Inari

by ThisIsArt (ToHoldForever)

Summary

Akira Kurusu, a regular high-schooler with a delinquent status to his name, lives the monotony of everyday life. However, when he meets the supposedly blacklisted fox yokai, Yusuke Kitagawa -- who showed up half-dead on the doorstep -- things definitely get strange and at many points... mystical.

He soon enters a contract with the spirit, but ends up with more than what he bargained for -- conflicts with deities, mythical creatures, the Demon World, the Surface, and evidently, the plot to rule both.

All while trying to balance his high school life so he doesn't have to face a judge... again.

(Inspired by Black Butler, Inuyasha, Kamisama Hajimemashita, Noragami... and, well, the mechanics of Persona 5, of course.)

Notes

So, while writing my other story, I've gotten into a slump where I need more motivation to keep going, even though I'm mostly satisfied with it. This story will help get some inspiration juices in my brain going, and I hope you like the aspects of the story which are all inspired by Black Butler, Inuyasha, Kamisama Hajimemashita, and Noragami. I love them, so check them out when you can.
That being said, depending on which story gets more popularity, I'll focus on more, however it doesn't mean I won't update them anymore -- just means which one I'll divide more of my headache towards. It's mostly a slight difference. LOL. Both stories have a lot to them, though, a completely different world. I won't take that away.

Also, I just realized I made a fanfic similar to another work... if you see it, you should read it, I just did and it's definitely fascinating!

Anyway, enjoy~!

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There's a demon on Akira's doorstep.

Okay, That might sound farfetched -- but it’s true.

All he wanted to do was go outside and enjoy his free time as Sojiro is out for the evening, but now, he has bigger problems. That’s a potential corpse -- a human corpse with fox ears and a tail at that-- sprawled out on the entrance of where he lives. Not expecting that.

What a rational person would do in the situation this happens, Akira doesn't know. He first checked his pulse, praying he was alive, and prayers answered, Akira resolved to visit the shrine more often. That aside, he can't bring him to Tae, because he's -- well, he has ears and a tail. If that's what a normal person has, Akira isn't normal.

What do I do with… it? Akira thinks, and looking at the cafe, he sighs. Well, there’s no other choice. He picks him up as gently as he can. Akira hopes he isn’t one of the ‘vengeful spirits’ sorts. It’d be worse if he just left him outside, though, and goes inside Leblanc.

Leblanc is a cafe and Akira's place of residence, due to his delinquent status. His parole officer, Sojiro, runs the place and had nowhere else to put Akira but upstairs. However, the eatery has a homely and comfortable feeling to it, and Sojiro’s curry and coffee are heavenly. So Akira can't complain. He isn't picky.

He puts the boy down on one of the booths, the light dimly revealing his face; the boy has dark blue hair soaked in rainwater from the storm outside, which is flattened and smooth. He also wears a disheveled traditional yukata, matching the color of his hair, even drenched in a similar fashion.

While he doesn’t see a traditional person walking around the city every day, the most shocking fact of all is his white fox-like ears and tail.

What person has fox ears and a tail? A furry… or something?

Maybe he’s just into cosplay, Akira concludes. Throughout the cities of Japan, cosplay isn’t uncommon. Find a gothic lolita on the streets, and no one would bat an eye. He’ll have to ignore those… certain features for now. He’ll catch a cold, so let’s get him dressed.

Akira uses a towel to wipe him off, and since Akira doesn't have any pants with a hole to fit his tail... he only wraps him around in a towel to keep him clothed just enough. Then, he lays him down on his bed consisting of a mattress and crates -- not the best place to put a wounded person, but he still thinks it’s a better alternative than the couch.

After running back and forth to the Konbini, he plies him with home remedies to keep him well
rested and healthy for the remainder of the night. Akira sighs, feeling a little better when the entity’s face finally relaxes. Akira couldn’t just leave him out there; it’s immoral, and plus, it’s scandalous in itself to find a nearly-dead boy -- who’s also partially a fox -- at Leblanc. The government would arrest Akira -- perhaps Sojiro -- without hesitation because of his record of delinquency.

Akira drags a stool near the bed to look after the boy. Upon closer inspection, he doesn’t look half-bad. Not bad at all. *He looks*... pretty, Akira considers before shaking his head off the thoughts. He has a graceful demeanor and face, long and feminine eyelashes, and a fair and clear complexion. His hair even looks silky and well-cared for. *He probably gets hit on a lot, doesn’t he?*

As time passes, his eyes get heavy themselves, and he falls asleep then and there on his chair.

When he regains consciousness, he can hear the birds tweeting outside. *Morning already?* Akira wonders. His eyes flutter open, not expecting another pair of gray eyes staring back at him with a gleam in its eyes.

Which there is.

Akira yelps in surprise, close to having a heart attack and falling from his chair, but the familiar figure steadies it before he can fall. When he regains stability, he takes a moment to catch his breath and look at the person in front of him. His eyes widen when he sees the person in front of him is none other than the boy he saved. He's even wearing his formerly wet yukata, now dried and looking new.

Before Akira can open his mouth, the boy gets on his knees and bows to the point his forehead hits the floor, catching Akira by surprise.

“Thank you for your hospitality! I apologize for any inconveniences I may have caused you while my stay here!” the male exclaims, refusing to look at Akira directly. “I am eternally indebted to you, and I will do anything you wish in return for my life.”

Akira is frozen, wondering what to say, but letting his mouth open, he stumbles out, ”T-There's... nothing that I really want.”

The one he saved shakes his head. “I cannot live knowing I didn't pay back the man who saved me. I need to fulfill my debt.”

Akira, other than wiping his criminal record... he doesn't have anything he wants, really. Well, what he wants is the truth to his tail and ears. “Then… I want some questions answered.”

“Oh, well -- of course.”

Akira holds his chin, trying to pick out the most glaring questions. “Who… what… are you?”

Yusuke stands up to his full height, revealing his tail and fox ears in full, and gives him a short bow once more. “My name is Yusuke Kitagawa, the pupi--... The former pupil of Madarame Ichiryusai. I am a fox yokai.”

*Yokai?!* Akira doesn't know how to believe it, even though it explains why he has a tail in the first place. Well, it also explains his traditional clothing. Except, for all he knows, he might just be an insane person, or a hardcore cosplayer. Perhaps both. There’s only way to find out. Akira stands up and touches his ears, which flinches to his touch, but relaxes after he feels them more gently.
He also goes on to attempt to touch Yusuke's tail, but it hides as Yusuke sputters, “u-umm, I really don't think you should try that.”

Akira rubs his neck. “Sorry, I just wanted to see if you really mean it.”

“I don't have a reason to lie to my savior,” Yusuke answers, and Akira takes a breath and returns to his seat. "May I ask... what's your name?"

"Akira... Akira Kurusu," Akira says in return. He looks away for a moment. "Why did you come here?"

Yusuke rubs his temples, his ears drooping. “I… well, I'm on the run from my former mentor, Madarame Ichiryusai, after discovering a dark secret of his… I can't believe it… but, I came here for shelter.”

Akira whitens. Wait, so demons might come looking for Yusuke?! They'll be knocking on the door and killing him without hesitation, along with Sojiro and the occasional patron of the cafe, if they find him? That's the last thing in the world he'd imagine dying from.

Before Akira can react appropriately, Yusuke takes Akira’s hands into his own, ears perking up. “My savior, I apologize for asking you a selfish request but-” he squeezes his eyes tight and says, “please save me!”

Akira blinks once. Save him? Wouldn't he be doing the saving, since he's a yokai? Akira thought. Akira’s just a human. What can he do other than help him with shelter -- if Sojiro would even allow it?

“How?” Akira asks, his voice sounding weak.

Yusuke looks straight at him in the eye, fiery passion burning within the gray orbs, which takes Akira aback. “My savior, when I came to the Surface, I sensed your powerful Potential. You have an incredible amount of power I haven't seen before. It is a high toll for asking you to help me again, but I have no other choice,” he explains. He squeezes Akira’s hand. “Please aid me.”

At that moment, both of them hear a loud crashing of utensils from downstairs, and Akira expects the worse. They both go down, going as fast as they can, and they see Sojiro being held by the demons. Both demons look deformed, each with varying colors but distinctive sharp claws, wild hair, and horns. Are they... oni?!

The cafe is a mess; shattered, small items scattered on the floor and chairs are knocked down. While it's not the time to think about it, it's going to cost a fortune to clean up the place. Really. "How did they find out where I was...?" Yusuke murmurs to himself.

“Sojiro!” Akira yells, and. Sojiro grunts as he tries to escape from the demons, to no avail. Sojiro doesn’t seem to have noticed Yusuke's presence yet, and shakes his head towards Akira.

“Akira! Go!” Sojiro yells in return, but Akira only takes a step back, not going any farther as he continues to watch Sojiro struggle and considering his options. What can I do...?!

Yusuke behind him grabs his arm, causing him to turn around in paranoid panic, and says, “Savior! Use your powers!”

Akira answers, “I was going to tell you -- I don't have powers!”

At that moment, Yusuke looks as if he's seen a ghost (ironic as it may sound). He looks between
Akira and the demon pulling out its weapon. He takes a gulp. “Akira, quickly! Form a contract with me!”

“What?! A contract?!”

Without warning, he approaches Akira, bewildered, and lifts his chin with delicate fingers, bringing his lips to his. It's chaste and like a simple peck between a wife kissing her husband good luck to work. Yusuke closes his eyes, while Akira's widens at feeling the kitsune's lips on his own.

Suddenly, a light envelops both of them, stopping the demons in their tracks as they watch, agape, at the blinding light. Adrenaline begins to surge throughout Akira’s body, giving him newfound stamina and freshness. A searing pain sprouts on the side of his neck, making him groan in pain.

_I am thou, and thou art I,_

_Thou hast forged an eternal contract._

_One must serve faithful for eternity to their contractor,_

_Or divine punishment may befall on them._

_With the birth of the Emperor arcana, may it mean a lasting bond_

_Between master and servant._

Their lips linger until Yusuke pulls away, the light dying down. Akira stands there, immobilized, as his head tries its best to load what’s happening. Before he can, Yusuke gently pushes him aside, and advances towards the oni, looking at Yusuke with tense bodies. They grit their teeth, and point their club at him, emitting a low growl.

“Give me what you got, fox,” one of the blue oni says, nodding his head. “I’ll see what those bastards found in a young brat like yourself.”

Yusuke doesn’t give a reply as he closes his eyes in silent focus. A glow starts to emit around him, the enemies just looking on in curiosity and fear. Their fear only heightens as a new transformation begins to happen; his hair starts to turn white before their eyes, midnight blue to pure snow. The blue demon trembles in fear as he takes a glimpse of the narrow, fox-like eyes Yusuke's wearing, yet it doesn’t put down its club. The club shakes along with its body. The other demon with the red skin takes a firm grip on Sojiro.

_He really is a yokai._

“Stand back! We're warning you!” They threaten once more. Akira watches from the stairs, in mild interest and curiosity paining him. The power of a yokai.

Then, he hears a chuckle. Which elevates into a laugh of near hysteria. The voice is familiar -- Yusuke’s.
“I believe that advice goes to you,” Yusuke answers, a smirk lingering on his lips.

When he met Yusuke, he expected a yokai who needed help, who hated bloodshed and wanted nothing about it; but seeing him in battle, his skin crawls. He’s more than what meets the eye. Even when he wields the sword, though, the way he moves is like the wind, elegant and graceful.

A sword appears at his side, glowing all the same with powerful energy. The blade gleams from the lights of the ruined cafe as he takes it with a firm grip. He tests it in the air for a while, before pointing it at the ones in front of him.

Before Akira can predict what happens next-

\textit{Slice --}

A streak of red appears across the demon’s bare chests. As if in slow motion, the demons’ eyes widen as they take in reality.

\textit{Thud!}

They land face first on the floor, releasing their grips on the middle-aged man, looking traumatized. Yusuke stands up from his crouch, but then goes back into a kneel as he checks the pulse of the demons.

\textit{Are they dead…?} Akira thinks to himself. Yusuke pulls away his two fingers and looks at Akira.

“Rest assured. They’re just wounded, but not dead. They fainted from shock,” Yusuke answers, shaking his head. “I would rather not resort to needless deaths, no matter if they’re a demon or not… and Sojiro,” he looks back at him, “are you okay?”

Sojiro looks at him, his eyes still wide, but he sputters, “y-yes, I am. What… was that?!”

Yusuke opens his mouth, but his right ear twitches. He spins in one swift motion, then pushes Sojiro behind him as the door of the cafe opens up to more growling demons. He crouches into his stance again, gripping the sword with more resolve.

“Go, Akira! Sojiro!” He yells behind him.

Akira, deciding to trust him, nods towards Sojiro, and they climb the stairs, hiding behind nearby furniture. Sojiro hisses at him, “look! Do you know what’s happening?! And who’s he?!”

Akira takes deep breaths and answers, “it’s-- it’s complicated. I can’t tell you right now -- let’s just trust in him… for now. Please.”

Sojiro looks at him, and seeing his determined gaze, he sighs and buries his face in his knees. “Understood. But if someone’s going to die, don’t blame me.”
Downstairs, Yusuke continues to fend off the wave of demons sent after him. Through his newly forged contract, he can feel Akira’s Potential surging through him due to their established Link, enhancing Goemon’s powers and his natural ability of a yokai’s. While there were incoming waves on never-ending monsters, Yusuke had no trouble cutting them all down, though most of his attacks are directed towards handicapping, not killing.

In the end, Akira hears silence downstairs, and with Sojiro, peers from upstairs to see what happened. What they find are the unconscious bodies of demons and still movements. Pure quietness and blood spilled on the floor (scoring Sojiro a headache. This was going to cost a fortune). They continued down farther, and see the gasping and wheezing Yusuke, worn out and trembling, with the same large figure towering over him. His blade is sharp and reflective as ever, but stained in bloody red.

Finally, Yusuke collapses, the mirage-like entity disappearing behind him, and his white hair gradually turns back into blue. Sojiro and Akira pick him up and places him down on Akira’s bed, where he was just an hour or two ago, but now, he’s back in bed -- again.

“Watch over him while I go get supplies,” Sojiro orders, and Akira nods without hesitation. He hears him mumble to himself how to clean up the cafe. His parole officer disappears downstairs and is left with Yusuke in a dreadful state; while any wounds are invisible, his chest rising and dropping at a rapid pace with such a pained look on his face. Akira prays Sojiro would come back quickly, but meanwhile, he attempts to stop the bleeding in areas where he could and looks over his breathing and heartbeat.

What do we do, we can’t even bring him to a hospital since he’s a yokai, Akira thinks to himself. He buries his face inside his hand, a headache nearing.

This was a dream, isn’t it? A kitsune -- yokai -- whatever -- was laying down on his bed, and in a blink of an eye, healed. Not only that, Yusuke saved Sojiro from being killed, with his powers, and asked Akira for his help. It can’t be true.

What is happening?!

As his eyes wander, he spots a scroll poking out behind Yusuke’s back. He gently removes it from his person, and then unravels it to read the letter.

\[M,\]

\[I\ \text{want Y dead ASAP. Do it in any way possible.}\]

\[S\]

He doesn’t know who these people are, but he figures Y meant Yusuke. Could Yusuke possibly have found the letter from one of the tougher mobs while he was fighting? Probably. They truly have underestimated him.
Though one thing he noticed -- why didn't Yusuke tried to save Sojiro earlier, and required Akira to forge a bond with him? Perhaps he needed a source of power -- and that would come from the contract, or Akira himself.

Ah. These people thought Yusuke couldn’t have made a contract with someone who, he quotes, had “powerful Potential” within them. *Wait, so I granted him that power...?* Akira realizes. *Does that mean... I have the ability to wield such a power?* But of course! That’s why it’s called Potential, but he didn’t know how that could come in handy other than fighting demons and whatnot, or what this Potential exactly meant. It’s potential -- not reality.

His train of thought is interrupted by Yusuke rising, holding his head with a pained expression. “A… Akira-sama? Thank goodness you’re safe,” Yusuke says, gripping Akira’s arm. "I exerted too much energy for using a weapon for the first time in a while, against so many of them..." Akira flinches at the way he addresses him. It doesn't help when he just displayed him his bloodthirsty nature a while ago as well. He stiffens.

“Why are you calling me Akira-sama? I’m-”

“Did you forget? We forged a contract. I am now your servant -- for eternity,” Yusuke interrupts. He lifts the back of Akira’s hand to his lips, closing his eyes. Akira nearly pulls away, but he can’t properly think with all the information he has to absorb.

“I didn’t want..."

Yusuke drops his hand, and looks at him straight in the eye. “I apologize, but it’s the only way to save Sojiro and both of us. You’ll have to bear this eternal bond until you find a way to break it... which is next to impossible." He points at Akira’s neck, and he blinks once. *Is there something on me?*

Akira looks in a mirror to find a seal with kanji writing in it. He thinks back to the burning pain in his neck when Yusuke -- did that thing with him -- and perhaps that's how it came to be. The proof of their contract? He turns around to look at Yusuke again, who tenses, evidently expecting Akira to burst out, but he only takes a few deep breaths.

“Well, I guess we’ll just have to stick together,” Akira answers, curling his hair in his finger. Yusuke hesitates, surprised of his relatively calm reaction, and nods in confirmation, mildly speechless. He lays back down on the bed. Akira knows there isn't much to do about the situation, outlandish as it may be; plus, if it were a dream or reality, it helps him out either way. He'll just have to accept what's happening -- change is good, even though it's hard.

Breaking the silence, he speaks up, "You're... powerful. Those demons must've been cake for you."

Yusuke takes a moment to consider those words, but shakes his head. "There were... many of them. I don't know why Sensei would send so many after me... after all, I'm vulnerable without a contractor," he says, and he looks up. "There were too many of them. What could he be plotting against me, to send...?" Revelation flashes in his eyes for a moment. He takes out the scroll Akira found on his person earlier, and his eyes visibly widen.

“This is...” Yusuke trails off. “It can't be.”

Akira's interest piques. “What happened?”

Yusuke's head shakes. “No, I must be overreacting. There are plenty of other demons out there with an S...” he muses to himself. “Though not all demons have names -- so I'd thought it would be
Shido.”

*Shido?* Akira wonders. *No, that’s the name of the well-known politician, Shido Masayoshi.* Through the public word, he’s seen to be a charismatic and assertive leader, but when Akira watches the TV with Sojiro on peaceful Sundays, he can’t help but sense something off about him.

What concerns him more is how Yusuke knows him, who’s clearly been living in the Demon World for all his life.

“I... I think I know who Shido is,” Akira remarks, and Yusuke looks at Akira with a shocked expression. Yusuke holds his chin as he rereads the scroll again to confirm his suspicions.

“How do you know him? Is it said in stories of your race? He's... the ruler of the Demon World,” Yusuke responds. “He has pseudonyms in order to do... certain clandestine activities. I believe, as far-fetched as it sounds, he sent Sensei's men to... kill me. For a reason I don’t know.”


At that moment, Yusuke looks at Akira with a fixed gaze. "Akira-sama, I deeply apologize for burdening you for too long, and it's clear our lives might be as good as forfeit," he says, his tone soft, but he nods towards him. "Even though you have no choice... I'll still ask for your help."

*Oh please, Akira thinks. I can't even help myself.*

It's unimaginable what happens next, but both of them suspected something big is going to happen -- soon, and inevitably.

End Notes

how does yusuke not trip on such loose clothing

**Akira:** Hey... how did you dry off your yukata so quickly?

**Yusuke:** That's easy; I just put it under my foxfire and fanned it, thus drying it off fairly quickly.

Here are your chapter clarifications today:

Shido = the Izanagi of the Japanese folklore changed to fit the story.

Madarame = A deity (TBA).

Oni = demon.

Yokai = ghost, phantom, strange apparition.

Large Figure = Persona/Goemon

Kanji on his neck = 悠祐, Yusuke

Demon World = Metaverse

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!