



Natsume Akatsuki
ILLUSTRATION BY
Kakao Lanthanum

A detailed illustration of Alice Kisaragi, a blonde anime-style girl with blue eyes, wearing a white short-sleeved shirt with a black tie and a grey skirt. She has a large grey cross-shaped hair clip on her right side. The background is white with several grey circular patterns containing a black cross-like symbol. There are also several small pink silhouettes of figures holding rifles. A black speech bubble with the number '2' is in the top left. A red swastika-like symbol is on her forehead. A yellow speech bubble with text is on the right. A yellow box with text is at the bottom left. A green banner with text is at the bottom right.

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"Giant
crawfish?
Ghosts??
Call in the
power of
science
and bust
them all!"

ALICE KISARAGI

A high-spec android developed with the latest technology the Kisaragi Corporation has to offer. She hates the supernatural.

■ ALICE'S VIEW

I won't accept anything as illogical as the supernatural. Grimm's so-called curses are nothing more than a combination of hypnosis and auto-suggestion.

THIS VOLUME'S MAIN HEROINE

COMBATANTS WILL BE
DISPATCHED!



MOKEMOKEMOKE MOKEMOKEKEKE!!

"That's a
mokemoke.
It's great
boiled."

"Hey, is
that...a
crawfish?"

SNOW

A diligent woman who rose up from the slums to become captain of the Royal Guard. Struggling with loan payments has brought out her inner gold digger.

■ SNOW'S VIEW

Oh, I should mention that these woods belong to the Bashin Tribe. So named for their tendency to bash in heads with blunt objects...

AGENT SIX

BUSTING TARGET ① OBNOXIOUS CRAWFISH THAT WON'T STOP SAYING "MOKEMOKE"

“Well, that’s some attitude coming from someone who could barely move from all his injuries. And to think I cleaned up your messes for you. But if that’s how you want to play it, fine!”

As Alice throws my pants at me, I remember something important.

“Now wait, Alice. We’re not done cleaning up. Come with me for a bit.”

I grin at Alice’s suspicious glance.

Alice leads me down a flight of dimly lit stairs. Following us is my special guest—a bit of insurance in case our negotiations fail.

At the bottom of the stairs is a stinking pit of a dungeon.

And then...

“Hey, you’re looking good.”

Inside the dungeon, both arms secured with long chains, is Russell of the Water.

He lets out an unamused snort as he hears my voice. “I can’t believe you’re still alive after the beating I gave you. Tenacious, aren’t you?”

“Tenacity’s Mr. Six’s middle name. Honestly, my bosses call me that, and I don’t really like it, so could you not?”

Russell fixes me with a mocking glare. “I still can’t accept that I lost to someone as disgusting as you... Well, I guess I lost to that little one there. *You* were powerless against my weapon. I don’t know why you look so triumphant when you got your butt kicked by a kid like me.”

Russell grins, spitting out a string of insults. I guess he’s trying to anger me as revenge for all that taunting.

“You’re right. I’m a lowly minion after all.”

“...Just like that? How boring. You’re just going to own up to it? *Sigh*. I still don’t get why Gadalkand lost to you.”

When I casually accept his attempt at mockery, Russell puts his hands behind his head and leans back, as if to demonstrate he’s lost interest in me.

I point my index finger at him. “But you. Well, you’re the pathetic scrub who lost to that lowly minion, making you the most useless of all. All that attitude and look where you are: in a dungeon as our prisoner! How’s it feel to be mocked by someone so lowly? Come on, tell me, loser. Ha-ha!”

“Grrrrrrrr...!”

“Six, why are you fighting with this brat anyway? I thought you needed something from him.” Alice brings me back to the task at hand before I can taunt Russell any more.

“Oh, right. That’s not why I’m here. I actually had something I wanted to ask you.”

“Piss off.” Russell rejects my request immediately.

“...Hey, you damn brat, you should listen while Mr. Six is in a merciful mood, otherwise...”

“Go ahead. I don’t know what you’re planning to do, but go ahead and do it. Despite my looks, torture doesn’t bother me much. I guess it’s a Chimera trait. Things like heat, cold, and pain don’t bother me,” Russell jeers with the attitude of someone long past the point of caring.

Ah, that makes sense. Rose didn’t seem to mind the heat and cold in the desert. Which means what he’s saying is probably true, too.

“Let me get this out of the way. You put us through hell, but we’re enemies, and this is war. I don’t have anything personal against you. But you’re a prisoner now. If you won’t cooperate, we’ll treat you accordingly.”

“Like I said, go ahead. I’m a Chimera. I had a lot of things done to me in the name of experiments. None of that bothers me now.”

Well, that’s a problem... I was hoping to get a little more information about this Chimera stuff, too...

“Come on, stop sulking and listen. You know this country’s short on water, right? What I wanted to ask you was—”

“Oh, shut up! I have no interest in listening to your requests! Do whatever it is you’re going to do! Or are you all talk? Could it be that you can’t bring yourself

to torture a kid like me? C'mon, if you're not all talk, bring it on!"

.....

"Well, all right. I can't do this. I give up."

"...Are you serious? Ah, okay. I guess you're just that desperate for water. Are you going to bow and beg for my help? It's true that I'm skilled enough with water magic to have it in my title. It'd be easy for me to make enough water to save this kingdom. Too bad for you that I have no intention of helping..."

I interrupt Russell's monologue and lower my head in a bow.

Not to Russell, obviously, but to the special guest standing behind me.

"I apologize, Tiger Man. I couldn't do it. I give up."

"Well then...leave the rest to me. In fact, you might say this is time forrr me to enjoy myself."

At my admission of defeat, our special guest, Tiger Man, steps out of the shadows.

Alice, who had been listening quietly, looks over curiously. "I didn't know Tiger Man was any good at torture. Can he really break someone this stubborn?"

Tiger Man doesn't respond to Alice's question, instead approaching the cell as though to offer a demonstration.

"...Who the hell are you? You humans have beastmen among your ranks? Hey, beastman, can you understand what I'm saying? Ha-ha-ha, say something!"

Russell overcomes a moment of surprise at seeing Tiger Man and quickly regains enough confidence to start blustering again.

Tiger Man doesn't say a word.

Instead, he stands there gazing intently at Russell's face...

"Nyeow that's some fine worrrk, Six. I'll buy you a drrrrink later."

"Really? Thanks, Tiger Man. Not only are you creepy, but you're generous! How cool!"

“You don’t need to call me crrreepy. Little Russell’s going to get upset, so don’t say things like that nyeow.”

Russell casts a suspicious glance as I exchange words with Tiger Man.

Alice appears to have figured out the situation and offers Russell some advice. “Hey, you really screwed up on this one. If you’d listened to Six, all you would’ve had to do is make water all day. Well, I hope you’re happy with Tiger Man.”

“...Huh?”

Russell tilts his head in confusion, as though he doesn’t understand what Alice is saying.

Just then, Tiger Man, in a cheerier mood than usual, purrs out in a low, husky baritone, introducing himself to Russell.

“My name is Tigerrrrr Man. A mutant that loves little childrrren. So much so that I plan to be modified into a little girl when I retirre.”

Hearing that, Russell looks utterly bewildered...

“...Huh?”

“No ‘huh’ about it. You and I arrre going to be the best of frriends from nyeow on, Russell. Nyeot to worry, I’ll be gentle nyeow.”

Tiger Man lets out a ragged breath, gripping the cell’s bars with both hands.

“E-erm... I don’t know what you’re talking about... I hate to burst your bubble, but I’m a boy. Heh. Sorry! Can’t you tell? Is this beast blind?”

Russell doesn’t appear to understand the situation yet.

Tiger Man smiles gently and continues with his nice, low baritone.

“I know you’rrre a boy. In fact, you’rrre just my type!”

Time stops.

“...What? What are you saying?! Hey, what’s he going on about?! He’s talking nonsense!” Russell says in a sudden panic, which just seems to excite Tiger Man further.

“Little Russell has a cute face, so I bet a skirrrrt would look myarrrvelous on him.”

“I don’t understand what you’re talking about!”

I admit I don’t get it, either. Still, I can say this with confidence. “Wow, Tiger Man. Mutants sure are impressive!”

“What the hell are you impressed by?! Y-you’re kidding, right? I’m a guy! You’re just threatening me, right? This can’t be happening!” Russell rambles desperately, as though he’s now aware of the danger he’s in.

“My heart is big; nyeow do you see? I don’t mind little distinctions like ‘boy’ or ‘girrrrrl.’ I can love them both equally.”

“Wow, Tiger Man. I seriously don’t get what it is you’re saying, but you’re creepy cool!”

“F-fine! I admit it, you win! I give up. I’ll go ahead and make water for you!” Russell suddenly admits defeat and offers to cooperate...

“Impressive, Tiger Man. The brat’s willing to cooperate.”

“Don’t be absurrrrd. It’s too late nyeow. No take-backs.”

“Wait! I give up! Please! I give up! S-stop...?!”

Tiger Man, who had been gripping the iron bars, yanks them out with his arms. The ruined remains of the bars land the floor near Russell’s feet.

Russell tries to back away, face locked in a twitching grimace. His voice is an octave higher than usual. “F-fine, I get it! I’ll defect to your side starting now! Combat Chimeras can be really useful!”

“Sorry, we’ve already got one of our own. It’ll be okay, Russell, I’m sure Tiger Man will take good care of you.”

Russell begins to cry, tears rolling down his cheeks and snot dribbling from his nostrils as he vigorously shakes his head from side to side.

“Nooo! NOOOOOOOOO! This is wrong! So wrong! Please! Please let me make water for your kingdom! I’ll work hard every day! I promise!”

Alice lets out a dismissive snort at Russell’s pleading.

“Of course you’re going to make water. You rejected Six’s offer. You may belong to a different organization, but you still consider yourself a villain, right? In which case...”

“If you’re gonna resist, resist to the end. If you’re gonna betray your side, do it quick.”

As Alice and I offer our commentary, Tiger Man presses his face up close to Russell...!

“I guess I have no choice. I’ll let you get by with just crrross-dressing. Make sure you work harrrd on your waterrr making... Though for my parrrt, I wouldn’t mind if you slacked off a bit...”

Tiger Man breaks into a predatory grin.

Epilogue 1



The conference room at Kisaragi Corporation headquarters.

“Lilith, can you help me decipher Six’s report?” Astaroth hands the report printout to Lilith.

“His handwriting is messy, but I didn’t think it was bad enough to be illegible. Let me see... Sorry, nope. I can’t make heads or tails of what he’s saying, either.”

It takes a whole two seconds for Lilith to give up trying to make sense of Six’s final report.

“‘I’m pleased to report Tiger Man finds fulfillment in each and every day. Also, supopocchis are a lot tastier than I thought...’ What on earth is a supopocchi?”

“Don’t look at me. It also asks for me to upgrade Alice, which makes no sense, either...”

As the pair try to sort out the report’s details, Belial’s angry voice rings through the room.

“F18, F19! Care to explain your miserable performance in today’s exercise?! I *know* you can do better!”

“My apologies, Lady Belial... 19 and I started reminiscing about the past, and I just started to get homesick... I keep thinking about how hard it must be on Father, Mother, my sister, and all the kingdom’s citizens...”

“I, too, found myself thinking of my old companions... Heine and Russell are probably worried about me... They’ve always had a soft streak...”

The two men dressed in combat suits close their eyes, letting out a nostalgic sigh.

Belial looks at the pair rather skeptically. “Eh, I honestly doubt it. I don’t know how famous both of you were back in your country, but it’s pretty common for people to just forget about you after a week or two.”

“Lady Belial, surely that wouldn’t happen with us! I’m a prince and the Chosen One! I’m sure my kingdom has been in a panic since the moment I vanished...”

“While my loyal minions must still be looking for their lost pillar of the Elite Four...!”

The pair passionately object to Belial, spittle flying from their mouths, but are promptly silenced by Belial’s fist.

“Stop it with the Chosen One nonsense! You sound as stupid as Agent Six! And you, no calling yourself an Elite Four member without permission!”

Astaroth turns her gaze to the fussy trio abuzz in their corner. “I have to give those two credit. I thought for certain they’d wilt under Belial’s training regime...”

“Agreed, that was a pleasant surprise. But Belial’s always been the nurturing type. And it seems those two have seen their fair share of battle.”

The two rookies suddenly appeared on Belial’s lawn, and despite the endless battles against the Heroes, the pair has managed to produce results.

“I thought about sending them to reinforce Six, but perhaps it’s better to keep them with us for the time being.”

“It’d be a bit cruel to send them off to that planet within a few months of starting here. Hate to do this to him, but Six will have to make do with what he’s got. We’ve survived this latest counteroffensive by the Heroes, but it’s too early to let our guard down.”

The two then turn their gaze back to the report.

“...So what’s this mokemoke...?”

“Again, don’t ask me. I’ll have Alice write up a final report, too. We can compare the two and use that to figure out the details. As far as I can tell,

though, it sounds like we've acquired some new territory...?"

The report is filled with sentences that are little better than gibberish.

But one stands out in particular...

"This last bit about narrowly avoiding disaster after trying to put socks on Grimm..."

"I know Grimm is one of Six's subordinates. But I can't understand what socks have to do with disaster..."

The two exchange glances and tilt their heads in puzzlement.

Epilogue 2 Undead Festival



A bit of time has passed since we made Russell solve our water crisis.

After nearly coming to blows with the kingdom of Toris due to an unfortunate series of misunderstandings, it appears relations between the two countries are slowly being repaired. Sounds like we'll eventually resume things like trade.

Everything seems to be going just great, but...

"I don't want to see your face, Commander! I've had nothing but awful things happen to me since I joined this unit! I go to Toris and get rejected by every guy I talk to, I go to the desert and get mummified, I'm forced to wear socks, I go to the city meetup event and get rejected by every guy I talk to!!"

"Only one of those things has anything to do with me! And how the hell was I supposed to know that would happen with a lousy pair of socks?! If anything, I'm the victim there!"

Grimm's decided an argument in the middle of the kingdom of Grace training grounds is a great idea.

"Fine, if you're that upset about it...I'll request that they give you a transfer..., " I tell her.

Grimm's eyes go wide...

"Noooooooooooo! Please, Commander, don't leave me! We've been through so much together! You're not going to just toss me aside after all that, are you? ARE YOU?!"

“You’re the one bitching about everything! What the hell do you want from me?! Since we’re on the subject, most of the time you’re out of the fight before it even starts! You didn’t do a damn thing this last time! You’re fired! Fired!! I’m going to recruit someone more useful! The clumsy magic girl or that old man we were talking about last time...”

Grimm clings to my arm, bawling her eyes out.

“But, Commander! We even went on a date! We’ve seen each other’s underwear! And you’re still going to leave me?! If you do, I’m going to curse yooooou!”

“You’re a piece of work, you know that?! What do you *really* want?!”

Grimm continues to cry, wailing loudly. “Alice calls me a scammer! And I can’t act during the day, so I can’t do as much as Snow or Rose...! Wait, that’s it! Let me have a chance to prove myself! A situation where I can shine!” she suggests, adding to my headaches, clinging to my sleeve, and showing no sign of letting go.

“A situation where you can shine, huh...? I mean, what can you actually do?”

“How about a wedding venue? You get points for evil deeds, right? So! What if we curse a couple to never be able to marry just as they’re about to exchange their wedding vows...”

And then the backlash from the curse...

“Yeah... I can already see the punch line where you doom yourself to the life of an eternal spinster.”

“Shush! I mean, I feel that’d happen, too, but saying it out loud is just tempting fate!” The loudly obnoxious Grimm is taking my teasing rather seriously.

“Grimm, there you are! It’s an emergency. The princess wishes to see you!” Snow shouts as she runs onto the training ground.

Grimm and I exchange glances.

“Uh-oh. She’s about to fire you...”

“Stop that! You’re making me anxious! But I can guess what the princess

wants, given the time of year. Commander, can you wheel me over? I'll have the princess explain to you just how useful I can be!" Grimm gestures toward me, urging me along.

"C'mon, you two, get moving! The royal oracle says this year's is going to be the worst on record!" Snow looks a bit more stressed than usual...

"This year's what? Just what is the worst on record? Grimm, what's she talking about?"

"That's for me to know and you to find out. Every woman's got her secrets, don't you know?" Grimm chuckles teasingly, poking my nose with her index finger.

.....

"When women tease me, I get the urge to strip them naked..."

"I'm sorry! It's just your cute subordinate being playful!"

Grimm hurriedly puts some space between the two of us, then points to the darkening sky.

"A festival! A lovely festival! The undead festival is upon us!"

[Final Report]

Agent 6 has succeeded in damaging the relations between the kingdom of Grace and one of its neighbors.

We've achieved the territorial expansion quota for Kisaragi by escalating this situation into a war.

During said war, we captured a business competitor's mutant. Said mutant is currently under Tiger Man's command. According to the information from this mutant, this planet once had a super-advanced civilization.

While we were unable to recover the methods of creating Chimeras or other useful information during our last operations, we are now aware that the presence of creatures (such as giant magical monsters) that could not have evolved on their own is due to said ancient civilization.

We will now focus our attention on securing any remaining facilities belonging to this ancient civilization and continue investigations.

Additionally, it appears that this planet holds an event called an Undead Festival during this time of year.

As a pinnacle of technological achievement, I believe it's my mission to disrupt an event so steeped in superstition and the supernatural. I will report on these activities at a later date.

Final Reporting Operative Supernatural Buster, Alice Kisaragi

“God’s Blessing on This Wonderful Planet!”



“October 3, 0200 hours. Safely landed upon surface of target planet. Discovered lighting during descent. Will move to investigate.”

Safely arriving on the planet, I record my observations into my device, glancing around my surroundings. The plains stretch as far as the eye can see; this area seems well suited for human habitation.

Confident that this mission will be easy, I let my guard down—and that’s when it strikes.

“Planet has ample water and plant life. It appears to be ideal for human—Whoa!”

The ground suddenly bulges outward, and a giant toad pops out of the ground.

There’s no reason I couldn’t eliminate this creature, but if I leave it here, the natives might find it. If they suspect there’s something in the area strong enough to kill this giant life-form, it’s likely to put them on edge.

“Goddammit! I can’t believe an elite like me has to run from a mere toad...!”

I didn’t expect to be running away minutes after making landfall. I may need

to take this planet more seriously.

I need to forget about my earlier mistake and move on—return to my usual calm, cool self. No matter what happens on this planet, I'll keep my head and stay on guard.

“Encountered a hostile giant toad immediately after landing! As this is a survey mission, decided it would be more prudent to conduct a tactical retreat! Reporting Recorder: Agent Twenty-Two!”

And so began my life upon this awful rock—

“October 17, 0600 hours. About to head to the construction site for work.”

Waking inside a barn, I speak to my device, starting my day's recording.

It's been two weeks since I arrived on this planet.

Learning the local language was a bit tricky, but it wasn't a great obstacle for an elite like myself.

Life here is going pretty well. In fact, due to the lack of entertainment, my day-to-day routine consists of waking up early and going to bed early, engaging in healthy manual labor each day. The simplicity of this life makes me rethink my priorities on Earth.

I'm struggling to come to grips with the fact there's no difference between my Kisaragi salary and my part-time job here as a construction worker.

Back on Earth, people used to run in terror at the mere sight of me, but no one in this city seems to mind. According to my colleagues, it's pretty common for black-haired, black-eyed people with strange names and wearing funny clothing to suddenly spring out of thin air in this city.

As I'm busily repairing the outer wall, like any other day, an unfamiliar young woman calls over to me.

“Hey there. Let me show you how it's done!”

The blue-haired woman appears out of nowhere, then begins an impressive demonstration of her wall-painting skills.

“...Say, is that blue-haired girl a master crafter?”

“Hmm? No, the maintenance chief is a part-timer. She comes by when she needs spending money.”

The workers around her greet the young woman, all of them calling her the maintenance chief. She seems pleased at the welcome. But why “chief,” of all things...?

Still, it appears that on this planet, even girls working part-time have an impressive array of skills.

My initial survey suggested the technology level on this planet was low, but it looks like I have to rethink that assessment.

—It was at that moment.

“Chief! The wall’s collapsed, and we’ve got wounded! Need you to go heal ’em.”

It appears there was an accident, and the crew boss shouts out for help.

“Sacred Highness Heal!”

I hear the chief chanting something and look over to her. In the blink of an eye, the wounded are healed.

I stare at the impossible scene before me.

“Geez! Like I always say, double-check to make sure everything’s secure! Sheesh!”

“Sorry about that, Chief. Thanks for your help, as usual! I owe you a crimson beer!”

The recovered workers walk up to thank the chief...

Hold on a minute. Given the miracle I just witnessed, a pint of beer seems like an awfully cheap reward!

But based on the chief’s happy expression, it’s more than enough for a thank-you.

Seems our maintenance chief will fix up people for a cheap pint of beer. Something’s wrong with this planet’s medical care.

“October 24, 2300 hours. Hereby initiating Evil Point acquisition.”

I've been here for three weeks now.

I learned the instant healing I saw last week was magic. It sounds like something out of a fantasy novel, but I can't deny it, having seen it for myself.

Today I'm going to put the talk of magic off to the side and try to replenish some of my Evil Points. I'll start out with some acts of petty villainy, and if things get out of hand, I can solve that with violence.

Once I make my decision, I head out. As I'm wandering around town, I earn points by doing things like flipping over trash cans.

"You. What are you doing! Stop making a mess of the dump sites. You're going to get in trouble with the Crow Slayer!"

A beautiful blond-haired, blue-eyed woman dressed in a slutty suit worthy of a naughty schoolteacher tries to stop me.

"Crow...? What the hell are you talking about? As for trouble, well, you're the one in trouble now. What's a woman doing alone at this late an hour? Heh... I'll make you regret your lack of caution...!"

"Wh-what? How dare you!"

I was just planning to threaten her a little, but instead of fear, all I see from her is surprise. Since I'm not getting any Evil Points, I can rule out the possibility that she feels threatened in any fashion.

"I didn't think there were any men like that left in the city! I don't know what you're planning to do to me, but I've already decided that I'll only ever let one man do such things to me!"

"Heh-heh... I wonder what sort of expressions I'll see if I drag you in front of your man and strip you naked... Whoa, wait, stop blushing! What's wrong with you?"

The mysterious beauty's cheeks flush red, and she starts squirming for some reason. "Th-that—that's because you started proposing some advanced cuckolding play! There might have been a time I'd have been tempted, but I'm not so easily seduced, villain!"

"Wow, what the hell is wrong with you? Is this culture shock or something?" /

mean, I know values are different between countries, but is this what passes for normal on this planet...?

“I can’t leave a late-stage pervert like you to roam the streets unchecked! Go on, make your move! I’ll capture you! Don’t even *think* of capturing me instead and dragging me in front of him!”

“I don’t know why, but I think it’s really unfair for you to be calling me a late-stage pervert! This may be a cheap thing to do to a civilian like you, but I can’t have Kisaragi being treated so disrespectfully! Time for a nap, girl!”

I don’t need to have her causing a scene, so I punch in her the face, hoping to knock her out. The woman just stands there in silence.

“Y-you...!” I shout.

“.....”

Thinking I must have held back too much, I put all my strength behind a punch to her stomach. If she noticed it, the mysterious beauty gives no sign of it.

If anything, she’s starting to look sad, as though disappointed by my attacks.

“I’m leaving...,” I mutter under my breath, turning to go home with a frown. I was the attacker, but for some reason, my fist is hurting. Given that my punches didn’t earn me any Evil Points, it seems those attacks didn’t even register as villainy to the woman.

Seems the reason there aren’t any guns on this planet might not be restricted to a lack of technology.

I guess I need to revise my way of thinking.

“October 31, 1000 hours. Today I will investigate magic.”

I speak to my device and set out.

While doing construction by the front gate, I noticed that in this city, adventurers were responsible for hunting. The target of these hunts were the giant toads I met on my first day here.

As terrifying as it sounds, those giant predators are actually quite low on this planet’s food chain.

And currently—

“Attention everyone! We’re facing an overabundance of toads! We’re offering bonuses for bringing in toad parts!”

The huge number of them that had spawned outside the city are being hunted down one after the other.

The news makes my head hurt, but I’m trying to focus on learning about magic today.

As I’m searching for a survey target, I see a young girl dressed in stereotypical mage clothing.

“Yo, Megumin. I’ll give you candy if you’ll go hunt over there.”

“Yeah, we’d appreciate it if you’d go far away.”

The adventurers are shoos away the survey target, a girl evidently named Megumin. Given that they seem to be calling her by a nickname, it doesn’t seem like they’re doing it out of malice.

I presume they’re treating her rather coldly because she’s still a fledgling mage. She does appear young, after all.

“If you keep treating me poorly, you’re going to regret it later!”

“Yeah, all right, whatever. Go ahead and cast your spell. What’s your guardian Kazuma doing anyway...?”

If she has a guardian, that confirms my assumption that she’s still a novice.

I watch the rather saccharine little scene with a faintly sour smile on my lips when— *“Exploosion!”*

I freeze as I see the girl’s spell.

A sudden, massive explosion incinerates the toads.

“Well done. I’ll go ahead and carry you home. Sheesh, what the hell is Kazuma up to...?”

“Hey! At least treat me with a little more respect!”

The adventurers haul off the impressive girl as though she’s an inconvenient

sack of luggage.

Actually, based on how the others reacted, it might be that her spell isn't all that impressive. The adventurers don't seem fazed by the spell at all, continuing to hunt toads as though that blast is a daily occurrence.

I guess that girl *is* still a fledgling, and the spell she used was a simple, low-level spell.

I cancel the rest of my investigation and shudder, remembering that spell's incredible blast.

"November 7, 2000 hours. Commencing..."

"You've come a long way for your spy mission. Impressive. Welcome."

A shiver runs up my spine.

Instead of finishing the recording, I turn to face the man behind me.

I had thought I'd concealed my actions well enough that even a dedicated observer wouldn't realize I was a spy.

"Oh dear. Panic and anxiety. Terrible emotions. Certainly not what I enjoy."

For whatever reason, no one in this city appears to have thought to ask why this tall man is wearing a mask.

I don't know how he found out about my mission, but now that he knows, he needs to be silenced.

"It's nothing personal..." Confirming there's no one else around, I press my pistol to the man's chest and—!

"Ah, did you truly think you could hurt me with such a toy? Too bad! Not even a scratch!"

I hit him near the heart, but the masked man breaks out in loud guffaws.

You have got to be kidding me... This guy, that ridiculously tough woman—is everyone on this planet invincible?

I'm supposed to be an elite combat operative. But this...

Have I been deluding myself all this time?

I stand there in stunned silence, my confidence shattered. The masked man doesn't bother to hit back and just walks off instead.

...What is the deal with this planet?

"November 29, 0600 hours. Heading to the construction site for my part-time job..."

It's been two months since I arrived here.

After picking up a few extra jobs around town, I've secured an inn room in lieu of a hideout and assembled a teleporter. All that remains is to wait for the teleporter to stabilize so I can make my way back to Japan.

I lethargically make my way to the construction site.

"Maintenance Chief, I got attacked by vegetables yesterday..."

"Aw, I'm sorry to hear that. Let me know if you get hurt, and Chief will fix you right up. Be careful if you end up dying, though. There's only a short window where I can resurrect you."

I'm grumbling about what happened yesterday at the farm to the blue-haired girl.

Based on her reaction, the events from yesterday aren't me losing my grip on sanity, but a common occurrence.

Wait a minute. I've been so surprised these past couple of months that I totally let it go the first time, but it sounds like this girl can resurrect the dead so long as they haven't been dead too long...

"Chief, I wanted to ask... I heard the other day that this is a city for new adventurers?"

"Yup, that's right. Never mind that, why do you look so worn out? Did getting attacked by vegetables scare you? Let me give you a piece of advice. When you eat a tangerine, make sure you don't get the juice in your eyes."

...I see. Even tangerines attack you here. Learn something new every day. I continue working, my eyes staring off into the distance as I file away that fact.

"If life isn't treating you well, feel free to come to me, the great goddess

Aqua, for help. As your colleague, I'll be happy to help you out. In exchange, I just need you to help me when I'm short on money."

"The great goddess, Lady Aqua..."

Despite my attention wandering during the work day, for some reason those words were etched into my memory.

This is Axel, town of novice adventurers.

This country is at war with the Demon King, so the strongest adventurers go off to the frontlines.

That means the people I've seen so far are...

"December 29, 1900 hours. Conducting final survey and returning to Earth."

The teleporter is now stable, and I can return whenever I wish.

After activating my device, I head off to the city of Axel to take care of unfinished business.

I'm looking for someone weak. It doesn't matter who.

Yes, although I've been pining to go home after having my confidence shattered on this planet...

"I'm one of Kisaragi's elite Combat Agents. I can't just run away with my tail between my legs...!"

It's possible that I've just happened to run into the most powerful people on this planet.

Even if it means I'm just being a bully, I'd like to win a fight with one of the locals before going home.

I laugh at my own shattered confidence as I wander around the city at night.

"Hey there. Are you an adventurer? Could you spare a moment?"

"Me...? Wh-what is it? I have a lot of strong and noble friends behind me, you know."

The target I've chosen is an extremely weak-looking young man, and it seems I've chosen well as the boy answers with a line worthy of a two-bit lackey.

Looking at me, he begins to back away.

...Of course he would. It's the normal reaction to seeing a Kisaragi operative dressed in a suit of power armor. It's the first time it's happened since I arrived here, and I can't help a tiny thrill of joy.

"I'm sorry if I frightened you. If you're an adventurer, well... Could you show me your card?"

"My adventurer card? Well, okay, but my stats kind of suck. My occupation's also the weakest around." Calming down a little, the boy hands me his card.

...Wow, that's pretty bad.

I'd done my homework around the city, and I'd looked up the stats of an average adventurer.

The boy in front of me definitely has the weakest occupation, with the stats to match.

Nothing personal, kid, but I'm going to test myself against you.

"Do you mind if we...?"

"Ah-ha! Found you guys! The hell have you been doing?! I've been getting nothing but complaints about you!"

Just as I tried to ask him to fight, the boy runs off yelling.

I reach out to stop him, but...

"Gaaaaah! It's not my fault this time, I swear! It was Megumin's idea...!"

...I notice where the boy is running off to and freeze.

"I—I—I was just thinking out loud. I didn't think you would actually try...!"

"Wait, Kazuma, calm down! There's actually a good reason for..."

Standing there are my blue-haired coworker, the tough beauty, and the explosive girl.

"Screw your excuses! I'm going to beat the crap out of all three of you!"

The three of them are running from the boy with the worst occupation...

...Which means, the low stat, weakest occupation young man is actually

stronger than those three women.

My confidence is utterly shattered by that realization, and I activate the recorder on my device.

“To headquarters. I strongly recommend avoiding this planet. And...”

I utter a prayer of thanks to the planet’s goddess for saving me from starting an unwinnable fight.

“My thanks to the Goddess Aqua. Combat Agent Twenty-Two, hereby returning to Earth.”

AFTERWORD

Thank you for picking up the second volume of *Combatants Will Be Dispatched*.

It's been four short years since I became a novelist.

Lately, I've been reveling in the fact that I got to hole up in a hotel like a proper professional novelist, and that I haven't even felt guilty for massively missing a deadline.

My apologies. Please forgive me for all the trouble I've caused. I'm really sorry.

Lately, it feels like I'm constantly apologizing for one thing or another.

Anyway, in this volume none of the heroines do anything remotely heroic, but I have faith that as the volumes progress, they'll eventually start growing into their roles.

So please, I would appreciate it if you could stand by these scummy, seductive, predatory heroines for the time being.

As you can tell from the cover, this is a volume focusing on Alice.

Since this android was built to provide support for Six, it's likely she's going to continue lecturing our extremely flawed hero, while pampering him in the end.

This volume contains a few parodies and homages to my other series, *Konosuba: God's Blessing on This Wonderful World!*

For those who have yet to read it, you'll enjoy the short story at the end of this volume once you've finished reading the other series. (Shameless self-promotion here.) This short story depicts the other side from the short story written as the limited-edition bonus material for the first volume of *Combatants*.

Personally, I'm a big fan of crossover works, but if you'd like to see more of

the poor protagonist, you'll have to ask my editors at Sneaker Bunko.

Finally, the manga adaptation of *Combatants* by Masaaki Kiasa is running on Monthly Comic Alive.

I recommend checking it out if you're interested!

Anyway, I wouldn't have been able to get this second volume out the door if not for the help of many people, starting with the illustrator Cacao Lanthanum, my editor I——, everyone else in the editorial department, and everyone else involved in the book-production process. Thank you so very much.

And of course, last, but certainly not least, sincere thanks to all the readers who have picked up this book.

Natsume Akatsuki



CONGRATULATIONS
ON VOLUME 2'S
RELEASE!

THIS VOLUME INCLUDED THE PRETTY
MEMORABLE CHARACTER TIGER MAN.

AND THEN THERE'S RUSSELL OF THE
WATER, WHO HAD A LOT OF APPEARANCES
IN THE TEXT BUT DIDN'T SHOW UP VERY
MUCH IN THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

Kakao Lanthanum

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