

## XLVI

"Damnit, Oki, I'm older than you, ya dumbfuck! Learn to have some respect!" Chinatsu scolded, prodding the principal on the forehead. The principal sighed, having almost completely given in and allowing herself to receive the lecture.

"Principal Ueno is pretty laid back, huh?" Raizo mumbled as he watched from a short distance away.

"More like she's *scared*," Juri said. "Then again though, we're dealing with an ex-assassin here."

"And she didn't like it when I called her a contract killer," Raizo chuckled.

"Well, accurately speaking, she was a cabal assassin," Marie explained. "She worked for rather shady groups within the backgrounds of governments, and killed political opponents and general opposition, essentially helping these groups overthrow their governors."

"Wow. Scary," Raizo said sarcastically.

"It was," Marie said sternly. "The people she worked for left her alone afterwards, sure, but what about those she eliminated? *Their* supporters soon caught on to her existence and have been trying to kill her ever since."

"Untrained militants working towards one goal," Raizo mumbled. "Their honor is almost admirable. Too bad I don't have much of a taste for honor," he added. "I'll do what gets me somewhere, even if it means drawing some blood."

"That much has become evident," Juri said, "and is precisely why we're here to see *you* today. Of course, we've already gotten the entire matter under control. It was easy enough. We just casually gagged the media," she admitted with a careless wave of her hand. "You've been in contact with Mariko Nakano, am I correct?"

"Yeah," Raizo nodded.

"And you've helped with the security force before, apprehending your attacker-turned-parter, Satomi," Juri added.

Raizo nodded again. "To be sure, she was a damn cheeky assailant and even more of a cheeky partner, but I don't deny the existence of that entire event."

"So you already have a taste of what we want to ask of you," Juri sighed. "Good, in a way. It's less explaining for me. In short," she said, "we want you to continue to operate as a reserve for the security force. Mariko Nakano's been a reserve ever since she arrived at Dosia, but she's only been called into action about seventeen times over the space of more than a year, school breaks included. It's not too much work, but you get a monthly salary with additional commission for every time you're called in."

"Oh? And what's the catch?" Raizo inquired.

"Huh. Clever boy," Juri mumbled. "There's only one: you have no days off. We'll rarely bring out the top reserves, but when you're needed, you don't have the option of refusing the call to arms. You must drop what you're doing. Period. If it's a

test, or even an exam, we'll provide you with a makeup exam date. If you're sleeping, you've gotta crawl out of bed. If you're in the middle of a date, well...too bad."

"And you're doing this in exchange for overlooking my current...'indiscretions,' right?" Raizo asked.

"Current *and future* 'indiscretions,' boy," Juri answered.

"Huh. Sweet deal," Raizo mumbled. "I'm in."

"Glad to hear it," Juri nodded, reaching into her pocket and pulling out a little badge. "Keep this on your person. It'll essentially get the security force off your back after you kill a guy. Even if you did it 'cause you felt like it. That said, unless you *absolutely* have to, don't go killing people just 'cause you feel like it or we'll be *forced* to do something about you ourselves."

"Not sure when I'll ever have to do something just because I feel like it," Raizo shrugged, "but I'll take it," he said, taking the badge from the vice principal.

"We'll provide you some goods later," Juri said. "You know, sunglasses, leather jackets, that sorta thing. There's no actual reason for it. It's just fun. That and it really pisses off the management when we underuse the budget. Something about 'giving inadequate amounts of education' and whatnot," she shrugged, "so we're supplementing some 'educational goods.' D-don't go telling people about that though," she added. "Is there anything you'll be needing besides your security uniform? A weapon upgrade maybe?"

"Uhh...about that," Raizo chuckled, "I think I'll pass. I'm pretty sure they don't got anything sturdier than fatalium yet."

"W-wait, your sword is made from—holy crap!" Chinatsu cried from across the room. "Jeez, how have you *not* been robbed yet?"

"Mistress, fatalium weapons can move on their own," Marie said. "They can't be *stolen*, for they *always* return to their masters at a simple beckon."

Raizo smirked to himself. *And thank God for that*, he thought. *There's been dozen of occasions where feigning being disarmed has won me fights. It's a simple trick. With a grabbing motion, I can call the damn thing back. Come to think of it, that's how I landed that giant gash in Satomi's body the first time we really fought. It's also how I retrieved my sword after throwing it into that Naoki guy's head...I really overuse that bit...*

"I see," Marie mumbled. "That's an interesting little quirk, but I believe your swordsmanship is a larger part of your power than your weapon itself. The fatalium sword is sturdier than anything else we have access too, being unbreakable and all, so it lets you cleave bones with ease. It explains why you can destroy a puppet's core in a single blow. They're usually stronger than that. But still, you had to be able to strike them for it all to work."

"Mariko guessed that it was fatalium," Raizo sighed. "She deduced it from the strength of the handle, which could rip cleanly through flesh despite being blunt."

"You made such a cut against Satomi, correct?" Juri asked. "Yes, that was peculiar. We saw a student rip a hole in a hitman on school grounds. With the handle of a sword. I think that called for *some* investigation."

"Alright, you two," Chinatsu suddenly called, "class is gonna start soon. You've discussed what you wanted, right? And gotten the 'yes, ma'am' that you've been anticipating? Good. Get out. I gotta get started for the day."

"Alright," Juri shrugged, walking over and grabbing the principal. "Let's go."

"Bye," Marie said as she waved.

"B-b-b-but the outfit!" Oki complained.

"Shut up, 'principal Ueno,' you're being annoying," Juri commented. "God, I hate calling you the principal..."

Chinatsu sighed deeply as they left. "Great, now those two've wasted all our time together," she mumbled to herself.

"Hmm? What?" Raizo asked, confused.

"Nothing. Get to your seat, kid," Chinatsu said, stretching.

"Right," Raizo mumbled, walking off towards his seat in the lecture hall.

Marie poked her owner's arm. "You're not very honest, are you?" she whispered.

"Who cares?" Chinatsu asked. "Jeez...it's not like *that'd* work out, anyways..."