. The battle between Sawaki and an enemy soldier still continued where the enemy attacked from under the water while Sawaki attacked from the air.

Simply put, they didn't grapple each other. Sawaki obtained substantial damage from the attacks on his hands and feet, while the enemy soldier completely switched to attacks from under the water. On the other hand, Sawaki didn't run on the surface of the sea, but instead was jumping high while sharply changing his trajectory in the air, diving down when the enemy showed up on the surface.

Each time this sequence of actions was repeated. Sawaki would try to kick the enemy, then enemy tries to grab Sawaki by the foot and drag him into the water.

"Oh, that's bad. Could I help him?" Frowning and muttering while floating on the waves was Kirihara, who was no longer fighting. The constantly jumping Sawaki, and the enemy that was waiting for his moment in the water. It looked like Sawaki would be the first out.

Kirihara was not the only one who noticed this. The head of the enemy appeared over the water and at the next moment a tightly compressed thin disk flew from the water, flying close to the sea, attacking the enemy, who immediately returned under the water. The water disk suddenly stopped over head and fell vertically.

Although not visible, it could be understood that the suddenly increased water pressure caused damage to the enemy under the water. Looking at the picture unfolding in the light of the moon, Kirihara involuntarily whistled as a token of praise.

Even without checking, one could say that this was also Hattori's magic. The behavior of this disk was not the result of rewriting magic on the fly. He pre-programmed the trajectory, predicting that the enemy would dodge by dropping down.

"Truly 'the general', Not at all like me." Kirihara muttered a secret nickname in a whisper so that Hattori could not hear, because it was obvious that he would not like it.

This word represented "not an expert, but ordinary", "simple", "universal." For example, speaking of the "universalist", in addition to the original meaning: "a person with experience, extensive knowledge, not limited to his own area," is also used for ridicule, meaning "one who cannot become an expert."

[note. The author describes a play of words where the English word "general" means "ordinary" and similar meanings, if used, as an adjective. Hattori's nickname is pronounced in English.]

However, modern magic, based on the use of a CAD, was originally developed taking into account the "almighty soldier who can do anything alone". "Not a specialist" means that "he isn't attached to any area of activity", that is, "he can do anything." This was exactly what modern magic sought.

Kirihara and his classmates believed that Hattori best realized the educational policy of modern magic among those their age while Mayumi and Katsuto represent those a year older, and Tatsuya and Miyuki represent those a year younger.

Marie, older than 1 year, also certainly has a lot of magic variations in her arsenal, however she is extremely concentrated on melee combat, and also has a lack of abilities against mechanized troops.

But Hattori does not have this problem. His main field of activity is group battles at middle and long range, however he can perform both hand-to-hand combat and sniper shooting at a high level. Kirihsara, specializing in close combat, could not easily defeat Hattori in training battles.

The nickname "general" also had one more meaning. The Hattori family isn't from the "Numbers". And also not some famous family of users of ancient magic. The name only coincided with the famous family of users of "nijutsu" Hattori, though he was not associated with them. They are among the oldest members of the "One Hundred Families", but do not form part of the magical world.

Nevertheless, Hattori, who was on an equal footing or even higher than "Numbers", was considered to become a leader, "Shogun," for the same numberless classmates, like Kirihsara and Sawaki.

Neither Kirihsara nor Hattori saw that Sawaki's lips moved slightly in the air. Like Kirihsara, he, perhaps whispered the same unknown nickname.

Seen on the surface, the enemy soldier looked sluggish. The magic of Hattori, as calculated, inflicted damage on the enemy using underwater pressure. Bouncing off the air, Sawaki attacked the enemy floating on the surface of the sea while the enemy soldier tried to grab Sawaki.

The enemy's hands stretched upward. Sawaki held up both his legs. Using not only the lower part of the body, but also the lower and upper back as a spring, he sharply extended both legs forward. Using self-acceleration magic, his feet reached the speed of sound. Surprised on the surface of the sea, the air wall completely cut down the enemy soldier.

The battle between Lu Ganghu and Bradley Zhang was also at the final stage. In a direct confrontation, Zhang cannot defeat Lu Ganghu. Having the nickname "The Man-Eating Tiger", Lu Ganghu is a warrior considered as one of the strongest melee magicians in the world.

He was defeated during the Yokohama incident because he was wounded in a battle with one of the strongest melee magicians, "Illusory Blade" by Chiba Naotsugu, and also because Tatsuya and Mayumi were his enemies. Even when wounded though, he could not be defeated by melee fighters, such as Marie, Erika, Leo and others. Lu Ganghu has a better command of both martial arts and magic.

Perhaps Zhang, finally, also realized this. From his presence, all signs of strength disappeared, it could probably say he was surrendering. Zhang knew what to do after the fight with Lu Ganghu. His goal isn't to defeat Lu Ganghu, but to achieve a successful diversion of the artificial island. However, at this rate, he will be defeated here. Zhang understood this.

Bradley Zhang's eye color changed. From his body, psions were bursting uncontrollably, covering his whole body with a veil that wavered like heat waves.

"Ho-ho." Lu Ganghu smiled joyfully and narrowed his eyes. The white armor worn by Lu Ganghu was covered with a layer of psions with properties of increased density and hardness.

Zhang bent heavily, standing on the waves. With his hands on the surface of the sea, he began to resemble a four-legged predator, preparing to attack prey. Water crawling over his hands, arms, and legs, covered the huge body of Zhang and lifted him into the air. This water didn't limit the actions of Zhang. The water mass moved up and down, forming something resembling the mouth of a giant snake.

From the mouth of this supposedly giant snake, or dragon, Zhang looked at Lu Ganghu. Lu Ganghu looked while not hiding a joyful and fierce smile.

Lu Ganghu took the first step at the same time when the dragon Zhang set in motion. A big wave in the form of a water dragon swallowed Lu Ganghu. Immediately after that, a roar was heard from the waves, not belonging to the "dragon". It was the roar of a "tiger". After rising, the water mass dispersed, forming the shape of a bowl. At the bottom of the "cup", breathing heavily, stood Lu Ganghu.

The surface of the sea began to return to its normal state. Before the waves converged on him, Lu Ganghu jumped out. Hanging in the air, Zhang attacked Lu Ganghu with a stream of water bullets.

"White Tiger Armor" Lu Ganghu is the creation of ancient continental magic and is subject to the law of the Five Elements. "Kinjosuy" means that the Element of Metal gives power to the Element of Water. [ed: "Kindzosui" - literally "gold gives birth to water"]

And if you look from the other side, the Element of Water takes power from the Element of Metal. This is a different interaction, in which one participant is strengthened and the other is weakened.

"White Tiger Armor" refers to the Element of Metal. Therefore, with such reliable protection, victory is assured. Cold in nature, it is designed to control anger.

The armor of the White Tiger, having the property of the Element of Metal, isn't when engaged with the Element of Water. Just a large amount of water will not affect it in any way, but if you attack with the Element of Water, its force will gradually decrease.

The attack of the detached Bradley Zhang reached Lu Ganghu, taking advantage of the law of the Five Elements. However, this was not enough to stop a man known throughout the world as the "Tiger-Ogre."

With the pain from the impact of water bullets, "Anger" became stronger. By transforming the enemy's attack into energy for his attack, Lu Ganghu with his right foot brushed aside the technique surrounding Zhang.

With one kick, the blow of Lu Ganghu, inflicted in full force, destroyed Zhang's technique and threw away his gigantic body. Zhang's body flew, drawing a big arc.

Was it a coincidence or a last will? Bradley Zhang was flying toward Tatsuya. Tatsuya's actions were the simplest. He just hit the gas. The hydrocycle suddenly accelerated and Bradley Zhang fell into the water and began to sink.



As Kazama suggested, the battle at sea didn't affect the party. But those who know the circumstances, have not weakened their vigilance. Warned by Tatsuya, Isori stayed in the banquet hall, and, together with Miyuki and Minami, they watched the group associated with First High. However, there was absolutely no time for other actions. There were some unavoidable things.

For example, there are these.

"Kanon, where are you going?"

Instead of blushing, Kanon replied with a smile:

"Collect flowers."

"And me too."

"I'm go with, too."

This meant that Kanon was going to retire for an unavoidable reason, and Sayaka and Azusa wanted to go with her.

[note. Translation: Kanon used the Japanese "secret" female phrase, meaning a trip to the toilet, if anyone didn't understand]

"Will Kei go too?"

"...Go, go."

The reddened Isori made Kanon smile to her ears.

Miyuki and Minami exchanged glances. They both heard from Tatsuya that Isori can become a target. In fact, their task was to observe Kanon and the rest. But Miyuki is alone. And for Minami there can be no question of leaving Miyuki. In the end they decided to stay there.

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The duo of Jasmine and Johnson of the Australian army moved independently, without waiting for the result of the division approaching the sea. They both understood. Having lost the main forces, the detachment of deserters from the Great Asian Alliance will not be able to show any good results in this operation.

And now they were whispering in the corner of the corridor, so as not to be noticed.

"Can you get control?"

"Thats impossible." Answered Johnson to the question of Jasmine.
"There is a whole crowd of soldiers in front of the control room.
Moreover, as a bonus, among them is 'Daitengu'."

"Harunobu Kazama? ... definately impossible."

The commander of the Independent Magic-Equipped Battalion, Lieutenant Colonel Kazama Harunobu, was known among foreign magicians, both under the pseudonym "Daytengu", and under the abbreviated name "Kharu Kazama." At the end of the 21st century among the English-speaking soldiers 「大天狗」 they began to pronounce "Dai-tengu" in Japanese instead of translating "The Big Long-nosed Goblin"

According to one theory, this was the result of the export of the subculture, but the truth was covered in darkness.

"Does this mean that now it is best to escape?"

"This conversation is over." Jasmine answered so quickly and sharply, because the same thought came to her mind.

"Wow, what the hell was that? ...What do we then, Jas?"

"At least it's too tough for me. To crack the magical system established on this island, we still need to get Kei Isori."

"So you cannot do it without kidnapping this boy?"

"It's more realistic than meeting with Kazama."

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

Johnson noticed the approaching people and closed his mouth. Jasmine also reacted well and quickly returned to the behavior of the "ordinary girl".

"These girls ... they're Kei Isori's escorts, are they not?"

They talked, sitting on the couch near the toilet. The faces of those who entered the toilet Kanon, Sayaka and Azusa were easily distinguishable.

"True?"

"Without a doubt."

It seems that Johnson didn't remember them so well, but he was confident in his reliable partner, Jasmine, with whom he went through a lot.

"This is good. Captain Johnson, hide. Take them hostage then take Kei Isori."

According to Johnson, none of them possessed a threatening fighting power. The girl with the hair-tail, seemed to be able to show some strength, but she was not so enemy that Jasmine was unable to handle.

"I got it."

Carefully, not to make noise, Johnson opened the door to the service room, and hid there.

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Leaving the restroom after correcting their makeup, Sayaka noticed that there was a smart little girl, seeming around 12-13 years old. Europeans usually look older than the Japanese, so she could be younger.

"Ah... really, Jas?"

"Yes , Sayaka."

It was the girl they helped the other day to avoid being kidnapped, she remembered in some way.

"Eh? But the hair color..."

As Kanon said, the hair color was different from what was at that time. Her chestnut hair turned red. The brown eyes turned green. The impression was quite different, given the change in colors and clothes, but after she herself admitted it, doubts fell away.

"Jas, what's the matter? Where is your dad?"

"Yes, so we had a small problem."

"Uh, what happened?"

There was no sound of fear in the voice, but Kanon, who, as usual, lacked vigilance, approached Jasmine. But in this case the enemy was a girl who looked 12-13 years old. It would be a little strange to blame Kanon for her carelessness.

"Actually... Do not move!" The result was, as expected. Quickly twisting her arms, Jasmine put a knife to Kanon's throat, which was hidden under her clothes.

"Jas, what the hell !?"

At the shout of Sayaka, Jasmine answered only with a soulless smile.

"Do not judge people by their appearance. You better remember this." Keeping Sayaka and Azusa in sight, Jasmine said her demand. "Bring Kei Isori ."

"Kei? What are you going to do with Kei!? Uk!" Kanon tried to free herself, but since her hands were firmly fixed behind her back, she could only complain.

"I have no intention of directly harming him. Bring him as soon as possible."

"No! I cannot force Kei to be in danger because of me!"

Azusa and Sayaka exchanged glances. At the moment there were no signs that Jasmine was harming Kanon. However, looking into her cold eyes, they knew that she would not hesitate to use the knife.

"Do not go calling me. I'm here."

"Kei!"

The voice of Isori was heard because of the puzzled Sayaki and Azusa.

"Kei, why did you come! Ay!"

"Please be a little quieter. You are interfering with the conversation." Tightening her hands harder to silence Kanon, Jasmine looked at Isori. Isori also looked at Jasmine. Anger burned in his eyes.

"First release Kanon. After that we can talk."

"Try to understand the situation better before you talk. I put forward demands here, not you. So... to begin with, let the soldier standing next to you step back."

Squeezing his teeth, Isori nodded to the standing Chaebaru. No, did he rather bow? Without saying anything, Chaebaru took two steps back.

Learning that the man dressed in the form of a waiter, in fact, turned out to be a military man, Sayaka and Azusa rounded their eyes. However, they both realized not to say anything, so they didn't interfere with what was happening.

"That's better. Then, back to the main topic. Mr. Isori , please follow us."

"...If I go with you, will you release Kanon?"

"Yes. James."

Called by name so as not to betray his identity, James appeared.

"Mr. Isori , come here."

"I got it."

"Kei, stop!"

At that moment, Jasmine's mind was directed to finding out what to do with the recklessly leading Kanon. If Kanon is left here, the negotiations will fail. Johnson's attention was directed to Isori, Chaebaru and Sayaka. Johnson, a combat melee sorcerer, knew that Sayaka could not match his appearance.

He was not worried about Azusa. Jasmine was also not afraid of her. The face of Azusa made others judge her to be a low threat.

But the one that Jasmine should have watched most of all was, in fact, Azusa.

...There was a sound of strings.

The sound of the strings, similar to the playing the harp, sounded from nowhere.

The Magic of Psychic Intervention by Azusayumi.

The consciousness of Jasmine was divorced from reality, seduced by the tone of the sound.

Jasmine could not understand where this sound came from. It was also unclear whether the ears could hear this sound, or if it was an auditory hallucination. Simply put, Jasmine's mind was distracted by the question of where the sound come from. Her mind was focused on the question of when and where the sound would come next time.

While everyone forgot how to move, Azusa activated the following magic, using the CAD taken from her handbag as a mobile terminal.

The knife, attached to Kanon's throat, jerked violently. The feeling of the knife moving in her hand returned Jasmine to consciousness. However, it was not enough as her fingers had little strength and the knife was torn from her hand.

The knife fell to the floor.

"Yaya!" Having seen this, Sayaka began to move. She aimed her hand against Jasmine's head. Jasmine released her hand from Kanon and quickly retreated.

"Jas!" Recovering from "Azusayumi," Johnson took Jasmine in his arms. Just in time, darts flew to Chaebaru to stop the two men. Johnson took them from the hotel's playroom. Chaebaru easily repulsed three darts, but during this time Johnson and Jasmine ran away to the entrance of the service room.

"Kanon, are you all right?" With relief on his face, Isori ran to the liberated Kanon.

"Uh-huh... I'm sorry. Forgive me please." Kanon that saw Isori next to her suddenly burst into tears. Isori didn't panic, but gently pressed his head to her.

"Was it scary?"

"No. Not true. Not at all!"

"Then what is it?"

"Because of me, Kei was in danger. All because of my carelessness!"

Isori repeatedly and gently stroked the head of the reproachful Kanon.

"Why are you apologizing? You did nothing wrong."

"But!"

Isori brought his lips close to the ear of Kanon continuing to repent.

"I'm glad that everything is good with Kanon."

Kanon's apologies ceased. She just sobbed, buried in Isori's chest.

"Uwaa... He's such a gentleman."

Fortunately, these two didn't hear Azusa's messy comment. Sayaka's look, saying "how enviable" also didn't reach Isori and Kanon, again gone into their separate world.

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"Somehow we escaped... Jas, how are you?"

"I screwed up. The fact that Azusa Nakajou uses the magic of psychic interference..."

With regret biting her lip, Jasmine looked at the floor and thought. In the end, she looked up, making a decision.

"I didn't want to do this, but... its time I use my magic at the party venue."

"Yes, it looks like that's all that is left..." Johnson's words, too, were indecisive. The use of Jasmine magic, "Ozone Layer", at a party is the same as a poison gas attack.

They will not be able to excuse themselves by justifying this. The whole world will oppose them with more harsh criticism than terrorist attacks with bombs. The government of their country may refuse to communicate with them in order to avoid criticism of other countries.

However, the operation of the external detonation would not be successful (in fact, it has already failed), the option of capturing machine control and the variant of hacking the magic system also ended in flight and failure. The only remaining solution was using "Ozone Circle". As the high command from the headquarters of the Australian army ordered to complete the diversion, it is impossible to destroy their expectations without doing so.

"Jas, we'll go to the lifeboats first. After using the "Ozone Layer", access to the port will be blocked. Therefore, it is better to prepare for an escape beforehand."

"Agreed."

They descended the service ladder to the staff area, and made their way to the workers' recreation room, located next to the port. To not be seen, they didn't go directly to the port. Instead they went to a remote, deserted room.

"How convenient that no one is here."

"It seems to me that this is too good..." Unlike the optimistic Johnson, Jasmine could not get rid of suspicions.

"Apparently they were distracted by the recent hype."

However, they could not afford to chill out here. Jasmine mentally ordered herself to agree with Johnson.

"Watch our back."

"Leave it to me."

If magic only generates ozone, then it isn't that difficult to pull it off. However, relying only on relative information about a place that isn't visible in order to generate highly concentrated ozone in a short time, the mind must be strongly concentrated. Thus, the magic operator becomes defenseless. Therefore, in order to use "Ozone Layer" in enemy territory, it was absolutely necessary to have a partner as an escort.

The CAD started downloading the activation sequence. Closing her eyes and concentrating, in the magic calculating area, she began to form the magic sequence.

This contradictory action deliberately changed the contents of the magic calculation area, which is in the subconscious. Both consciousness and subconsciousness had to simultaneously concentrate in one act. Even forgetting how to breathe, Jasmine built the sequence of magic "Ozone Circle".

Coordinates were recorded. Jasmine activated the Ozone Circle (not realizing how many people it will affect) at the venue of the party. However, there was an unexpected problem.

"...Did the invocation of magic fail?"

"What!?" Instinctively asked Johnson, forgetting about the observation of the surrounding area.

"Activation of the 'Ozone Layer' ...seems to have failed. There was no effect."

"Impossible!" It's amazing, but Johnson seems to have raised his voice and forgot that we're hiding.

No, he was right that this was impossible. Jasmine Williams was an improved magician optimized for Ozone Layer, and Ozone circle developed personally by William MacLeod during the process of setting up her genetic code. He failed to reproduce the same scale, allowing the magic to be classified as Strategic Class, but the activation speed and identity exceeded the original magic of MacLeod himself.

Not only in theory. Jasmine has used the Ozone Layer in real combat many times already. Up to this point, she has never failed to activate it. Four days ago, there were also no problems with using the Ozone Layer to get rid of the pursuit of the Japanese army.

"I'll try again!" Jasmine closed her eyes again and concentrated her mind. Johnson forgot his role as a security guard and stared at her. Opening her eyes, Jasmine, with a shocked face, fell to her knees, exhausted. "Not activated ...Why? Is my power gone?"

"No."

Suddenly, a beautiful, clear voice, like the sound of a bell, interrupted them. Immediately after the voice sounded, the presence of a third party emerged from nowhere. Johnson wanted to release an air bullet in the direction of the apparent presence. However, his magic was never activated.

Before the speechless duo appeared one man and two girls. The man is a colonel of the division of special forces of the Great Asian Alliance, Chen Xiangshan. And the girls were Miyuki and Minami.

"You two didn't lose the ability to use magic techniques." Miyuki spoke to Jasmine and Johnson. In her speech, there was a faint pity.

"The secret technique of the Yotsuba family, 'The Gatekeeper.' How is it for you?"

"The secret technique... Yotsuba?"

Miyuki smiled back at Jasmine, who had croaked her question.

Jasmine's question was in English, but Miyuki responded in Japanese.

"Yes. Usually I do not explain this, but today is a special day. Because we were also given a look at many interesting techniques."



Saying this, Miyuki turned her gaze to Chen Xiangshan. He grinned slightly in response. Miyuki looked again at Jasmine.

"The sequence of magic, built in the subconscious, is transferred to the "root" of consciousness from the upper layer of the subconscious and projected onto the target of magic from the "Gate" existing in the gap between the conscious and the subconscious."

"So what?" Johnson asked in an irritated voice.

"...Cannot be!?" It seems Jasmine realized what Miyuki is trying to say.

"The gate is the Eidos platform on the border with the Idea. The gate faces the Idea. Otherwise, you would not be able to make magic work consistently outside of you."

"Damn it! Whatever look, it means..."

"It seems that you have already understood. The magician neutralization magic of 'Gatekeeper' is installed on the Gate of the target magician and destroys the sequence of magic immediately after passing through. You cannot use magic until 'Gatekeeper' is canceled."

Miyuki's explanation was partly true.

She said the "secret technique of the Yotsuba family", but it was "Tatsuya's secret technique." At least for now, in the Yotsuba family, only Tatsuya could follow the "gates" of other people. It was presented as a "Yotsuba secret technique" to avoid too much interest in Tatsuya. But neither Jasmine nor Johnson could do anything about it. Because now, in fact, their magic was sealed. Jasmine struck the floor with both hands.

Johnson silently attacked Miyuki. But before he could, his body bumped into a barrier created by Minami. Shortly after a sharp drop in body temperature took away his strength to stand on his feet. Miyuki kindly turned to Johnson, who crawled unattractively on the floor:

"Do not worry. Because it has already been proven that sleep is only temporary."

Chen Xiangshan again grinned. Because he himself was exactly that example of proof.

"Guys, please." Miyuki shouted to someone outside the door. As if on command, the door opened and the soldiers in uniform entered to detain Jasmine and Johnson. Behind this door was not the expected port, but a completely different room.

From the open door, music was barely audible. Realizing that they are very close to the venue of the party, Jasmine was shocked.

"You probably didn't notice? It seems it's called 'Kimon Tonko'. You two wanted to go down the stairs, but actually went down and down. So, if it had happened that 'The Gatekeeper' didn't work, then the method of aiming Ozone circle through relative coordinates would not have yielded any results."

"Hahahahaha.... What is this. From the very beginning, we were in the palm of your hand...?" Realizing that this was their final defeat, Jasmine burst into laughter.

Chapter 7

When Tatsuya returned to the artificial island, Miyuki returned to the party.

"Tatsuya-sama, thank you for all the work you have done."

"Miyuki too, good work. It seems that everything went almost as planned."

"Yes. In the end, I had some unexpected work, but it was better to do this than to just explain."

As Tatsuya promised, he was able to return at the end of the party. His suit looked new, the shoes polished to a shine. He looked neater than when he left. Seeing the appearance of Tatsuya, Honoka and Shizuku quickly approached him.

"Tatsuya-san, have you finished your work already?"

"Yes. It seems it took a little longer than planned"

"It's only about the middle of the party."

According to the schedule, today's party will last two and a half hours. In fact, it was already farther than "about the middle", because it took about one hour.

"By the way, where did they go?"

As Shizuku and Honoka said, all graduates of First High, including Isori, one of the main invited guests, left the venue of the party. Both Tatsuya and Miyuki knew what had happened, but they were not going to tell these two. Honoka and Shizuku understood this, and didn't raise the topic of the graduates anymore.

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With regards to the graduates, Azusa and Sayaka were in the port of the artificial island. They met Hattori, Kirihsara and Sawaki.

"Well! So wet! Your clothes and shoes must be spoiled with sea water!" Under the rain of Sayaka's reprimands for the appearance of Kirihsara, not only he, but Hattori and Sawaki shrank and became smaller.

Around them there were also soldiers present that were engaged in the collection of neutralized enemy agents. Azusa could not help but worry about watching the curious looks of the soldiers.

"But look at this. This is hopeless."

The material of their expensive costumes for the party was sodden with sea water. Leather shoes were also all swollen, completely saturated. For ordinary people, like Sayaka, it was quite justified to regret this in terms of lost money.

"That's all right." With a desire to finish everything quickly, Azusa forgot about the surrounding views and activated her CAD

The magic of Azusa enveloped Hattori, Kirihsara and Sawaki at the same time. Salty sea water was divided into liquid and powder and fell to the floor. Despite the absence of wind, the powder and droplets moved to the sea and disappeared there. Clothes and shoes became dry. Leather shoes returned their shape, wrinkles of clothes were smoothed. As if the wind blew, the short hair of Hattori, Sawaki and Kirihsara spread a stiff feeling of drying. In just 10 seconds, signs disappeared that these three plunged into the sea.

"All good? Let's go back to the party."

Azusa didn't notice that her magic attracted attention. Not realizing that the military were looking at her for another reason, she thought that this was mainly because of her proposal to "return."

"...No, first you have to go and see how things are at Chiyoda-san."

Sayaka wondered if Azusa should be told why she was being looked at, but finally decided that there was "happiness in ignorance," answered in this way.

"Did something happen to Chiyoda?"

"I'll explain it later. Come along." Asked by Hattori, Sayaka pushed Azusa from behind and went.

Because of what happened to them, Isori and Kanon singled out a separate room in which there were no other people.

"...What happened?" Entering the room where these two rest, asked the really surprised Hattori. Kanon no longer cried. There were no tears or sobbing. But still she sat, burying her face in Isori's chest.

"Ahahahaha... Yes, yes. Something shocking happened." Isori tried to laugh it off. But that was not enough to convince Hattori. In the end, they left the embracing couple. While Azusa and Sayaka were told about the "hostage incident", it was time for the end of the party.

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Chen Xiangshan and Lu Ganghu went back to their country on a speedboat with the deserters on board. From the boat disguised as a fishing boat, Bradley Zhang was also caught. The mission was almost complete.

"Captain, I'm offering you a drink."

"With pleasure."

Watching the full moon on the deck of a ship heading west, to the port of Xiamen through the Taiwan Strait, Chen Xiangshan and Lu Ganghu picked up a glass.

"This time the mission was fruitful."

"In the words of Chen Xiangshan,"

"Really."

Lu Ganghu answered without his usual tone of subordinance.

"And yet, sooner or later we will have to fight again with the Japanese army."

"I agree with you."

Having come to an agreement, both looked at the moon.

"It's a pity that we failed to see the skills of Lieutenant Colonel Kazama himself, but the abilities of his guys, in general, are understandable."

"Yes. Especially formidable was Major Yanagi"

"Hou."

Chen Xiangshan poured wine into the glass of Lu Ganghu. Lu Ganghu politely took the glass with both hands.

"But."

"Yes."

"They are only a stepping stone to a more complex opponent."

"As you say."

"Shiba Tatsuya. Shiba Miyuki. Heirs of the annoying Yotuba."

In response to Chen Xiangshan's words, Lu Ganghu's eyes flashed, reflecting his burning morale.

"They're dangerous. It is a great achievement that we could at least confirm this again."

"Yes."

"Then we are enemies. From now on."

"You can count on me."

"Yes."

Chen Xiangshan gulped down the contents of his glass, as if swallowing the moon reflected there.

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After the end of the party, Tatsuya reported on what happened to Maya through the communicator of the yacht.

"You did a good job today."

"Thank you."

This time the mission ended without problems. If it was a test, then it was 90 points. Not 100, because there was no "plus-alpha". [note.
Additional points for optional side achievements]

"I am satisfied with today's results."

"Many thanks."

"I also heard something interesting. 'Gatekeeper'... a pretty good-looking magic, is it not?"

"After improvement, I think it can be used by someone else besides me."

"Does this mean that at last magic will appear, that in a real sense can neutralize magicians? I'll wait for it"

"I will make every effort to reach practical application as soon as possible."

"The magic of the Great Asian Alliance was also very interesting. I'd like to receive a detailed report directly, so go to the main house when you return to Tokyo."

"Good. Then we will leave immediately."

"Ara, do not hurry. Rest there for a couple of days, regain strength, before returning. You can come with a report in April."

"Thank you."

"I look forward to our meeting next month."

After these words, the connection was interrupted. Bowing before the camera, Tatsuya, making sure that the call indicator went out, raised his head.

Tatsuya slightly stretched. Despite the success of the operation, the conversation with Maya greatly exhausted him. To freshen up, he left the cabin on deck. There, Miyuki, accompanied by Minami, watched the moon.

"Onii-sama. Have you already finished the conversation?"

"Yes. After returning to Tokyo, it will be necessary to report directly. But it was ordered to come only in April."

"Oh... Both of you now seem to be busy."

It seems that Miyuki thought that there would be an order to come with a report as soon as possible. She covered her mouth with one hand and slightly widened her eyes.

"Perhaps you are right."

Tatsuya remembered the time when he was assigned this case, then Maya left the main house for a reason unrelated to the Conference of the Main Clans, which was very rare. Perhaps some urgent issue with sponsors was also solved.

"But then we have a little free time?"

"Exactly."

Tatsuya stood next to Miyuki. Having understood the atmosphere, Minami disappeared into the cabin. Left alone on the deck, Miyuki came closer to Tatsuya. Still dressed in a dress and with gathered up hair, she gently laid her head on the shoulder of his suit.

"This time the mission was... a fun trip."

"I was having fun too."

"But next I'd like to go on a trip without a mission. Onii-sama... Tatsuya-sama."

"Onii-sama will come."

Worrying not to disturb Miyuki's head touching his shoulder, Tatsuya looked at her profile.

"Onii-sama and Tatsuya-sama. What is better? I'm still..."

"There is no need to hurry. There is still time."

"That's the truth. Time still remains..."

Tatsuya could not read what was on Miyuki's mind, after she closed her eyes.

Epilogue

In the waiting room for the departure of the airport there are 3 kinds of people.

People that see others off with a smile. People that escort with tears. And people that escort with a different look than the first two. Discarding the detailed classification, it could be anything, except for smiles and tears.

Similarly, there are three types that are escorted. People who go with a smile. People who go with tears. People who depart with something different from the first two.

However, we dare add one more group for those who are leaving. People who go home with a tired face.

There were differences between working and playing, there was a difference between physical and mental exhaustion, but those who now waited for the return airplane had exactly this expression. Even the girls were exhausted.

March 29. The day after the party on an artificial island near the coast of Kume Island.

"It was a tiresome trip..."

Naha Sayaka, who came to the airport departure hall, grumbled, leaning both her hands on her suitcase to relieve the load of her own weight. Azusa, who heard her, giggled with restraint. It was like saying "I agree!", Because she could not say aloud the same thing to the invited classmate.

"True? But was it fun?" But her partner, Kirihara, had a different opinion. He objected with a cheerful expression. The excitement of yesterday's evening had not yet passed. This excitement was not from the party, but from the battle.

"...So Kirihara-kun had fun? Like a child, who rejoices when getting wet in a puddle."

Looking at Sayaka with sad eyes, Kirihara immediately looked away. He remembered how she got angry last night for a spoiled suit.

"Er, that's not because we wanted to play in the water. Hey, Sawaki." Sawaki nodded strongly, although he didn't understand well what he meant by "hey."

"Yes. It was a good fight. I am happy that for the first time in a long time I had to give my best."

"Oh, no! It isn't true!" On Isori's apologizing words, Sayaka quickly waved her head. "I'm sorry to say strange things. Sure, I was having fun."

"Yes, I understand." With a smile, Isori nodded and fussily explained to Sayaka.

"Everybody is tired of getting into such an incident. I would like to rest another day."

"I agree!" Kanon reacted to the words of Isori.

"Refuse today's flight and stay one more night!" Grabbing his hand, Kanon with a spoiled voice tried to persuade Isori.

"Such a reason will not work."

"Correct. Although there are still a few days before the ceremony of entering the university, you still need to start preparing in advance." Having confirmed Azusa's words to Hattori, Kanon didn't seem convinced.

"Yes, but what is there to prepare?"

"By the way, you have already passed the registration for landing?" Ignoring Kanon's objection, Hattori turned to Isori.

"Exactly." Answered Sawaki. He pushed his suitcase toward the check in counter for landing.

"Wait! Hey, do not ignore me!"

Followed by Sawaki Hattori, looked back at the protesting Kanon:

"It's not a different country. Maybe we'll come again in the summer?"

"A good idea. Will we go again with this line-up?" He responded vigorously to Hattori's words.

"Uh, I'd like to see Kei and I together." Kanon immediately expressed discontent.

"We do not know if the summer holidays will be really free."

Speaking of the National Academy of Defense, Kirihsara, entering the same course as Sayaka nodded with a disappointed face.

"It isn't necessary to be limited only to the summer of this year. A chance can be given at any time, because risks are everywhere."

"Hattori, is this some sort of philosophy?"

On the hob of Kirihara, Hattori with a smile shook his head.

"It's not entirely philosophy. Simply words of consolation."

"I do not understand what you mean."

"It's like saying that next time you have to do better." Sawaki, who finished registration, looked around. "Then, next time, let's deal with the problem only on our own."

"Well, something like that." Smiling, Hattori nodded at Sawaki's words.

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Unlike the group of graduates of First High, which, as planned, flew to Tokyo on the plane the day after the party, a group of current students swam carefree in the morning. The tour of Kumejima, interrupted by the attack of the submarine, was organized anew on the same ship with the transparent bottom.

"Suddenly it became not a mission, but a trip" said Miyuki with a bitter smile.

"I think this does not count." Tatsuya also smiled ironically.

"What do you mean 'does not count'?" Honoka immediately asked with curiosity.

"The trip to Okinawa this time was a job, so I talked about going out without work next time." Because there was no need to hide this, Tatsuya honestly answered Honoka's question.

In a conversation last night, Miyuki requested that next time he not have any work. It was during their conversation on board the yacht returning from the artificial island to the main island of Okinawa. Since then, only half a day has passed. When it was mentioned that this cruise can be considered a "trip without work," Tatsuya and Miyuki showed bitter smiles, feeling that the conversation last night was continued.

"Hmm, that's what you mean?" Honoka didn't go any further. She, probably understood that questions like "is it possible if I go with you?" will receive undesirable answers.

"How long will you stay here?" Feeling the sufferings of her best friend, Shizuku decided to change the subject, referring to Miyuki.

"We plan to return to Tokyo tomorrow or the day after tomorrow."

"There's not much time left after all."

"In fact, we planned to return with today's flight. But in the end we had extra time."

"Hmm..."

Miyuki didn't explain where the extra time came from. Shizuku also didn't ask.

"We will soon have to organize preparations for the opening ceremony." Since Shizuku is an ordinary member of the disciplinary committee, she needs to participate only in the school events themselves, but there is no need to participate in their training. But Miyuki is the president of the school board. She must participate in a large number of preparations for the ceremony of admission.

Annually in March, preparations are made for various events including the admission ceremony, other events at the beginning of the year, an acquaintance with the first graders' representative is being held, etc., but this year Miyuki left Tokyo immediately after the closing ceremony to fulfill something similar to official duties (although this was not an "official" duty, but close to this). Most of the preparations were completed before spring break, but a meeting to prepare the speech for the newcomers had not yet been held.

"This year, the representative of the first-graders, is again a girl?"

"Correct."

"She's from the Top Ten Clan Clans?"

"Yes, Shiina-san. The youngest daughter of the Mitsuya family. But we have not met."

"So this is how it is. That's why you cannot stay longer."

"Yes. I'm afraid that is why." When Miyuki said this, not only herself, but Honoka also had a depressed face.

But not because Tatsuya will also leave when Miyuki goes to Tokyo. Honoka is also in the school board, so she also needs to participate in the preparation for the welcome ceremony. Honoka and Shizuku planned to return to Tokyo on the 31st, but if Miyuki returns on the 30th to prepare for the admission ceremony, they would also have to think about returning on the same day.

"...Anyway, let's rest while we're here! It's a little early to be in the sea, but why not swim in the hotel pool, where we stayed? It is quite spacious!" With Honaka's returning enthusiasm she approached Tatsuya. Shizuku thought that from the face of Miyuki, who was watching, a bit of calm disappeared.

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The report on the capture of Jasmine Williams and James J. Johnson by the Japanese army reached William MacLeod in Britain in the middle of the following day.

The incident, with an attempt to sabotage the artificial island in Kumejima, was apparently carried out by a detachment of deserters from the Great Asian Alliance with the support of the Australian army, but in fact it was Britain that organized the two forces together. If these details come to the surface, it would be impossible to avoid revealing that the British army was the culprit.

Knowing this, the intelligence department of the British army was surrounded by a tense atmosphere. Of course, there was not much noise, as if the hive had been turned over. Even in the building of the headquarters of the military intelligence department in the White Hall (the Government Center of Britain in the business district), this case was not loudly voiced, for fear of information leakage.

It was unnecessary to create a depressing atmosphere. Therefore, there was nothing but reproach from the people MacLeod was passing. The staff involved in this operation knew that MacLeod had a leading role in nominating the detachment of magicians from the Australian army.

MacLeod understood why these reproachful views were aimed at him. He was already asked to explain himself. The fact that his reputation worsened was clear to all, however, William MacLeod didn't need to worry about the hostility directed at him. During interrogation by senior officers, he was treated like an aristocrat just like before.

First, he expected that the British government would not be negligent towards one of the official magicians of the Strategic Class. The fact that he was calm, spoke of his confidence in the safety of his position, despite the fact that he was involved in an independent trip to Australia, where he directly supervised the operation.

MacLeod left the headquarters of the so-called DIS and entered the old building next to the First Block. There was a branch of the government communications headquarters (formerly MI1), which was in charge of the British SigInt (engaged in interception of communications, eavesdropping, interception of radio signals, radar waves, etc.). For passers-by it was completely unclear what this building is, but it was MacLeod's workplace. Roughly speaking, in one of the rooms adjacent to the GCHQ building Macleod had a private office.

Not meeting anyone on the way, he went into his office and locked the door. In general, there were people walking back and forth through the building, but MacLeod's office was on a technical floor, where ordinary employees usually didn't go. And access to the office itself was hidden from with the help of a dedicated elevator.

MacLeod included the most modern communication terminal, incompatible with the appearance of the old building. A figure of one man immediately appeared on the display. Apparently, the interlocutor approached his terminal before the appointed time.

"Hello, Sir William MacLeod. How is your health?"

"Hello, Dr. Clark. Health is normal. For my age."

"I didn't mean anything like that ...I'm sorry."

"No, sorry for being rude. This was just a joke."

The name of the man, smiling puzzled on the terminal screen, was Edward Clark. He is a scientist from the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America and a specialist in large-scale information systems.

"You are an evil man, sir. By the way, it seems that the question we discussed earlier, as expected, ended in failure."

"There's nothing to hide from you, Doctor."

"I apologize. So, the introduction of the 'Trojan horse' was successful?"

"Not yet. Jas was caught by Haru Kazama."

"How? ...And I thought the Yotsuba would be interested in getting such a sample."

"I still think there's a chance. It seems that there is a special connection between the division of Haru Kazama and the Yotsuba."

"Through the telepathic network of the 'Brothers Williams', having the same genetic code, I hope to find out some secrets of the Yotsuba."

"In the case of Jas, you should say "Sister", do you not? Although there is no confidence in the conscious use of telepathy, it has the advantage of being difficult to detect to the enemy. In combination with the "system" of the doctor, the limits in which our eyes and ears can penetrate will increase significantly."

"Information is what you need to manage the world. Sir William, the USNA thanks you for your cooperation, regardless of the success or failure of the operation."

"Thank you. For the prosperity of Britain, Doctor, continue to provide us with your wisdom."

"Of course. Because we are allies."

From the screen of the communicator, Edward Clark uttered a friendly "Well, see you soon." Immediately after this, the screen went out. MacLeod also turned off the communicator, carefully closed it, and left this secret cabinet.

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Two days after the incident when an attempt was made to sabotage the artificial island in Kumejima. Maya visited a prestigious residential area near the city center.

The house looked like an old big mansion. But in fact it was a kind of fortress, which, in addition to the latest security equipment, was protected by a large number of ancient defensive spells.

The owner of the house was called Todo Aoba. Also known as His Excellency the priest Aoba, he was one of the secret players (also known as Yokai [ghosts, demons]) in the political and business arena of Japan. He was the true owner of the former Fourth Laboratory, and also the Yotsuba sponsor.

Elder Todo rarely summoned Maya. Although this was called sponsorship, the relationship with the Yotsuba family could not be called a one-sided patronage. In terms of funding, the Yotsuba family can do without the help of Elder Todo.

The Yotsuba family once won freedom from the army, destroying all workers of the former Fourth Laboratory.

But before that the army had already deprived the Todo family of power over the Fourth Laboratory.

That's why Elder Todo and the head of the Yotsuba family still had friendly relations. Just as the Yotsuba family depends on the influence of Elder Todo, so does he on the strength of the Yotsuba family. Relations of mutual support. Therefore, since Todo called Maya, the problem was really important.

After a formal welcome, Maya and Todo immediately moved on to the main topic.

"The day before yesterday in Kumejima you did a good job."

"Thank you."

The work to prevent the diversion, commissioned by Maya to Tatsuya, was the request of Elder Todo.

"Then you captured magicians from the Australian army."

"Yes. One of them is an ordinary magician, but the other seems to be a very interesting specimen."

"And she is." Elder Todo nodded at Maya's words. "It is natural for you to be interested. But never bring this person to the heart of the Yotuba." Hearing the words of the elder, Maya slightly rounded her eyes.

"Ara... Is it a trap? Like a living bomb?"

"Worse than a bomb. This woman is 'ears'."

Despite the abstract expression, Maya accurately realized that "ears" is a person with a special intelligence ability.

"As you wish. I will ask Ms. Saeki get rid of this person immediately."

Maya didn't doubt the words of Elder Todo. And she didn't ask where he got this from. The Yotuba family was not the only development of the former Fourth Laboratory. In the organization that preceded the Fourth Laboratory, mating was also practiced. And Elder Todo also had with him those who once offered their "blood" to the Yotuba family.

"Correct. It will be much more effective to inform Saeki through you than to simply give the order from here."

On the orders of Elder Todo, Maya bowed with a heartless smile.

[Grammatical and structural edits by englishmuffins10]

Afterword

Thank you very much for reading us. How do you like "Smash in the South Sea"? I hope you enjoyed it

Initially, it was planned to begin the third year of training in the 20th volume. But for some reason, I had to insert an additional episode, which fit into one volume.

In this volume, at the development stage, 3 main courses were taken:

- 1) Make a separate storyline that isn't related to the main story.
- 2) Give more activity to characters a year older, who have not received much attention before.
- 3) The situation is a graduation trip to Hokkaido or Okinawa.

But as a result, it grew into an amazing story that you read. It was possible to show the team work of Hattori and other scenes and situations that fit into the taken courses ...

Since in the arch of the Tatsuya Grand Clans Conference and others there was a failure, I didn't think that success this time would be such an excellent idea. Tatsuya got too comfortable exceptional ability. What will happen if you give him freedom?

With ordinary enemies, there are no problems anymore. Well, from now on we will face situations where one force does not break. Expect it.

In the epilogue, we introduced a character who will actively participate in the main story.

Returning to the original plan, I cannot call this an addition to the plot. But as a result it is good that we managed to present it now. Of course, it was only a name and class.

Originally it was planned to be called "Fumino", but the idea was abandoned because of the existing "Fumia". Then I came up with "Sino", but this idea died when I remembered that this is the name of the famous heroine of some very famous work. As a result, "Sine" was born. It will receive many characteristic features, so look forward to the next volume.

Reserves of minerals from the seabed are a reference to the "place" found in 2015 with oil deposits. Also in February 2016, the discovery of a geothermal field in the sea near Okinawa was confirmed. Would it be good if technology progressed forward so that we too could access such places?

Model artificial island was peeped at the "Aquapolis" at the 1975 International Ocean Fair in Okinawa. Although the scale and structure are completely different.

Although I myself think that bottom structures are more effective for developing the seabed, I chose a floating island for the convenience of history. I wish I could see the realization of this as long as I'm alive.

Well, in the next volume, the third year of training will really begin. In the final year of the main character's training, I left a lot of "here it's turning", so read us to the end of the whole series. I'll try my best to make you say "it was interesting."

So, see you in the next volume No. 21, "The Beginning of the Troubles."