

Hanging Marionette

Prologue

It was pretty noisy in the classroom. Bronya just sat there all alone rethinking what was happening from the morning. She just didn't feel the same as she felt the other days, she wasn't ill, and she wasn't injured. Something that bothered her was the question: "What happened last night". She couldn't remember it for some reason, only the before evening. Before she could start thinking of anything the class teacher entered the classroom.

"Good morning class," Mrs Eden said placing her stuff on the desk.

"I agree that most of you might have seen the poster hanging on the front door. About the "School Halloween party" which I'll explain in detail. Basically "St Freya Academy" is hosting a party. it's going to be held on Saturday mainly in the yard, so other places will also be decorated. There will be snack stands, foods so don't worry about being hungry. Starts at seven pm and ends at midnight. Make sure your outfits slay the crowds." Mrs Eden smiled.

"Now, any questions?" She asked the students

"All right, class let's start. So, at the start, I'll be paring you guys and you will have to fight against each other. We will finish once there's only one winner. And remember using abnormal power is not allowed and fighting till death, you know what happens if you do that. Understood?"

"Yes," the whole class answered.

After a while

The only ones left are Mei and Bronya. Who was going to win, none of them knew.

"Bronya, I know you're strong but don't you dare go easy on me," Mei commanded watching Bronya with a smile.

A little while after the fight Mei had just won. It was kind of a hard match. Either way, they both didn't care.

After classes and training

"Hey, girlyes! How was training for both of you?" Elysia asked quite in a brag to Mei and Bronya.

"You know you don't have to flex that you don't have training today just because your teacher was sick." Annoyed Mei said.

"Yeah, yeah. Well, it's quite late we should go home, Bronya. " Elysia said.

"Hm, sure, all right bye Mei," Bronya said.

"Bye guys."

When both girls arrived home, they changed into their regular clothes and sat down.

"Hey Bronya, are you hungry?" Elysia questioned.

"Hmm, kind of. I can go to the market and buy a cold pizza if you want?"

"Really? Thanks, make sure to stay safe because it's quite dark outside."

"Don't worry, I will." Bronya encouraged her.

A little time later Bronya had just bought the pizza and was ready to head home. As she was walking home, she walked past a dark alleyway and a voice arrived from there. Weird. She stared at the alleyway but couldn't see anything when suddenly she groaned in pain. What was the matter? Bronya was on the edge of fainting. This was worse than getting stabbed. In a second the pain stopped. What was that, it felt like a strange power going inside her. Bronya didn't even dare fight the enemy hiding in the dark, or so she thought. She just stormed home, but one thing was that she wasn't in for telling Elysia what happened. She didn't want her to be worried.

The door was pulled open. Inside the house-entering a tired girl who was out of breath.

"Bronya! Your back. Hey, why are you so breathless? Did something happen?" Elysia questioned in concern.

"Uh, kind of, a dark started chasing me. You know how much I hate dogs." Bronya tried lying but Elysia knew something was off.

"Hmm? What happened yesterday you were just petting a dog and today you're scared of dogs?" She asked in suspicion.

"Well Uhm, this dog was kind of evil looking so it scared me." The poor girl couldn't think of a good lie.

"Oh, if that's the case all right. Let's eat now," Elysia said, still being suspicious of Bronya but letting that slide.

End of prologue

"My experiment has been successful"

"All it needs now is a soul and some tears from the divine knowledge"

"After that, this world will truly show its true skies"

....

Another day and even more unnatural things happening. As Bronya opened her eyes she saw ocean blue eyes with pink hair staring at her. It was her friend Elysia.

"Ah, you finally awoken It took me three hits on the shoulder, and five pokes on the nose just to wake you up." Said Elysia.

"I'm sorry I must have been really tired last night," Bronya said in a quiet voice, rather tired.

"It's OK. Now hurry up or else we're going to be late for school" She said in a rushed tone.

Bronya stood up, still trying not to fall, her vision was a little blurry, and her head was still hurting trying to process what was happening.

When she entered the bathroom she could see her reflection in the mirror. Grey hair and grey eyes shone from the sun that was coming out of the little window.

A while later both of the females were ready, having to catch the bus because they will be late for school.

When they arrive the schoolyard was still full of students, talking, playing, and some even running while yelling.

What? It's seven in the morning how are people so energized and have the fitness to run?
Bronya thought to herself.

"Bronya? Bronyaaaa?!"

"Huh, yea?" Bronya looked at Elysia confused.

"Are you OK? You're acting a little strange today, are you sure you're not ill or something?" Elysia asked her.

"No, I'm fine it's just something that has been hanging in my head" she replied while her eyes kept staring at the floor.

"Something like...?"

"I don't know, something, a weird feeling flying around my head trying to tell me something but can't get in. But never mind, it's nothing; Oh, and look it's Mei" she pointed her fingers at the figure who was standing not so far away with darkish purple hair.

"Mei!" Elysia shouted catching the girl's attention while waving at her.

The purple-haired girl waved back.

"Hi, guys didn't see you there. I was getting my books from my locker"

"Oh, don't worry because I didn't see you either," Elysia said while forming a cheeky smile.

"So, how is it going, anything new? Mei asked.

"Bronya's feeling a little weird but I guess nothing to worry about" Elysia answered not being aware if Bronya wasn't in for sharing information.

"Bronya is well, no need to worry. I just have little headaches but other all I'm fine" The grey haired confirmed and the rest just have to accept and move on.

Just like that, classes flew faster than a bird for Bronya. Walking down the stairs her vision got pitch black falling.

...

Waking up, Bronya's vision was sort of blurry. Getting up she started analyzing the place. A white room with five people being it, one of them being Bronya and the others Mei, Elysia, the nurse, and...*Who was she?* The strange girl had black hair and a mask on her eyes. *Was she blind?* Bronya didn't try questioning her.

"Bronya are you OK?!" the concerned faces with widen eyes looked at her.

"Bronya is not very well...I don't know what's happening. But I think Bronya will be fine." The grey-haired girl answered.

"Bronya, why do you keep saying your name at the front of every sentence? Mei out of curiosity asked.

"I don't know. I guess it's just a habit Bronya has." She answered.

"No, it's not. You were fine just yesterday and today out of nowhere something happened. We're going home and you're going to explain everything to me." Elysia announced.

What choice was there left?

"Oh, by the way, my name's Columbina. Earlier when you fainted you fell into my arms." The girl sitting there on the bed said.

So that was her name.

"Nice to meet you, I'm Bronya" She was curious about this girl, she has never seen her before. Was she new?

"Let's go home and you'll tell me what's wrong and the act of strange," Elysia said

At home

"Now tell me what's going on," Elysia said with a serious look.

"Hmm...Yesterday I can't remember what happened last night and this morning when I woke up, from the beginning of the day I didn't feel well but I wasn't ill nor hurt. The morning when I went inside the bathroom I saw my reflection in the mirror, I looked normal but on the inside, there was a strange feeling. Bronya just didn't know what was happening and the sudden faint and blurry visions, I don't know..." The girl's eyes were staring at the ground still questioning what was going on.

Suddenly a pair of arms were wrapped around the grey-haired girl. Elysia hugged the girl tightly dead worried about what just happened to her. Even though they just met a few months ago she was attached to her and treated her like a sister.

"I hope nothing goes wrong," Elysia thought to herself.

"You know, we just met a few months ago, but before that, I was an abandonment issue, all alone. But then when we first met, I felt like I finally found the right person, so therefore I don't want to lose you and want to keep you safe, cause to me you're not just a friend, a sister"

Hearing those words, Bronya didn't have the same feeling as she did. Inside there was nothing but an endless journey of finding the truth of her feelings.

Suddenly Bronya's head started hurting, it felt like getting hit by a rock but that wasn't all. Everything went black for her like she was falling deep into a black hole. It didn't feel real, how was she still alive?

"Bronya! Are you OK?!" The scared girl was holding on to Bronya so tight praying that nothing bad will happen, wiliest the grey-haired girl screaming from pain.

The girl fell into a slumber, not being able to realize what just happened, she closed her eyes, fainting...

"Will she be all right?"

"Is she going to die?"

"Can I somehow help"

"Is she already dead?"

The girl kept asking questions as if her life depended on it.

"Miss please stop asking questions, as you can see, she's fine. So please, sit down and I'll explain in full detail what could it be." The doctor said quite annoyed. But she let that slide and calmed herself.

Both of the females sat down in the doctor's office. Elysia was dead worried about what could have happened.

"So, in short, said" The doctor started talking.

"After making some analyses, I came to the point that..."

Before

"Luckily she isn't in her strong form because do you not realize that this could lead to serious consequences? Do you know how useful she was going to be? By that I mean how reckless you showed yourself as the N.2. It's been months..."

*"My majesty, we looked all over the landscape of **Teyvat** and we found no signs"*

"Find a way. I'll give everyone two more weeks. And if she's not found, I won't tolerate damage."

"There's only one hope in finding her faster..."

...

"OK, doc I understand" Elysia stood up, and before she was about to leave, she was interrupted.

"Oh, and one more thing. Please do not say anything about this to your dear friend, I do not want to put anyone in danger, as you know we doctors want to help people and not do the opposite. So please, keep it a secret from her."

"Hm? And why is that if I may know? Elysia questioned with a sense of suspicion.

"Let's say you tell her about it, what do you think she will do?"

Elysia stayed there quiet not knowing what the doctor could say but all she knew was he wasn't just a regular doctor, there was something off about him.

"Hmm then let me tell you if she's irregular she would probably be surprised and out of surprise she would explode which leads to killing you, cause **marionettes** like her are *dangerous*. And

you might ask me, "how do you know?" well let me tell you little one that when marionettes get a surprised or negative feeling, they usually can't control their emotions so they rather express it by exploding, and maybe even killing. I think this is enough understandable."

"All right. You've convinced me, I won't say anything" With that said she left the room trying not to express any angry feelings.

As she was walking down the hall, she couldn't help but think how could such a thing happened. Why was she the only one who even with that one person betrayed her?

Elysia knocked on the door, lightly opening it. Seeing Bronya in that situation just made her heart sink. She kind of felt betrayed but who knows what if Bronya didn't even know she was a puppet. A question that bothered her was "How can she feel things?".

"Hi. How are you feeling." The pink-haired girl asked sitting on the bed

"Better than earlier I'd say."

"Alrighty, then I guess we should get home. "

As time passed Bronya and Elysia finally arrived at their house. They settled in.

"So want to go out later to buy some outfits for the party, because we don't have time since is tomorrow?" Elysia asked.

"Yeah, we should, 'cause I still don't know what to wear." The grey-haired girl sighed not knowing what to do.

"All right then let's eat and get ready because there's a long day ahead of us"

They ate, got ready, and went out. Hours passed they wandered almost the whole mall still not being able to find the right clothes for them. Looking through the clear glass walls outside the shops, a dress caught Bronya's attention.

"Hmm, Bronya likes that one." Pointing, she addressed the dress she liked.

"Ah, it looks nice!" Elysia exclaimed.

"Ahh, this one is amazing. We're going to be dazzling our ways tomorrow, trust me."

1 hour later

"Did we have to buy the makeup; we already have tons!" Bronya said tiredly from all that shopping.

"Hmm, well I didn't have this shade of pink and you know the makeup is really important because it's supposed to match the colour of your outfit and-" Suddenly Elysia got interrupted.

"Yeah OK, OK I get it."

"By the way, tomorrow at four pm at Mei's place since she has like a whole spa in her bedroom."

"Hmm, OK. I guess I'll have to come. I'm going to my room."

"OK, I'm going to check out the makeup we got and maybe try it out."

"All right." Sighing the girl went to her room.

As she entered the area something wasn't feeling right. There were staring eyes somewhere placed, she could sense from her veins. All of a sudden, an attack rushed through her body. Her head hurt so much from that. She could see a pair of indigo eyes staring at her on the wall. Who were they? They kind of looked familiar to Bronya. And in that instant, a flash popped into her head. She started screaming in pain, she couldn't process what was going on inside her head.

"Bronya are you OK?!" Dashing inside Bronya's room Elysia knew what might have been.

"Hmm, Bronya is not OK. Bronya feels weird."

"Oh no, she's getting weirder and weirder but the doctor did give me some pills if this happens. What did Bronya see?" Elysia thought to herself.

Before

"Here, take these. In case she gets headaches or sudden pain. Needs to drink them before breakfast for seven days straight."

...

"Hmm, wait take this." Pouring water into a glass cup and giving Bronya the pill, *what could go wrong?*

Elysia hoped to herself that these pills might help her, or maybe even damage her even more since that doctor was kind of suspicious and wasn't that easy to trust.

"The doctor gave me these but I wasn't so sure if I should have given them to you." Bronya just nodded in confirmation.

"Let's go to sleep it's late, plus tomorrow is a *big day*."

The next day

"Bronya! Wake up! It's already noon." Elysia shouted seeing that Bronya is still asleep.

“Ah!!! Why did you shout like that?! You scared me...Oh, it’s noon I must’ve overslept” Bronya tiredly said.

“Hmm, yeah sorry I shouldn’t have yelled, but it’s late and you haven’t eaten breakfast.”

“I’ll go eat now”

“Oh, wait. Take a pill, the doctor said that you should drink those seven days straight before breakfast. I know that last night you drank one but I’m sure nothing will happen.” Elysia said worrying that something might happen. How could she forget that one important detail?

“Well, I hope so. I’ll go drink it right now.” Bronya said heading towards the kitchen where the pills stayed.

Bronya made herself toast because she didn’t feel really hungry.

“By the way don’t forget that we have to be at Mei’s house at 4 pm.” Elysia informed Bronya.

“Oh right, also when is the party starting?”

“At 7 pm. That’s why I told you to get ready three hours early so we won’t be late”

As time passed both of the girls arrived at Mei’s house. Clicking on the doorbell the sudden voice echoed inside the house’s hall. Within a moment the door opened meeting a purple-haired girl.

“Hey, girlies!” Mei said hugging both of them. “Come in”

The two girls were welcomed inside. Entering, the place was quite warm. There were stairs leading upstairs.

“Hi~. Happy Halloween! So how’s it going?~” Elysia asked.

‘All right, I guess and happy Halloween to you too. How about you guys, anything new?’

“We’ve been OK especially today despite being the party, which I’m so excited about.” The pink-haired exclaimed. Bronya just stood there zooming out.

Mei noticed that though she said nothing about that she just said: “Well OK let’s go upstairs to my room we have makeup to do.”

Both of them started walking except Bronya. Hmm, she was still standing there.

“Bronya, come on. Why are you still standing” But Elysia had no answer to her question so she started shaking her.

“Bronya!”

"Huh-? Yeah?"

"What has gotten into you? Why are you acting so stranger" Mei asked.

"Hmm, Bronya doesn't know either" Bronya said sighing in frustration.

"Hmm, was it the pills, because who knows what that doctor had up his sleeve? He was acting suspiciously. Seems to be having high intelligence. With that, he could do anything. Something is off about him for sure and maybe I'll stop giving her the pills they might be worsening her condition." Elysia thought to herself aware of might what happen.

"Eh, doesn't matter let's go!" Elysia said in a hurry just to change the subject.

"Hmm, OK if you say so." Mei was aware of that but let that slide.

Two and a half hours later they were all ready. Looking in the mirrors the three girls looked gorgeous in their outfits. Mei wore a red torso with a black siding skirt and red stripes including on her legs black glittering leggings and black boots. Her hair was straight released while Elysia wore a black torso with a red skirt underneath a layer of white and also black leggings and black boots and her pink hair was lightly tied in a down ponytail. And lastly, Bronya wore a white dress with black accessories and a black collar and gloves, red leggings and black boots. Her grey hair was tied in two curly ponytails.

"Triplets!!!" Elysia shouted. "Time for a selfie."

"Hmm, Bronya thinks we're going to be late, look at the time," Bronya spoke after a long time of not talking.

"Wait, she's right. To the car!" With that everyone went outside, it was quite chilly even though it was fall."

They arrived and were welcomed by some strange-looking...thing? The strange guy had long ears and a long nose with a thick moustache wearing a huge hat.

"Who are you if we may know?" Mei asked curiously.

"Ha-ha, you may think I'm weird because of my looks but I'm the hosts' partner at this party. And so why not welcome my guests?" The strange guy said.

"Oh, by the looks I've never seen you around." Elysia said with suspicion.

"Well, One day we went into the principal's office and asked him if the school could create a party for Halloween because why not, you poor things train all day and study hard about things so why not give your brains some relaxation? Oh, and by the way my name's Pulcinella but nowadays people call me "The Rooster"."

"Hmm, familiar..." Bronya quietly said.

"Did I hear something? Strange, because based on your looks *I have never seen you*. First time meeting." The Pulcinella guy just laughed that off.

"Strange. And is the host's name if I may know?" Elysia knew that the strange guy appearing from nowhere couldn't be trusted.

"Sounds like you wannabe herrschers want to know everything but about this I cannot say."

"Huh?! How dare you call us wannabe herrschers?!." Mei angrily announced.

"Well my darlings isn't that the truth, your training won't help you with becoming a herrscher, but only one thing will which is something you need to find out yourself to become a herrscher. Anyway, you're free to enter the area." Saying that Pulcinella left with a proud face *for what?*

"That guy mustn't be trusted I have the feeling he's in danger," Mei stated.

That was true. The guy appeared out of nowhere and the school never really said who was the host. Though Elysia kept on thinking that there was something that infected Bronya into acting weird.

"Hey, isn't that strange black hair girl who saved me when I fell down the stairs?" Bronya asked pointing at the girl with a white-black dress.

"Oh, yeah. Columbina was it? Hmm, we never asked her why she wears a *"blindfold"*. And who's that white-haired girl standing next to her?." Elysia said having a strange feeling about these new people they met.

They decided to walk to them. And judging by her looks she also looked new around here.

"*Aren't these her comrades you informed us about?*"

"*Nice guess. The time we first met I noticed they were attached to her.*"

"*The ones who are easy to fool. Keep quiet for now, we don't want to make the children cry.*"

"Columbina, you're here too and who is this friend of yours?" The pink-haired girl said walking forward with her pair of friends.

"Very nice to meet you and seems like you're interested in knowing about my close friend. Her name's Arlecchino." Columbina informed forming a soft smile on her face.

After a second of thinking, Mei was a little distracted by the idea of who or what these new people were, as for Bronya all of them were very familiar.

"Oh, Bronya that's you. Don't you remember me? We were once colleagues in another world. Huh, looks like it all slid away." Arlecchino started saying things that were oddly new to Bronya.

"Based on Bronya's memory it's hard to think that we were once together. I don't know." A confused look formed on Bronya's face.

"Let's go somewhere private so I can tell you something."

Walking behind the building. Arlecchino lowered herself, almost bending herself, her head right next to Bronya's ear.

"You don't think your memories' ambitions are alone enough to bring themselves back or you need to try as well. Time is fast though so you better not wait." She pulled herself straight up.

"Hey! What are you trying to say?" Bronya asked confused.

"So, you decide to not understand, I see. Take this, as a lucky charm." Handing Bronya a weird-looking mechanic, though she was not even a little interested in it. And kept staring at it.

"What's wrong?"

"How do you want Bronya to trust a stranger she just met? And what is that are you trying to bomb me or something?" An angry look was placed on her face knowing that mechanic could cause danger.

"Knew this would come, well your decision. But don't make the wrong one. Take this as a warning of what might come. Also, don't say a thing to your dear friends. You don't want to put them in a serious death situation, do you?" With that said she turned around and walked away.

Bronya was confused to the core. She couldn't trust her one bit aware of what might arrive. But the question "why was she saying this" bothered her so much.

Walking around the area, the schoolyard was decorated with skeletons, pumpkins and different stuff. As well, there were stands, places for dancing and a stage. As Bronya was walking back a person started announcing something on the stage.

"Greetings to everyone and welcome to the party that our school has hosted. I want to mention one thing. The Halloween party has officially started and you're all free to do whatever you want. Thank you for listening." Miss Eden announced leaving the stage and strange, she walked behind the school building. *Why didn't she stay in the crowded area?* And finding her friends, Columbina and Arlecchino were nowhere to be.

"Based on my calculations...Hmm, Dottore, what were the functions of that little mechanism?"

"If the mechanism properly holds itself in the puppet's hands, then it'll surely absorb the power itself. So, tell us did you provide it to it?"

"I wish to say I did, but it was hard convincing her to take it. Stubborn just like the one we have now as a colloque."

"Pathetic of you to think I'm useless like her. Do you not realize how naïve she has become once she escaped and wandered off by herself?"

"Don't worry our little comrade, you'll always be our favourite puppet."

"Enough fooling you two, we have a mission that must be complete."

"Scaramouche, make your next move, midnight is going to arrive soon."

Enjoying themselves at the party, a sudden fog appeared. They thought it was to make the place filled with the Halloween aura, but for Bronya it was the scent of a familiar creature.

"Bronya needs to go somewhere." Saying that Bronya went to the forest behind the school building.

Walking forward, the area that surrounded her, and the crowd all seemed unrealistic. As she was walking in the forest. Her consciousness came back, the moment she realized she wasn't at the party anymore. Just a lonely creature lost in a forest.

All of a sudden her eyes widen. Some purple-haired boy was behind her, with the use of his hand covering her mouth.

"Hide and seek is fun, but you know what's more interesting? Reaching your goal and guess what. I have finally reached it."

The second she heard that voice, she loosened his grip and switched her direction straight at the individual who was in front of her. But the power of the *thing* he held made her fly away a few metres.

"W-who are you?!" Bronya stuttered in fear.

"I am the all-knowing Balladeer also known as Scaramouche, but I didn't know that my equivalent was so weak but was enough sturdy to keep such a magnificent gnosis. And now I have no other choice but to..."

Bronya's body fell into a deep slumber while her mind was still awake. All the memories flashing in her head, she didn't understand a thing that was happening. Bronya was staying still, straight and some good five metres tall but strings on her hands and arms remained.

"Hahahaha...Hahahahaha Perfect."-"Go destroy them."

“Ah! Mei, wait we’ve been so distracted that we forgot about Bronya and wait, where is she?” Elysia asked with a concerned look.

“I don’t know but my vision tells me there’s something far away in the distance. Hurry, we have to check it out.”

Rushing through the crowd both of the girls finally arrived at the start of the building’s length. And their studios was correct, a *hanging marionette* could be seen in the distance.

“It looks like it’s heading this way, quick, we have to inform the teachers about this.” Elysia stated and both of them rushed back to the crowd.

“So you’re saying there’s a puppet in the distance approaching our way? I’ll gather everyone right now so they can be aware. Oh, and do you know where miss Eden is?” the 2nd ranked of the herrschers-teachers, Durandal, one of the mightiest asked.

“Now that you mentioned her, I don’t know where she went.” Mei answered.

“Is that so, well then I’ll go now.”

Durandal went on the stage and informed everyone about the situation, occupying everyone with fear and awareness of what could happen.

“Jean, I have to turn every mighty student into herrschers and leave the lower ones in a safer place, because the power this puppet holds seems like a doing of the harbingers.” A white-haired man said approaching her.

“I understand Kevin, if it’s for the safety of everyone, sacrifices must be made.” Jean stated.

By the time he did that, the puppet was already in the air walking, being controlled, and falling on the schoolyard. It was late, the fight had to begin. Transforming into their herrscher forms all of them were ready for a fight. But there was only one problem, the puppet started making minions which were counted as infinite. They just kept on coming.

“We can’t keep defeating the puppets when they just keep coming.” Mobius the 4th said. “Split into teams one defeating the minions and one hitting the main enemy and apply the knowledge you have gained from all that training.”

“Wait, Durandal and Su come with me for a moment.” Rita the 5th called both of the herrschers and took them to a safer place. “Based on my knowledge and research I concluded that this puppet holds something called gnosis. It did though, but now it’s somewhere else and I need Su to find out what happened to the gnosis.”

Searching for a clue something appeared in his head. “I found it, the gnosis is broken into three pieces and each piece is located in a risky place which is OK to send the students there and their

safety will be much better there instead of here. But I am aware that someone is hiding, though I am sure the students are enough capable to handle it themselves.”

“All right, I’ll go find the sturdiest students and send them while we handle this.” Durandal said and in a rush went to the fighting place.

“Seele, Elysia and Mei! Leave the puppet and come here right now!” she commanded. “Miss Rita and Mr Su found out about the case and it seems like there was a gnosis in the puppet once, but someone had removed it from her and broken it into three pieces, as well as placed those pieces in three random places. And now, I need you three to find the pieces, I also have the locations. Mei, you go behind the largest building, Seele you go to the playground and Elysia you go to the end of the forest which is up that hill. Understood?”

“Understood!” the three of them shouted beginning their search for the pieces.

Seele made her way to the playground. Kids were wearing different Halloween costumes and playing on the swings. While she was there wandering around to find the missing piece.

“Hey, miss!” One of the children called. “Would you mind playing with us?”

“I-I’m sorry. I can’t I’m busy with something little one.” Seele excused herself but the kid didn’t seem to care.

Mockingly another kid said “You teens are always busy, “with something”. Try living your teen life for once, and maybe even hang out with kids like us.”

“I apologize once again but I really can’t play with you guys. I have to finish my mission. Besides can’t you all play together?” She asked ready to storm away because she found this a waste of time.

“Hmm, no. We want to play with you.” And within a second Seele was already gone running to find the lost piece. “Hey come back!” The kids yelled starting to chase her. What did they want from her?

Her eyes were analysing every single movement trying to find the lost piece. Distracted by the running she suddenly tripped and her eyes widen at the look.

“The lost piece!”

The second she wanted to grab it, those kids from the playground got there. Making Seele grabbing it so fast and sprinting off. Who knows how long her herrscher energy could last?

At the same time, Mei was also trying to find it when she came across the dark alleyway. She decided to check it out. Going in it was pretty dark, as usual, but because her movements were fast, a piece of paper floated and caught her attention. The note said: *“There are cursed eyes*

here hiding inside the walls, you better watch out. One stare at you and you're going to be nothing but a puppet controlled by those eyes."

Aware of what might happen, Mei locked eyes with the walls, a sword in her hand but something distracted her. A silhouette of someone. When she tried getting closer, she realized who it was. *Columbina*. And In her hand was the lost piece.

"Congratulations, you actually manage to find it." She said

"So you're those cursed eyes. No wonder you never show your eyes." Mei spoke putting the sword up her throat.

"Already in combat. I wouldn't do this if I was you. But I won't damage you. As the 3rd I don't usually like fighting back. But, that note you saw, you actually believed it. People say it's fake. Smart choice for separating yourself from humanity."

Mei's eyes widen. "Stop saying nonsense and give it here!". She tried grabbing it from her hand but Columbina backed away and clenched it in a fist.

"Finders-keepers they say. But I'll spare you and give you a chance." After saying that she opened her hand and the piece was no longer there. "Let me not confuse you, but it's in your darling's mouth. That's all I have to say for now. Bye-bye" With that in a blink of an eye she vanished.

"Who does she think she is? "In your darling's mouth?". Think Mei, think. Wait didn't miss Rita mention this type of power? Herrscher of lightning that had this so-called dragon and. What?! Am I supposed to use my full herrscher power? There's no way, it might destroy the whole city. I'll go to a safer place."

"Hmm, these trees seem empty. I wonder who's hiding." Elysia asked playing around not realizing this was a serious situation. Reaching the hill, she thought it would be easy to find it because there was nothing but it looked like it was going to take her a little bit more walking. Walking up the hill she saw a small figure in the distance, purple-haired.

"Hey, I know you! The Balladeer right?!" She shouted, in surprise, the male heard and faced her with widened eyes.

"Do you not realize with whom you're talking to?! How dare you ask me such a foolish question?" He glared at her with a stern look.

"So harsh, geez." Elysia spoke but she was still thinking about how she was going to get away with this. Turning into a herrscher wouldn't do. "I'll just switch paths." And she did as she said. She switched to the other side and started walking away.

"You're not going anywhere without a fight." He said teleporting himself into the area she was in. "Come and show me what you got."

Dead end. She knew she was going to die here why on a cursed night like this, but had to act through it.

“Sir, I don’t think it’s a nice place to fight. We might put on a fire and burn the trees. Oh, poor trees there won’t be any air if we kill them.” Elysia pouted trying to annoy him but knew it would worsen the situation and had to transform into a herrscher.

“I know you herrschers think your so strong but even combined you will not beat our puppet.”

“Don’t you dare think that Bronya will stay even a second with you monsters.” With no nerves left, she asked “Where’s the lost piece?”

“I mustn’t tell. But if you’re not in for a fight then-“

“Scaramouche, leave the girl alone. Besides before she finds the piece there won’t be any time left for the explosion to explode. Trick-or-treat and you guys chose trick and you’ve been welcomed with one which you’ll find within this area.” Dottore said interrupting their conversation.

“You won’t get away with this little “trick” of yours.”

“Let’s get going.” Scaramouche said leaving with Dottore.

It took her some time before finding it. And then she realized a faraway house in the distance. It was a modest house with a porch. When she got there, she noticed a letter on the mini table:

*“It was October 31st, Halloween. I, and my friends were trick-or-treating when we wanted to knock on his house. A little grandma came out, quite scary. She gave us some cookies and let us sit in the porch. She told us she was going to the kitchen to get something. While we were waiting and eating the cookies, my friend spat out something. It was a hard piece. I decided to go inside and tell the grandma about this, but the second I got to the kitchen, she was dead. Laying on the ground and next to her a bloodied knife. When I took a look at her, she had no organs and most importantly the grandma didn’t have any blood only the knife. It looked like she was a puppet. I ran as fast as I could out of the house and told my friends to leave. If someone is reading this, **do not enter the house.**”*

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Elysia was so stubborn at the moment that curiosity was killing her. She had to enter that house and find out what was in it. Maybe there was the lost piece. When she entered the room, traces of blood were laid on the floor. She followed them and arrived at the kitchen, a bowl, flour and cracked eggs. We’re these the ingredients that the grandma used to bake the cookies? But one thing that blew her mind was the laying puppet on the ground.

“Did one of the harbingers do this and pretend to be the grandma?” She thought to herself. When she approached the bowl, Elysia saw that it was filled with a mixture of ingredients.

Searching through it she touched on something hard. It was the lost piece. Why was it there though? But out of excitement, she forgot that she was on a time limit. Storming out of the place, she realized there was almost no time left.

“Woohoo! I got it. You giant pet, what should I call you? Benares! Perfect. Do you like the name?” The dragon looked happy about it and so was Mei with her new pet dragon. “I have to go now I don’t have much time and need to bring the piece to the right place. The dragon felt side but it knew it had to go back so he flew away.

“Oh, I see you found it.” Columbina from the distance commented.

“You! I have no time to fight with you so get lost.” Mei shouted in annoyance.

“Let’s see how fast can you get to your desired locations with some small challenges.” Just like that rocks started falling from the sky. What power did this girl hold? Mei dodged every single one of them but didn’t waste time being in the same spot. “Very clever, Mei!” Columbina started laughing like crazy while throwing large strikes of ice. One hit and Mei would be frozen and wouldn’t be able to make a move.

A little after, Mei was still running at a fast speed, as well as dodging. In the area ahead of her she could see a small purple-head figure which was...Seele! And not so far away was Elysia flying her way.

“Hey, guys!” Mei shouted catching the attention of both girls.

“Mei! Hurry we don’t have much time.” Elysia called out.

Rita was far away and could see them. She waved at them with a smile. As soon as they approached her, she said: “You girls actually managed to find them, Durandal knows her students very well I see. But quick, give me the pieces and ill combine them and give them to Su to merge them together.”

After combining the pieces it was all set to end all of this, but Eden appeared from nowhere.

“Eden, you’re here!” Rita said, but what’s with the sudden appearance?

“I apologize for not being here in a serious situation like this, but I can fix this.” Eden said by putting her hand forward in order for Rita to give her the combined gnosis.

“Can I really trust you?” Rita said out of suspicion.

“Why, yes. The gnosis will need a little bit of melody for it to function properly and I’m the best for that. It’s also written in your books.”

Rita quickly searched through the book and Eden was actually right. She had no other choice but to trust her. "OK, go on."

Everyone stopped fighting, even the minions the puppet created. Eden started her melody, and as she began to sing in the air, the gnosis started floating in her hand. It really was going to work or was it.? She took a grip of it and smashed it on the ground. Breaking it into millions of pieces. And there was the end. The puppet got out of control, destroying everything.

"Bronya! Get it together. It's me, Elysia!" Elysia tried convincing something, but it was worthless.

"Foolish of you to think that she will listen to your orders." Pulcinella appeared from somewhere with someone beside him.

"You harbingers, and I'm guessing that's your partner right? Who paid the school money so your mission would succeed" Mei said filled with anger.

"Well, that's correct. You can call me Pantalone. And there will be not a minute left before everyone here is dead. Dottore's creation was so mesmerizing and successful that none of you who get into people's business would be left alive." The tall guy said heading to Eden. "Miss Eden how can we thank you so much?"

"There is no need, just land the millions in my bank account, that's all I need." Rita's eyes widened but there was no chance of saying anything. The puppet already started slaughtering every single one of them, leaving the harbingers and Eden alive.

"Dottore, you've impressed me once again. This creation is going to be very well to us." The Tsaritsa, everyone's leader arrived.

"Your majesty. As much as I like making and designing creations, trick-or-treating will also be a fun creation to try. But I would like to experiment that on my little hanging marionette."

THE END

Eva Stoilkovska

VII-2 OOU "Blaze Koneski"- Veles

